

## Questions We All Ask

*Lectures delivered by*

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*in the Temple of Peace, Point Loma, California*

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### Contents

#### Volume I

- No. 1. October 1, 1929
- No. 2. October 8, 1929
- No. 3. October 15, 1929
- No. 4. October 22, 1929
- No. 5. October 29, 1929
- No. 6. November 5, 1929
- No. 7. November 12, 1929 (lecture delivered July 28, 1929)
- No. 8. November 19, 1929 (lecture delivered August 4, 1929)
- No. 9. November 26, 1929 (lecture delivered August 11, 1929)
- No. 10. December 3, 1929 (lecture delivered August 18, 1929)
- No. 11. December 10, 1929 (lecture delivered August 25, 1929)
- No. 12. December 17, 1929 (lecture delivered September 1, 1929)
- No. 13. December 24, 1929 (lecture delivered September 8, 1929)
- No. 14. December 31, 1929 (lecture delivered September 15, 1929)

- No. 15. January 7, 1930 (lecture delivered September 22, 1929)
- No. 16. January 14, 1930 (lecture delivered September 29, 1929)
- No. 17. January 21, 1930 (lecture delivered October 6, 1929)
- No. 18. January 28, 1930 (lecture delivered October 13, 1929)
- No. 19. February 4, 1930 (lecture delivered October 20, 1929)
- No. 20. February 11, 1930 (lecture delivered October 27, 1929)
- No. 21. February 18, 1930 (lecture delivered November 3, 1929)
- No. 22. February 25, 1930 (lecture delivered November 10, 1929)
- No. 23. March 4, 1930 (lecture delivered November 17, 1929)
- No. 24. March 11, 1930 (lecture delivered November 24, 1929)
- No. 25. March 18, 1930 (lecture delivered December 1, 1929)
- No. 26. March 25, 1930 (lecture delivered December 8, 1929)
- No. 27. April 1, 1930 (lecture delivered December 15, 1929)
- No. 28. April 8, 1930 (lecture delivered December 22, 1929)
- No. 29. April 15, 1930 (lecture delivered December 29, 1929)
- No. 30. April 22, 1930 (lecture delivered January 12, 1930)
- No. 31. April 29, 1930 (lecture delivered January 19, 1930)
- No. 32. May 6, 1930 (lecture delivered January 26, 1930)
- No. 33. May 13, 1930 (lecture delivered February 2, 1930)
- No. 34. May 20, 1930 (lecture delivered February 9, 1930)
- No. 35. May 27, 1930 (lecture delivered February 16, 1930)
- No. 36. June 3, 1930 (Lecture delivered February 23, 1930)
- No. 37. June 10, 1930 (Lecture delivered March 2, 1930)
- No. 38. June 17, 1930 (Lecture delivered March 9, 1930)
- No. 39. June 24, 1930 (Lecture delivered March 16, 1930)
- No. 40. July 1, 1930 (Lecture delivered March 23, 1930)
- No. 41. July 8, 1930 (Lecture delivered March 30, 1930)
- No. 42. July 15, 1930 (Lecture delivered April 6, 1930)
- No. 43. July 22, 1930 (Lecture delivered April 13, 1930)
- No. 44. July 25, 1930 (Lecture delivered July 25, 1930)
- No. 45. July 29, 1930 (Lecture delivered April 27, 1930)
- No. 46. August 2, 1930 (Lecture delivered May 11, 1930)

- No. 47. August 5, 1930 (Lecture delivered May 18, 1930)
- No. 48. August 8, 1930 (Lecture delivered May 25, 1930)
- No. 49 August 12, 1930 (Lecture delivered June 1, 1930)
- No. 50 August 15, 1930 (Lecture delivered June 8, 1930)
- No. 51 August 19, 1930 (Lecture delivered June 15, 1930)
- No. 52 August 22, 1930 (Lecture delivered June 22, 1930)

## **Volume 2: Second Series**

- No. 1. September 1, 1930 (lecture delivered June 29, 1930)  
"Who Are You?"
- No. 2. September 8, 1930 (lecture delivered July 6, 1930) "Have You Found Yourself?"
- No. 3. September 15, 1930 (lecture delivered July 13, 1930)  
"What Are You?"
- No. 4. September 22, 1930 (lecture delivered July 20, 1930)  
"The Destiny of a Soul"
- No. 5. October 12, 1930 (lecture delivered July 27, 1930) "Souls That Drift"
- No. 6. October 20, 1930 (lecture delivered August 3, 1930)  
"Occultism and Psychism"
- No. 7. October 27, 1930 (lecture delivered August 10, 1930)  
"Occultism and Psychology"
- No. 8. November 2, 1930 (lecture delivered August 17, 1930)  
"Gods, Men, and Atoms"
- No. 9. November 10, 1930 (lecture delivered August 24, 1930)  
"Visions"
- No. 10. November 17, 1930 (lecture delivered August 31, 1930)  
"Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace"
- No. 11. October 5, 1930 (lecture delivered September 14, 1930)  
"Was Jesus Man-God, Great Sage, or Myth?"
- No. 12. November 24, 1930 (lecture delivered September 28, 1930) "Ghosts"
- No. 13. December 1, 1930 (lecture delivered October 5, 1930)  
"The Mystical Story of Jesus"
- No. 14 December 8, 1930 (lecture delivered October 12, 1930)  
"The Secret Anatomy of the World"

- No. 15.** December 15, 1930 (lecture delivered October 19, 1930)  
"The Secret Physiology of the World"
- No. 16.** December 22, 1930 (lecture delivered October 26, 1930)  
"The Azure Seats of the Gods"
- No. 17.** December 29, 1930 (lecture delivered November 2, 1930) "Occultism, Mysticism, and Secret Societies"
- No. 18.** January 5, 1931 (lecture delivered November 9, 1930)  
"Elementals and Nature Spirits"
- No. 19.** January 12, 1931 (lecture delivered November 23, 1930)"Mysteries of Sleep and Death"
- No. 20.** January 19, 1931 (lecture delivered November 30, 1930)  
"More About Sleep and Death"
- No. 21.** January 26, 1931 (lecture delivered December 7, 1930)  
"Sprites, Fairies, Goblins"
- No. 22.** February 2, 1931 (lecture delivered December 14, 1930)  
"Something About Myself"
- No. 23.** February 9, 1931 (lecture delivered December 21, 1930)  
"Something More About Myself"
- No. 24.** February 16, 1931 (lecture delivered January 4, 1931)  
"The Theosophical Mahatmas"
- No. 25.** February 23, 1931 (lecture delivered January 11, 1931)  
"Some Secret Causes of Rebirth"
- No. 26.** March 2, 1931 (lecture delivered January 18, 1931) "Is Our Universe Mad?"
- No. 27.** March 9, 1931 (lecture delivered January 25, 1931)  
"Glimpses into the Unseen Universe"
- No. 28.** March 16, 1931 (lecture delivered February 1, 1931)  
"Glimpses into the Unseen Universe — II"
- No. 29.** March 23, 1931 (lecture delivered February 8, 1931)  
"Occultism: Genuine and Imaginary"
- No. 30.** March 30, 1931 (lecture delivered February 15, 1931)  
"Invisible Worlds and Their Inhabitants"
- No. 31.** April 6, 1931 (lecture delivered March 22, 1931) "The Secret Doctrine of the Ages"
- No. 32.** April 23, 1931 (lecture delivered April 5, 1931) "The

Esoteric Easter"

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[Theosophical Society Homepage](#)

**Vol. 1 No. 1 (October 1, 1929)**

**I — SOME QUESTIONS THAT CHILDREN ASK**

Some questions that children ask — and grownups too. You will also hear some delightfully touching and humorous remarks that children make — and that grownups make too, only in different form. I don't think that there is much difference between a child's mind and an adult mind as regards the fundamentals. The questions that I have heard children ask, and the questions that I have heard grownups ask, seem to me to tend precisely to the same point, and to require precisely the same answers. It is merely the formulations that differ, both in question and in answer, and in observation or remark.

In our Occidental countries where the questions concerning "God," — "Who is God?" and "What is God?" — are considered of such enormous importance, a child may say: "Papa, who is God?" Did you never hear a grownup ask that very same question? Or again when a child says: "Mama, what is nature?" did you never hear a grownup ask the same question? Do not grownups ponder over the same thoughts?

As regards nature, indeed, this is the very truth of things that the scientists are trying to find out — what *is* nature? Where then is the difference in fundamentals between the child mind and the so-called adult mind? The child's mind is pragmatical: it is direct, it is very matter of fact. It wants a clear-cut answer, and it is not satisfied with evasions, as grownups so often are. But the adult mind is sophisticated; it thinks it knows a great deal, and therefore unconsciously to itself, it is satisfied with evasions that are an apology for an answer. Provided that the answer be logical in form, the adult mind rests quite content with an answer which

may contain no substance of reality.

But the child is not content with evasions. There is a hunger for knowledge and for truth in its unspoiled soul. It wants to know something real and true about things. The adult flatters himself that he also wants to know something really true, but nevertheless he is only too often satisfied with an answer if it comes from an authority: religious or philosophical or scientific or other.

You may ask: Is not the child also satisfied with the answers it gets? Yes, if the answer is clever enough to hide the fatal flaws in logic and fact, but it requires an extremely able adult mind to deceive a child who has begun to think; and please understand I am not referring to infants.

So when we speak of "Some Questions that Children Ask," we might just as readily say "Some Questions that Adults Ask." We adults are children simply grown up, and children are little men and women who are as yet unsophisticated. That is the only difference that I have been able to see; and it is as difficult to answer a child's questions as it is to answer a grownup's questions, and indeed I think it is more difficult.

When a boy comes to his father and says: "Papa, what is the answer to this?" the father often does not know, and so he replies in substance: "Go about your business; study your lessons; go to your books." Now, I think that this is positively cruel. If the father does not know the proper answers to give, I do not mean that he should say "I don't know," because there is a psychological problem involved here, and there is a certain respect that the parent rightly feels the child should have for him; but he certainly could give his child some kind of an answer, if he is himself sufficiently a man to bring a child into the world and to take the responsibility of its upbringing; and the same remark applies to

women.

Let me read to you something that happened in this our Temple of Peace on last Sunday afternoon — and this comes from one of our ladies in attendance here, whose permission I have to read it to you:

"Hearing you announce the subject for the next Temple Service address, I am quite sure this incident which occurred in our Temple of Peace will be of interest.

"A man and woman with two small children sat directly behind me. Many questions were asked during the organ recital. The little girl gained my strict attention by asking, 'Mama! What is the music saying?'

"This was repeated several times before the answer came. If you will reproduce the atmosphere of the Temple, you will not think I exaggerate my feeling that something had been killed, when the reply was, 'It isn't saying anything, it's just pretty music.' I could have wept."

Ask a musician what the music is saying to him. The musician will understand the question. The music is talking to him, if he is a musician indeed. It speaks a language that he, at least to a certain extent, can understand and interpret; it does say something to him, it carries a message to him, therefore it speaks, and this child's inquiring mind, searching for knowledge, appealing to the person in whom it had utmost confidence, acted from an instinctive sense of truth, and its mind was rebuffed and by so much was stultified.

Such things are positively cruel, and show an utter misunderstanding of child psychology.

I may say here that Katherine Tingley's whole system of



education — the Raja-Yoga system of education — consists in bringing out the child's inner faculties: in teaching it not only how to think, but how to feel, in teaching it how to become that which it is *within itself*. Therefore it consists not so much in putting a vast array of facts into a child's weary mind, and thereby proportionately crippling the child's native powers and genius, but in bringing out that which the child is living to express and trying to express. In other words, the Raja-Yoga system is based on the recognition of the fact that there is a great spiritual power lying latent in and endeavoring to express itself through little human beings whom we call children.

See how different this Raja-Yoga System, this theosophical system of education, is from the old ideas: so different as contrasted with the old idea that education for a child consists in stuffing its mind full with more or less uncertainly truthful facts, until the mind, until the brain, until the heart, can hold no more — of what? Truths? Immortal gods! no, only too often of fairy tales of the wrong kind: of things which seem to be true in one era, and in less than ten or twenty years afterwards are proved to be false, or false in part.

What kind of education is that? And that is the "education" that our schools are full of, not only our American schools, but schools the world over. Fairy tales! And the phrase in this connection is a kind one, for there are two kinds of fairy tales, false and true, the latter being the tales and stories of the ancients which embody great truths of nature put in the form of story and legend. For these wonderful old legends and fairy tales of the ancients which have come down to us in different forms in different lands, in the form of story, embody natural facts, facts of nature under the guise, under the clothing, of fairy tales.

Yes, if you have ever studied the books of fairy tales existent in

the different countries — such as they which have been collected by Andrew Lang in Britain, such as they which have been, not so much collected, but have been imagined, by Hans Christian Andersen in Denmark — there you will see, if you have the eyes to see — and you will have the eyes if you study theosophy — the great natural truths behind the veil of the tale.

Take the exquisitely beautiful fairy tale of the *Sleeping Princess in the Enchanted Wood*, sometimes called *Prince Charming and the Sleeping Princess*, or again sometimes called *The Sleeping Beauty*. You remember the incidents of this beautiful tale. The beauty lay sleeping in the castle in an enchanted wood, and all around her everything was sleeping. The cook slept at his spit in the kitchen, and the fire slept in the grate, and the wardens and the guards slept standing. The king slept on his throne, and the queen and her ladies in their boudoir slept with brush or pencil in hand. Everything was asleep, sleeping. Then comes riding along the way Prince Charming. He sees the sleeping wood and the palace in its midst, and he enters the palace and finds everyone asleep, humans, animals, trees, everything. He bends down and kisses the Princess on the brow, and immediately everything awakens. The cook resumes his labor of turning his spit; the wardens and the watchmen awaken and begin anew their interrupted conversation; the king moves on his throne; and the queen and the ladies in their boudoir resume their various tasks.

All this lovely little tale is an expression in forms of faerie of what theosophists call the opening of the manvantara, that is to say, the awakening of a new period of cosmic evolution. Prince Charming is the spirit who bends down and kisses the Princess on the brow, and this is the touch of the spirit awakening new life in all things — the awakening of intuitive vision — and things then spring into life because manifestation begins anew for another cycle of cosmic expression.

A legend which contains in such beautiful form some of the profoundest mysteries of the old religions and philosophies of past times, and indeed of modern science, is worthy of study, for our ultra-modern scientists are beginning to see, they are beginning to have vision, they are beginning to realize that there are majestic truths in nature which can be interpreted no longer merely by mathematical formulae, but by an intuitive mind and sympathetic heart.

Such a legend, I say, containing such wonderful truths of nature, is deathless in its elements, and one can understand why such a legend has migrated from land to land through the ages, and has been a great favorite not merely among solid thinking men, statesmen and philosophers and others, but has been told by the intuitive understanding of mothers in their nurseries to their little children. Perhaps they do not understand what it all means, but the appeal is there, the instinctive recognition of a great truth, both physical and moral, which underlies the outer veil. And as regards our scientists, that is, if they keep on as they have begun, they will begin to understand the great meanings of some of these legends of the ancient times.

In my next lecture on the Sunday following today, I hope to take up, at least briefly, how such legends come into being, and how they pass from land to land. I love to read the old fairy tales, the old mythologies, the old folk-lore: because the fairy tales and legends and stories and folk lore are but parts of the mythologies of the ancient peoples. Some are more enwrap than others are in the veils of tale and marvel, some are more closely shrouded under the veils of story, but all of these ancient fables and legends and myths, contain profound truths of nature as their essential meanings.

Education is a different thing from instruction. In our Raja-Yoga

system of education, founded and directed by Katherine Tingley, we have not merely *instruction*, but *education* likewise. Do you know the difference? These two words are popularly supposed to be synonymous, but they are not. "Education" means bringing out the native faculties within, evolving the native faculties of the child, or indeed of the adult, so that the adult or child will learn to be independent, spiritually and intellectually, to think for himself or herself, and feel for himself and herself, and to walk through life unafraid, a true man or a true woman; and this in no sense is license or an unbridled following of moral lawlessness. Instruction means the teaching of things that the current customs and manners of the time require.

Katherine Tingley said many years ago, shortly after she first founded her Raja-Yoga School here at Point Loma with five pupils:

"The truest and fairest thing of all as regards education is to attract the mind of the pupil to the fact that the immortal self is ever seeking to bring the whole being into a state of perfection. The real secret of the Raja-Yoga system is rather to evolve the child's character than to overtax the child's mind; it is to bring *out* rather than to bring *to* the faculties of the child. The grander part is from within."

Everybody today knows how true this declaration is. It was an educational novelty when Katherine Tingley first enunciated this more than a quarter of a century ago, a true educational novelty. Some educationalists possibly had dreams of such a system to come in the distant future, but the idea then of education was simply the cramming into the child's mind of all that could be crammed into it, thus crippling the native genius of the child, distorting often the pathway that the poor remnants of its faculties, in other words of its genius, might follow.

People talk about the old fairy tales as if they were mere stories of pastime, the fanciful wanderings of the imagination expressed in words. They forget that there are and have been many fairy tales which at one time were supposed to be knowledge, scientific knowledge and whatnot, but which later were proved to be mere ideas based upon theories of the bigwigs. Just think how things and times have changed! Just think how our minds were crammed with such false fairy tales about nature, when we were children, and which we had to unlearn in adult life; and how, as a matter of fact, did we succeed in learning the little that we do know? By going within ourselves in thought and reflection, also through mental pain and suffering and distress.

We might have been saved so much of this had we been properly taught, both educationally and instructionally, according to the truths of Katherine Tingley's Raja-Yoga in our youth — not however that pain and suffering are not good friends to us in their own way. They are indeed pathways in recognition of truth, by which we may learn; but there is a better way — not only an easier way, but a better way — and that is a sympathetic understanding of the developing mind of the child by its parents first, and second by its teachers who are its second parents; and a very, very grave responsibility is theirs. I think that our Raja-Yoga teachers realize it to the full. Every child we take into the school I know is regarded by our teachers as a soul entrusted to their care, for which they are individually and collectively responsible.

Yes, we used to be taught scientific fairy tales which were false, and religious fairy tales which were false. We know of course some of the old religious teachings of our childhood regarding heaven, hell, God, the Devil. It reminds me of a little boy who said to his mother once: "Mama, I want to go to sleep; please tell God to go away."

Another little boy had been brought up in an orthodox home, having loving parents of course, but he had been told of God as a revengeful God, a God of mighty power who was the punisher of wickedness and of sin, and who, although a God of love, for that very reason used to punish little boys for being naughty; and he was told of the sins that he should not do, and naturally his childish brain and instincts were immediately tempted to do these things, in order to see what would happen.

He had a wonderful mental picture of God, this poor boy; and one day he saw a figure in a picture book — you know what the old picture of the devil was, the medieval picture, a thing in human shape with a tail, with horns on the head, with cloven hoofs, with a satanic leer on the face, and holding the trident fork. This unfortunate boy looked at the picture in amazement and fear, and reflected a bit, and finally he said: "Papa, this must be God."

This is an example of fairy tales of the worst kind, and of their influence on the plastic mind of little children. And there were many other fairy tales that little children, you and I, when we were between infancy and youth, were told. I am sure that all of you here had parents as great and noble as mine were, but I am speaking of the general run of individuals of my own age at that time.

Let me read to you something that was given to little children to read some forty years ago by one of the great religious organizations. This extract is taken from a book, and this extract describes the regions of Hell. I make only an extract from this intolerable work, for I have no desire to inflict any more pain on you:

"The Fourth Dungeon is the boiling kettle. Listen: There is a sound like that of a kettle boiling. The blood is boiling in the scalded brains of that boy; the brain is boiling and

bubbling in his head; the marrow is boiling in his bones.

"The Fifth Dungeon is the red-hot oven in which is a little child. Hear how it screams to come out; see how it turns and twists itself about in the fire; it beats its head against the roof of the oven; it stamps its feet upon the floor of the oven."

Isn't it horrible to put such thoughts into a little child's mind? Is there any wonder that nurtured in such an atmosphere of terror and horror we have as resultants criminals, weaklings, crooks, shifty-minded and shifty-eyed adults: men and women who were once little children brought up in the atmosphere of fear, of horror?

Contrast all this with the stories which are told to the little children, and have always been told to little children: the stories of beauty; simple tales conveying an ancient truth about nature and the human being; about the bright gods, the divinities; about the fairies who make the flowers grow; tales about the raindrop and of the sunbeam, true scientific tales, this time. The imagination of the child is fired and stirred; it is taught to think for itself; and the result is that it wants to know more, and as it grows it will know more, for the developing faculties thus encouraged within it to grow, will demand to know more. Thus you have, I say, every possibility of genius shining forth in manhood or womanhood.

The seeds of greatness lie in the lessons of beauty and of harmony and of hope and of law instilled into the breast of little children. Therein lies one of the beauties and secrets of the wonderful theosophical Raja-Yoga system of education of Katherine Tingley.

I do not see much difference between children and grownups, except that the grownups are worse, far worse, as a rule. We

adults have learned to make abstractions in our mind; we have learned to be sophisticated, indeed often to be arrogantly egoistical. We have learned to think that we know a great deal, and have a great deal of trouble in unlearning much of what we have been taught to know; and thus we have lost the child state in which knowledge comes naturally — that child state of which Jesus the Christian founder is alleged to speak in the Christian New Testament: "Except ye become as one of these little ones, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

The idea here is not that we should become infantile, not that we should lose knowledge, not that we should lose what we have gained in the way of self-control; but to come back to the child state of clear vision, with a mind free of prejudices, possessing a lack of hates, and of false loves, possessing a lack of falsities in both heart and mind. For these and other reasons the ancients called their initiates, the great seers and sages, Little Ones. Children see; and it is their inquiring mind seeking more knowledge, that drives them to ask questions which adults often find very embarrassing.

The childlike question "Who is God?" is an instance in point. Can you answer that question? Now, in a Buddhist country no child would ask such a question very probably, because in those countries they don't believe in a Great Big Man up there in the sky; but our unfortunate children in the Occident have been told about this "Great Big Man up there," and they want to be told something more about him. They are not satisfied. In fact, the childish mind in its secret recesses does not know whether it is going to accept it or not.

But every child heart understands when you talk to it about the fairies who make the flowers grow; and so do adults; and it is an infinitely more scientific thing to tell a child, than are the old-



fashioned ideas, scientific or religious as the case may be, about something which never existed and was merely imaginary, and has passed away, and is not indeed forgotten, but is not spoken of. Here I refer to the entirely changed scientific conceptions and views of nature and of life. The scientists will tell you the mysteries of the atom and of the electrons in the atom. Their own minds are fired, their imagination is fired, their whole being is stirred, to get still greater truths. And what do they tell us lies underneath the veil of the material world we see? Professor Eddington of Cambridge, England, is one of these great modern scientists who are beginning to "see," and he says that what lies behind the material veils is "mind-stuff," to wit: all these electrons and atoms are but manifestations of what he calls mind-stuff.

Fairies! You don't like the term "fairies," perhaps. Why? Simply because you associate it with childhood. You think that childhood is ignorant and stupid. Is it? Answer the children's questions then, if you know so much. No indeed, children are neither stupid nor ignorant.

Let me read to you some of the questions that children ask, and also I am going to read to you some of the delightful sayings of little children that have been gathered together here in our own Raja-Yoga School by our teachers, some of whom have been kind enough to supply me with quite a long list of these questions and quaint sayings of the little ones.

Little Paddy (one of the boys): "Why don't we remember our past lives?" Teacher: "Why do you think we don't?" Paddy (after some thought): "Oh! It must be because we would not know which mother to love."

Now, is not that a natural answer, as well as a thoughtful one? Can you offhand give a more telling and pointed answer? Here we are not dealing with questions of philosophy and religion as

much as with the inquiring mind of adult or child, as the case may be. You probably could give a much better answer if you had studied theosophy, the ancient wisdom, but if you have never heard much about it, your natural instinct of love and devotion to your present mother would perhaps lead you to say: "Well, I think it must be nature's law, because if I had to love two mothers, or three or more, I might feel that it was criminal to leave any one of them out of my thought." You see that this is a child's devotion, but not a man's. That probably is true. Nevertheless it shows thought, it shows instinctive heart-wisdom, it shows sense — more sense sometimes than we grownups are accustomed to show in the answers that we give, which are often not merely stupid but ludicrous.

Little Isabel: "Are the animals born again as we are?"

Answer: "Yes, but perhaps in a little different way." But the answer is yes, just the same. That question is easy to answer. But when little Isabel was told that her same exact body did not come back again, but only "something inside," little Isabel remarked: "But I didn't know I had anything inside me except my food that I eat."

Now, there is a lot of wisdom in that answer — more than appears on the surface. I venture to say that it is more wise, more based on true intuition and instinct, than are those bulky tomes in the libraries of the medieval schoolmen, who had an idea of a something called a soul, which they thought was inside this physical body, and that when the body died, the soul went up to heaven, or in the other direction, and that one day the body was going in some miraculous way to shoot up after it, or to plunge downwards after it.

Personally I think little Isabel is right. That "something inside" is indeed not in the body. It is, so to say, only metaphorically inside.

What I mean may be suggested to you when I ask: How about the electricity in the conducting wire, and the wire itself? Is the electricity "inside" the wire? How about the wireless? What is the wire? Mostly holes. You know what physical matter is in the view of modern science which is coming to be practically identical with what it is in theosophy. Haven't I talked about it again and again in our Temple of Peace? Physical matter is mostly so-called empty space. Why, if you had the electronic eye, you would not see any wire at all, for the wire is just a mass of electrons, points of mind-stuff.

Indeed, that "something inside" of which little Isabel speaks, is rather the psychomagnetic, quasi-material atmosphere surrounding the individual, the auric cloud as it were surrounding the body, wherein inheres the spiritual electricity of individuality, popularly miscalled the soul.

Now, listen to this very quaint remark, one of the most beautiful things that I have ever heard. Our little children here have an idea that God and Mother Nature are the same person, one of the teachers informs me. In fact, said this teacher, when Mr. Mitchell, Sr., used to go about in his flower garden between five and five-thirty o'clock in the evening, those little children all believed at that time that he was God and Mother Nature, and that he made the flowers grow. That is a beautiful thought.

Do you adults know where the flowers come from? A child's question, you may say, but I tell you in all seriousness, it is an adult's question, and will any adult in this Temple undertake to answer it for me? Ask the scientist if he can tell you.

I can tell you, because I try to understand theosophy. Every theosophist in this Temple can tell you. Partly they come from human beings. Do you know that our soil, the ground, is the physical stuff of beings that have lived and have gone? And we

ourselves, we human beings, physical body and all, are each one of us a vast multitude of little lives, growing, learning things on their upward way, just as we humans are: hence they are fairies, if you like to give them that name, or if your mind is scientifically disposed, you may call them atoms, which are points or centers of mind-stuff. Otherwise they would not be individualized as atoms and electrons.

Think about it for a moment. Think about it for yourselves, and do not take merely someone else's opinion. We are made up of these little fairies or points of mind-stuff, and we help to form the flowers, as they help to form us, for we as well as they, are each one of us shedding, so to say, these points of mind-stuff constantly. And as these points of mind-stuff exist in very many different degrees or grades of evolution, they seek both individually and collectively their proper spheres when they leave us, either as composing the bodies of minerals or the vegetable world, or the animal world, or of other humans. Everything in nature helps everything else, and we are bound together by unbreakable bonds.

Now, this is high philosophy, as well as high religion, and it is true. It is, in the sense of the word that I have already set forth, a most wonderful fairy tale, because it is true, and every little child will understand the elements of it immediately, because its mind is unsophisticated. We think we know better from stuff that we have put into our minds, and therefore we reject truth; but the child's mind is not crammed full of false teachings — usually, that is. You mothers and fathers, if your child asks you these questions, should know how to answer them simply, and the thought that I have just set forth is at least a suggestion that your child will understand.

A child eight years old: "Where do we go when we dream? That is

the most interesting of all to me." Could you answer that? Do you realize that our greatest psychologists are pondering over that same question, of course formed in their own fashion, and answering it with Graeco-Latin sesquipedalian words, words perhaps two inches long in print; and all this is merely sophisticated methods of trying to achieve the same thing that the child says in six or eight words or less; but there is the same question, the same thought.

Answer your child, should he ask you this question, that we go in dream where the mind goes, because the mind is the personal you and I; and tell your child at the same time that for this reason it is very necessary to keep the mind clean and pure and in a state of love for all things, for love is a great and mighty force of protection — true, impersonal love, I mean. It surrounds the mind with an aura that evil forces or influences never can penetrate, and its influences on others are very beautiful and elevating.

Never mind, in speaking to your children, about high philosophy, and do not attempt to fill in all the details, but wait until your child is older. Give the child an answer that it can understand, and if there is something wrong in your answer, let it find it out for itself. Oh the joy of discovery that the child-mind feels! This method will help the child, because it will make it think by firing and awakening its own imagination, and this is of enormous benefit to it in after-life.

Never fear to answer a question. Treat your child as you would a companion and a friend, instead of a nuisance in the sense of an animate interrogation point. This does not mean that you should be foolish. It simply means that you should look upon your child as a young and unsophisticated friend trying to learn. Treat it aright.

Little Sidney, six years old, has long and eagerly awaited the time

when he could go to school. His experience was a bitter disappointment. His teacher tells me that once he said: "We just played games like Chick-a-my-Chick-a-my-Craney-Crow, and did other things I already knew, when I thought I was going to learn what became of the yesterdays, and how the stars are made to stick in the sky and not fall out."

Will you please tell me what has become of past time? This is a question that our greatest minds today are attempting to answer in the ponderous language of modern philosophy. The great Einstein has partly answered it in his so-called space-time continuum. If you want philosophy, I call talk that to you also. But the little child asked the same question in childlike words. Can you answer it? Tell your child: "Dear, there is really no past. It is all *Now*. Do you remember yesterday? Do you remember today?" It will be satisfied for the time being. You have taught it to think, to realize its own consciousness. Its own mind will fill in the details; and you mothers and fathers, it is your responsibility so to help it. Never mind trying to train it according to instructional fads of the day: help it to grow so that its own native genius will come to the fore, and instead of a criminal, instead of a failure, instead in your family you may have one to bless your declining years, a grownup son or daughter whom you will be proud of.

"How do the stars stick in the sky?" Can you explain gravitation — what it is? Can you tell why it is? That is the very question that our ultra-modern scientists are trying to solve today. Where is the difference in fundamentals between the question of the adult and the question of the child? It is the same thought, only formulated differently. No wonder that the questions that children ask puzzle their parents sometimes, because we adults ourselves find great difficulty in answering, and the answers are not yet complete by any means.

Here are some more questions: "Who is Mother Nature?" That is just what our scientists are trying to find out. The child wants to know. If that question were asked of me, and I were teaching a little child, I think I would say: "The universal life, dear, is in you and in me." And the child would probably ask more questions of me and I would answer them as best I could: try to give it a thought, something for its mind to think over, to dwell upon, something noble helping it to bring out its own powers of reflection and responsibility, thus helping to lead its own faculties out into action.

You remember what Socrates said of himself, in his own view, as being the proudest thing that he could say of himself. He said: I am the midwife of young men. I teach them how to bring forth their own selves, to bring to birth the real man inside.

Another question that a child asked: "Where do I come from?" You may answer, for instance, if you like, "From the last life." The child will be satisfied for the time being at least. It may immediately ask another question. Be prepared for it, then, and answer it in the same way.

A third question: "Where do we go when we die?" Suggested answer: "To another life. You are here now, dear; you came here from the last life; and when you leave this life you are going to another life."

Listen to the following question: "Why must we obey?" Now, here is a question that is indeed difficult to answer. However, we might make an effort successfully to do so, and we might say: "We obey because it is beautiful, and because it makes one strong and healthy and good and wise." Such an answer teaches obedience to constituted authority. It also teaches the child to have respect for its parents, because the child feels that when Papa answers him in that way, Papa himself is obedient to constituted authority.

Obedience therefore in the child's mind becomes something both noble and manly, or womanly, as the case may be. You have put a seed in the child's mind that will be helpful to it throughout its life, and doubtless that seed of thought will grow into something great.

"Who pushes the toadstool up through the solid concrete?" How are you going to answer that question? Do you realize that that question has been debated in the Academies? I verily believe that nobody ignorant of theosophy can answer it, but that a theosophist can. He can give you a good answer, whether you accept that answer or not. The answer is logical, philosophical, scientific, religious, and therefore satisfactory.

Putting the answer in as simple language as I can, I think I should answer it as follows: "The toadstool pushes itself up, because it is full of toadstool soul-life. In the same way your body will grow up to be a big man, because your body is full of little fairy-lives, which, all together, make your life too." In this answer you give the child something to think about. Your answer may not be satisfactory to yourself, but your purpose in answering your child is not to do so in a manner pleasing to yourself. But with such an answer your child has something to think over, to reflect upon, and depend upon it, if there are any flaws in your answer, your child will find them out, and will come to you again. And indeed, is not that just what you want it to do?

Some of our children the other day found a dead mouse, one of our teachers tells me, and after burying it with great ceremony, they later saw another mouse running across the road. "Oh!" said one of them: "Is that the other mouse come alive already?" They thought that it had reincarnated so quickly. We may truly call this one of the delightful things that children say.

We have some wonderful children here. It is a sheer delight to



listen to them. They do ask questions sometimes that literally puzzle one, and it is impossible to blame anyone for being at a loss how to answer these difficult questions, for the simple reason that as I have said before, most of them are questions that adults themselves are puzzled about.

A little four-year old boy remarked to his teacher one day, quite of his own accord: "Miss ---, you know there are many things we would like to do, but really they are not right; for instance, we would like to hang on the doors." See the delightful and refreshing frankness in this remark! It is a small thing, but after all how significant in their meanings, as to a child's character, such small things are.

"Will this pansy come alive again if I put it in water?" — holding up a dead pansy to his teacher. I don't know what the teacher answered, but I think that I would have answered: "No, it is only the pansy's outside clothes. The little fairy has gone to another life. Then when it comes back here to earth it will be at new pansy-fairy." I have a notion that this answer will cause that child to think a bit. Also its inquiring mind has not been rebuffed; it has not been snubbed; nothing in its mind has been killed. On the contrary, it has been helped.

"Why did the ancient Aztecs bury their implements with the dead? They would not come back again in the same body," remarked a child of six years. How would you answer that? Indeed it is a question that archeologists have been puzzling over for many years, and they are still puzzling over it. The archeologists long ago came to the conclusion that the peoples who buried such implements believed in some kind of "spirit" or "soul," and that they also believed this spirit or soul will need its implements in the next life, and that it was for that reason that the ancients buried the dead man's implements with the corpse.

That answer never seemed to me to be a very logical or satisfactory one. Do you know, I think that I should have answered that child as follows: "Because the implements are no more needed. New implements will be there ready and waiting in the next life."

"Caterpillars turn into butterflies, but what turns into caterpillars?" I would say: "Butterfly eggs." I think that this answer would satisfy the child, at least for the time being.

One of the little tots was having her piano lesson one day, and had just played a little piece called Humpty Dumpty, singing the words while playing. The teacher told her to put some expression into her playing, because at the end it was rather sad when Humpty Dumpty could not be put together again. She calmly replied: "Well, I don't care. It was his karma for sitting on the wall!"

Someone had been reading *Jack and the Beanstalk* to the children. After the story, one of the tiniest tots said: "Now, if Jack had not climbed the beanstalk, the giant would never have gotten his karma."

Several of the children have asked at various times: "Don't we go to Fairyland when we die?" I think that I would have answered this question as follows: "Yes, we shall go to a most beautiful and wonderful fairyland for humans."

One small boy who thoroughly understands that he has two selves, was asked by his teacher: "Why, when you know how to do right, do you keep on doing what is not right?" The child answered: "Well, the other boy keeps hopping up." Well, let me ask you a question: Does any one of you think that he or she has not two selves, or perhaps a dozen of them? Have you never heard of multiple personality? Psychologists and our modern

moonshees and bigwigs have long puzzled over the phenomenon of multiple personality, which embodies in multiple form what Katherine Tingley briefly calls the "duality of human nature." Children know this fact instinctively. We adults, sophisticated and so wise in our own view, have to learn this truth again, and we think that we learn it by going to the academies and by committing to memory long explanations and rigmaroles which the moonshees teach to us.

"Is the world ever coming to an end?" Is not that a scientific question also? Has it ever been answered? No. But the theosophist would answer that in perfect confidence: "Yes, because all things that are manifested have a beginning and an end. So will our world have an end and then it will grow into a better world." Any child can understand that idea because it is entirely within the boundaries of its own experience, and furthermore the answer is wholly scientific.

The following conversation was overheard between some of the little boys: "Well, if the world does come to an end, whether by fire or flood, what will become of us?" — "Why, don't you know we are all going to be saved? They will have to invent some way of saving us." (A third child): "Why of course not, we will save ourselves by being *good*."

I shall now read to you some extracts from the diary of one of our young women teachers here.

"Herein are written a few of the delicious things said by the children, those beings who, being primarily mentally ignorant of mere theories, are therefore sometimes extremely wise. They are always profoundly unorthodox, and thus it is that they so often shock and fundamentally disturb those older 'children' who have forgotten the 'clouds of glory' which shine about the heads and in the hearts of little ones."

The teacher had been reading to the little boys about King Arthur and his knights. Several days later she came into the room where the boys were playing. Jimmy was just saying to Tommy:

"Anyway, Tommy, you have to have an education before you can see the Holy Grail." "Why, the idea," said Tommy, "education has nothing to do with it! You have to be good inside, first!"

Now that is the message of Tennyson's poem. The instinctive child-vision saw it.

The boys were playing outside: "Let's play fighting. I'll be George Washington," said Jimmy. "And I'll be Jesus," said Tommy. (Tommy had just come to the school.) The teacher quickly called the boys and told them not to play fighting. Then she explained to Tommy that Jesus did not fight and that he taught that all men are brothers. Tommy thought a moment, and then said: "I can be Jesus in his next life; he has different ideas now."

Isn't that delicious!

Tommy is a new little boy, who has a special aversion to baths. One day he said to his teacher: "Do you have a bath every day?" "Yes, Tommy, every day." "Does Betty?" (his little cousin). "Yes, Tommy." "So do I," said Jimmy. Just then Paul came up. "Shall I have to have a bath every day when I am a big man?" said Tommy. "Not if you are a business man," said Paul. About half an hour later, Tommy came to the teacher and said: "Do you know what I'm going to be when I grow up? I'm going to be a business man!" This with an expression of both relief and satisfaction on his face.

The ocean was as blue as it is possible for blue to be. "Mother, did you see the ocean yesterday? It was *thick* with blue!" said Tommy.

Jimmy is a great giggler. I was telling the boys one day about the

planets — that they had no light of their own — that one might say they were sleeping. Jimmy was giggling over something and therefore was not listening. But Tommy found the subject interesting, and was provoked at Jimmy's disturbance. "Do be quiet, Jimmy," he said, "your noise will go way up into the sky, and wake the planets up!" This in dead earnest.

There was a bird's nest one day high up in a vine. The boys had seen the mother-bird fly back and forth from that spot, and of course they all wanted to see within. So the teacher lifted up each boy in turn. Most of them uttered the usual exclamations of delight and wonder, but Fred just looked. Suddenly he said: "I see lots of gray feathers and yellow mouths, but *where are the birds*"

The teacher had been having a most fascinating talk with the boys about Mother Nature, in the course of which Fred asked: "Did Mother Nature make me?" "Yes," the teacher said, wondering what would come next. "I thought God made us," said Jimmy. It was getting difficult, but Tommy saved the situation. "Aw, stupid," he said, "they worked it out together."

Now, I believe they do. That is a perfect truth, if you look upon God as what the barbarians even today call the Great Spirit, and if we look upon Mother Nature as the lower part of natural being. Verily and indeed they worked it out together.

The plumber was mending a leak in a pipe, and the teacher let the little boys watch him. "Well," said the plumber, "I must be getting old, I can't find it." "If you're getting old you'll be going to Fairyland soon," said one of the boys. "Oh, no," said the plumber, "I'm not good enough for that." "Yes, you will," persisted the boy, "you'll go to Fairyland and after a while you'll come back. Perhaps," he said, with great concern, "perhaps you'll be a *girl!*" "Wouldn't that be nice," said the plumber. "No," said the boy, "because you couldn't fix any more pipes and things."

Now listen to this, for a child: The boys had heard from somewhere that God was in everything. They were discussing the question, and were pointing out how the Great Life-Spirit manifested in various creatures and things. Finally they were just about at the end of their enumeration when Fred said: "God is in this table; if he weren't, it wouldn't hold together."

Professor Eddington in childhood.

One day the boys found a dead bird. They decided that it ought to have a grand burial. So they took it into the garden and buried it under a rosebush. The children sang a little song as they covered over the earth. After they left the spot most of the children soon forgot about it, but one of them was sniffing away by himself. When asked what the trouble was, he said: "Now the birdie will have to be dead all its life."

Freddie was relating, after he had come from home, about how his Daddy's car (a Ford) had been hurt because some other car had bumped into it. "Never mind," said Tommy (whose daddy is a naval officer and owns a fine car), "never mind, Freddie. If it's hurt very badly he can get another car, and I hope he'll know enough to get a prettier kind. You know if your car is pretty enough people won't want to bump into it!" "No," said Freddie, "we want a Ford always. A Ford can always scoot around corners, but a big car is so long: while the head of it is safely round the corner, the back is getting hit."

Tommy and Jimmy were coming back from a concert with their teacher one night. As they passed a certain palm tree, they began to tread very cautiously. "Miss X," they said, "do you know what's under that tree? A big rattlesnake. We saw it this afternoon." "How do you know it was a rattler?" said the teacher. "Because," in an impressive whisper, "it had *very long ears!*" (A rabbit!)

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Well, friends, I am half tempted to have another three-quarters of an hour of delightful talk with you on next Sunday afternoon about the children, but I have not yet decided. Meanwhile, there is one thing which we theosophists try to do, inspired as we are by Katherine Tingley's wonderful system of Raja-Yoga training. We treat our children, not as grownups, but as evolving beings who think and who are learning, and indeed we learn as much from these little ones, I honestly believe, if not more, than they learn from us. Some of the most delightful hours that I have spent here at our Headquarters have been in listening to the little children when they talk.

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[Vol 1, No 2](#)  
[Contents](#)

**Vol. 1 No. 2 (October 8, 1929)**

**II — THE WISDOM OF LITTLE CHILDREN**

I wonder how much greater it is than the wisdom of grownups — grownups with their sophisticated minds, making them think that they know everything in heaven above and in the earth beneath, and in the waters under the earth, as the saying goes. Little children with their quick instinctive minds, quick instinctive vision, unspoiled, unsophisticated, seem to know things instantly, as it were intuitively, and their questions, different in this from grownups, arise not so much out of their ignorance, but out of their desire for more knowledge, for a truer insight and oversight.

Why are the questions of little children so difficult for parents and grownups to answer? Just think over it. If we are so wise and know so much, and are so sophisticated, and think ourselves such natural and proper upbringers of the little ones, why cannot we answer their questions? Because we do not know, most of the time, and even as to those questions that we think we can answer, the so-called scientific answers, why, it is the common knowledge of the streets today that the scientists themselves have overthrown the knowledge of their forefathers in very, very large degree, and are themselves puzzled by the questions which nature, the great Mother-child puts to man's inquiring mind, or rather which man himself sees in the operations of the Mother-child.

So, what are we going to do? The little ones ask us questions, and confessedly we cannot answer them always; and the answers that we can give are also unsatisfactory to ourselves. We know that most frequently they are not good answers, and are answers that would not pass current with other adults; and yet the children



have to be answered. The children have to be taught. We must give them some answer that will be satisfactory, some answers to all their questions, otherwise we give them nothing; and our children will grow up in that so-called "natural" way, lauded by shallow philosophers and unthinking visionaries, which means that the children finally succeed in growing up into first-class snobs, immortal gods! knowing nothing themselves that is of value, having no training, either moral or intellectual, and seeing no examples in their elders to follow, thus growing sophisticated and thoroughly spoiled — much as we have been, although in less degree, sophisticated and spoiled, so that we have to unlearn every day almost what we had been taught to consider as things of knowledge.

I suppose that this idea of allowing a child to grow "naturally," is, in a sense, a reaction from the rigid and false instructional and educational systems of our Occidental forebears; but even so, its results are worse, if anything, than are the results that happened to us. It is better to educate, even though imperfectly — it is better to instruct, even though imperfectly — than to allow a child to grow up to think that both education and instruction are the nonsense of the old fogies, its parents, and that the child itself is so perfect a creation of nature that, in its own mind, it becomes a little tin god on wheels. This so-called natural education is just plain bunk, and contains in itself all the seeds of immorality and crime!

A gloomy picture, is it not? And yet it is a picture of facts as they are. I am speaking with deliberation and emphasis today, because as a theosophist I want the ideas which I am trying to express to sink into your minds. I myself have experienced the value of these theosophical teachings, and know how good and helpful they are. Your children must be instructed: more, they must be educated. They must not merely be taught what we adults *think*

we know, that is, apparently logical and natural answers to the questions which nature puts to us; but they must also be educated, "brought out," that is to say the inner faculties within the child brought out into the expression of their native powers.

It is indeed a problem, and I suppose that no one knows it better than the thinking and conscientious fathers and mothers themselves. They question themselves seriously today: Where shall I send my boy to school? Where shall I send my girl to school? Well, you know what some of these schools are like. Making all allowances for the splendid men and women in the schools who are doing their best under what are very frequently most embarrassing and unfavorable circumstances, our schools are not at all what they ought to be.

It was with this situation in mind in part that Katherine Tingley, some thirty years ago, founded the Raja-Yoga system of education, which system not only teaches, that is to say, instructs, the child intellectually, as the word goes, but tries to bring out the child's own inner faculties, in other words, to *educate* it — the meaning of which is to bring out what is within. This combination of objectives is the ideal, this is the aim, that we strive to move towards.

I think that no true theosophical teacher will ever tell you we have attained perfect results, for, in the first place, there is always growth. And mind you, it is not always those who talk most glibly about Raja-Yoga who are the best exemplars of it. Words come easily to thoughtless lips; but the Raja-Yoga system of education is above everything else, a *life*. It is, in fact, the ethical side, the philosophical side, the religious side, and the scientific side, of theosophy, all put into practice as far as both teachers and students can do so. It is not everyone who howls: "Lord, Lord," who sees the Divine, nor is it everyone who claims to be a Raja-

Yoga pupil who is worthy of the title, unless he or she shows it in the life.

This in no sense means that our Raja-Yoga pupils or graduates are 'saints' or exemplars of priggish self-satisfaction. But it does mean that they have had every opportunity to become worthy of the splendid system under which they were brought up, and according to which they were taught.

This may seem to you perhaps like preaching, but even if so, it is exceedingly good preaching. It is true. It is the man or woman, who *lives* what he believes to be true and right and honorable and impersonal, who is a true Raja-Yoga student. Nor is one of the sublimest virtues of human nature absent in the Raja-Yoga training: I mean gratitude. On the contrary, there are no people so grateful, heart-grateful and mind-grateful, as are they who have understood what the Raja-Yoga education and training mean. This training begins even with the little ones, and therefore is it such sheer delight to listen to what they say, or to study the questions that they ask, because these sayings and questions so beautifully exemplify the coming into being of the innate faculties of the little ones.

Yes, some of the sayings of the little ones — quaint, humorous, occasionally irresistibly funny — sometimes show the breadth and profundity even of the child's mind, in other words show that Something back of the outward seeming, behind, as it were, the developing mind of the little one, which is striving to express itself as it grows.

A child's mind is not as some former philosophers in our European countries have tried to set it forth to be: a *tabula rasa*, or blank tablet, on which the child's growing life experience will inscribe its character as it grows. It seems to me that the simplest examination of your own selves, and of the little ones around you,

easily will teach you differently. Each child has its own character which comes to it with its birth, through birth. It brings itself into life; it brings therefore its own character; and its character is not made nor created; not even may we say that its character is fully shaped or formed by the experience of the ensuing life. Instead of being a *tabula rasa* or blank tablet, on which its life-experiences will write legends of the weal and of the woe that it has to undergo, the child's inner constitution or mind, in other words the child itself, brings with it into earth-life vast treasuries of experience out of the past of all times: good, bad, and indifferent; and these, in their aggregate, and in the effect that they have had upon the developing soul, are what we call character.

Now even our wonderful Raja-Yoga education cannot achieve miracles. We do not believe in miracles. You "cannot make a silk purse" — you know the old proverb! If the child brings with it a character which is cold and callous, calculating and selfish, the utmost that even divinity, a school conducted by the very gods themselves, could do to such a child under such circumstances would be to ameliorate its unfortunate mental attributes and to soften the circumstances in order to help it in the life to come.

So it is not everyone who cries: "Raja-Yoga, I am a Raja-Yoga!" who has learned anything at all about it. Words come easily to the lips of the thoughtless. We know that, and we do not claim to have a school of miracles here. Our own great teacher, Katherine Tingley, has told us that in one very important aspect of the system, it is a school of prevention, not however, meaning by that phrase that our Raja-Yoga teachers can prevent everything. That would be idiotic, and we are not idiots. But it is indeed a school in which, if there is the slightest chance for amendment, for amelioration, for moral and impersonal growth, the little ones here can have that chance, and under our system grow and bloom and blossom, much as the flowers open their petals to the

rays of the golden sun; but we cannot achieve miracles, and no one knows it better than our Raja-Yoga teachers themselves, and our real Raja-Yoga pupils.

Therefore, our wonderful Raja-Yoga system of education, is, as much as anything else, not a school of prevention alone, but a school in which the child is studied in order that its growing faculties may manifest themselves in the easiest and ultimately the best way. Its mind is eagerly sought out and analyzed under the often perplexing veils of personality by our Raja-Yoga teachers, and impersonally and kindly — but, heaven forbid! not by psychoanalysis or anything of that kind — but analyzed wisely, its tendencies noted, its character studied for its own benefit, and every possible chance given to it to develop — not "naturally," as this word is so abominably misused, but spiritually, morally, intellectually, in order to *bring out the best that is in it*, its own soul, which is the real man to be, or the real woman to be.

And if we do not always succeed, the fault is not in the system nor in our splendid and most unusually conscientious Raja-Yoga teachers. We have indeed had wonderful success. The system has proved itself a marvelous success as a system; and this is very largely due to the self-denying, wonderful teachers that we have here, most of them brought up from childhood under Katherine Tingley's own direction: taught by her, not so much in words, not so much in books, not so much in mere mental lessons, not so much by stimulating the mere mental apparatus of an educational system for which a great deal is claimed. Not so.

You can find such methods practically anywhere more or less; and in comparison with the principles and ideals of the Raja-Yoga system, the former do not amount to a snap of the fingers. The system, on the other hand, aims to teach the child what it is, and

what the nature of things in themselves is: the children are taught where to look in order to find the things of great value in life, while the teachers are taught how to teach the children, how to evolve forth the often splendid faculties of the child's mind, which ordinary systems of instruction cannot reach.

There is the whole secret in a few words. No wonder theosophists may briefly call it the Royal Road. It is the highway, the beginning of the highway, which leads ultimately to the immortal gods. When the child is taught to know itself, it is thereby taught to know its inseparable relations with spiritual nature, and its oneness with all that is, and therefrom flows the sense of individual responsibility, not only to the Self, but to all other selves; and the resultant of all this is that if the child has been properly taught, its spiritual and moral instincts begin to work of themselves almost automatically.

On last Sunday I made the suggestion to the fathers and mothers then here, that if they could not answer the questions of their little children, to tell them a fairy tale. Now, I mean that. The idea is part of the system of the Raja-Yoga educational work here. It does not, however, mean any kind of a fairy tale that you can find in a book purchased for a price in the shops. Many of such fairy-tales are not good, and some have even an immoral influence on the impressionable and plastic minds of children; and this latter kind of tales are not true fairy-tales at all. They are merely imaginary tales, written by moderns who do not know the secrets of Nature, who have not been taught, as the originators of the splendid archaic fairy tales were taught, by seers and sages.

But I mean by fairy tales, those splendid old myths and legends which have stood the test of time, and which contain, all of them, a great spiritual, ethical, and scientific truth. You know the old nursery rhyme about the old woman who lived in a shoe, and had

so many children she didn't know what to do? It sounds just like doggerel, doesn't it? Well, that is a native English fairy tale, and it contains a great truth, like many others of the folklore fairy tales. Therefore is it a true fairy tale.

Who is this Mother who lived in a shoe? What is the shoe? Who are the many children? Mother Nature, friends, living in the universe around us, which is called a shoe in this tale because it is the outward vehicle in which Mother Nature works; just so does the shoe protect the foot and clothe it and carry the body along to other scenes and views. This is evolution expressed under the metaphor of a shoe. Do you know that an ancient name for body was "bearer," or "carrier" or "vehicle"? In other legends of this type the word 'shoe' is not used, but the carrier or bearer or body is spoken of as a garment or a veil or a mist, or something like that; but the idea is essentially the same.

You could not readily tell a child in philosophical and religious terminology, with words an inch or two long, the great truths of nature. Its mind has not been sophisticated enough to misunderstand nature after that manner. It would not understand the language you are talking to it. But you can teach it precisely the same truths of nature by figures of speech, by metaphors, by tales, and the things thus taught will remain in the mind.

The child will think about them, it will remember them, it will remember the doggerel; but something of far greater value than this remains: its consciousness has been awakened by the intuitive working of the spiritual purpose inside the meaning of these metaphors, tales, stories, etc., if they are indeed true fairy tales.

You don't have to explain to a child the ethical meaning of a fairy tale, in fact it would be unwise to attempt to do so, unless it asked

you so to do. Then you would have to do the best you could. Meanwhile, don't bewilder it. Allow it to think for itself first, and to develop the wish or desire for a larger understanding. Overtaxing or bewildering a child's mind with the patter and lingo of grownups, that grownups themselves don't understand, is not Raja-Yoga education or instruction.

Enable the child to think for itself, and to see the truth for itself. Bring out the powers within the child. Develop the growing individuality of the child, lead it forth into manifestation: this is the Raja-Yoga meaning of education. You should no more try to think for your child than you should try to eat for it or to walk for it. On the other hand, be an example of conduct for your child, guard your conduct and your words very carefully when in the presence of your children, for their eyes are very clear-sighted, and they are logically intuitive, and when they see father or mother doing things which the child is forbidden to do, not only does there grow disrespect for the parents, but something more serious than this, a sense of disrespect for the intrinsic beauty of moral teaching.

When a child sees its father and mother breaking laws — not merely the laws of nature, but also the laws of the state — it learns to have a perfectly unlovely respect for law and order, and for constituted authority! When it sees its mother or its father perhaps cheat the street-railway company out of a nickel, which is an instance that I personally have seen, what a lesson is thereby instilled into the child's mind! Do such parents desire their child to grow up to be a professional thief or a criminal of some other type?

The life and duty of a teacher make his profession a strenuous one, if he is at all sincere, but nevertheless it is a beautiful life; and I have positive pity for the man or woman who has no



respect for a little child. They know every bit as much as we do in their own ways, and within their own sphere, although they cannot express it as adults think they can express what they know; and if you think that you know more than your children do, then answer their questions and answer them honestly. Be honest with yourselves! Face yourselves for once in your life in the presence of your little children!

I might say that in reading to you some of these delightful questions and sayings of the children, in which their wonderful elementary wisdom is shown, I have chosen names different from the real names that the real children bear, for the simple reason that I see sometimes here in our Temple the faces of parents of our little children here, and I do not know whether I ought to give the real names or not. I cannot see any harm in doing so, but it struck me it might not be the right thing to do, for some parents might not care to have their children's names thus mentioned in public. So I have changed the names. For my own part, if I were a married man and had a child, or children, I would be delighted to have somebody talk about their questions and their childlike sayings.

On the street of a certain Pennsylvania town, some years ago, the following conversation, short but truly pitiful, between a mother and her little son, aged four, was overheard: Son: "Mother, what would you do if something should happen to Daddy?" Mother (slight hesitation and then firmly): "I would cry, and cry, and cry, and cry!" Later mother and father will wonder why son is such a cry-baby.

That child was not properly answered. The mother spoke from her own personality, and doubtless she thought she spoke from her heart. She was so vain she wanted even her little son to understand that when Daddy died she was going to be terribly

hurt. But how on earth does that personal feeling of the mother's vanity answer the child's questions? How does it help the child? On the contrary, it teaches it to look upon its personality as something of importance and to cry at the first opportunity when that personality is denied something that it wants. I ask you plainly: what kind of a mother-thought was that which prompted such an answer? I, the big I!

Two or three of our Raja-Yoga teachers here have supplied me with some more of the delightful questions and sayings of some of our little children. I will quote them during the course of my talk this afternoon.

The little boys in one of the groups were once talking about what happened to all one's possessions when one died. They were told that people, before they died, made a will and said just what they wanted done with their possessions when they passed away. One boy said: "But what happens if a man dies unwillingly?" — meaning without having written a will.

How would you answer that? You know what is done, but how would you answer such a simple question as that. Do you think that this question of the child has no meaning beyond its word-sense? I think it has a great deal more. That child has begun to think.

Here is another question: "If caterpillars and spiders and bugs have many legs, why has a man only two legs like a bird? Why have fishes and oysters no legs at all?" Could you answer that question? Never mind about any scientific theory that you may have heard of. Just remember that it is only a theory. Can you give a truthful or a natural answer to that question: can you satisfy yourself why you have two legs, and fishes and oysters have none, and caterpillars and bugs have many? I do not think that you can.

But you must answer your child's question with something, and I think that I would answer that child as follows, at least as a starter; and I know very, very well that if my answer is not satisfactory, there will be a quick come-back. "We don't need so many legs, dear. We just grew in that way." Now at least that is not untruthful, and it is responsive as far as it goes, and the child will wonder over this fact of "growing in that way," and as itself grows older, and learns about the scientific theories of its own day, its mind will have attained a certain independence of judgment, because the germ of thought on this very subject has already been planted and therein lies the beginning of the training in accurate thinking.

Another question: "So many flowers have lovely perfumes, Miss X. Why don't we smell nice, like the flowers?" Well, why not? Do you think that there is anything foolish about that question? I do not; I think it is a very natural question. As a matter of fact, we do smell, and I think that I would have answered that child just about in this way: "Some people do and some do not smell nice. The dogs can tell the difference, for they have a highly developed sense of smell."

Now, that answer is at least a true answer. It would not satisfy you perhaps, and it won't fully satisfy the child. But at any rate, I have not snubbed its mind; I have not rebuffed it or thrown it back upon itself, and made it feel: "Oh, what a fool I was to ask Daddy such a question. I am not going to do it next time."

Bring out the developing soul of the child; help it. That is what education is, as contrasted with instruction, which latter only too often means only teaching it a lot of folderol, that, when the child grows up, will be forgotten. There is, of course, no harm in properly teaching a child some of the prevailing theories of the day. There is a certain amount of real value in mental training;

but I tell you, as a teacher by profession, that I believe that I know that there is more value in teaching a child *how* to think than *what* to think.

Human egoism! If you try to put into a child's mind what you think it ought to think, in the first place you will find that it is useless, and in the second place you are wasting time, and worst of all, you are distorting that child's mind, particularly if it be impressionable, as almost all children are.

Now, what are the best ways of teaching a child how to think, and living out or bringing out what is within itself? You say: what is the use of dead-languages? They are of no practical value. They do not make money for you, they do not enable a child to earn its own living, to pile up a big bank account. How do you know? I say that it is much more likely that a child whose mind has been accurately trained by studying dead languages — precisely because they are impractical, to use the modern expression — will be more likely to succeed in life in the so-called practical affairs, because its mind has been trained, than would a child whose mind has received no such training in thought and in discipline. Such training teaches the mind to be accurate in its thinking, to be close in its observations, to make necessary logical deductions; and hence whatever it is, these dead languages, mathematics, or anything else, are the valuable things for a child to study, because they train that child to think and to think carefully.

Similarly, mathematics for the same reason precisely calls for accurate and impersonal thinking. Then the scientific studies: tell your child that the things that you are now teaching it in the various sciences are not fully truth, that they may change tomorrow; but that they are the highest knowledge of nature that has as yet been attained. Outside of anything else this will lead

your child to accept your frankness, and therefore it will make it also frank and honest, which is a great advantage in the so-called struggle of life.

Do you not think that all this is true? Do you think that our modern scientists are encyclopedias of ascertained truths of being, and that nothing more can be learned than what they know, and that therefore their word or theories at any one time are irrevocable and absolute truth? What a pitiful thing it is if there is nothing more to know in the universe, and to suppose that our scientists know everything that there is, and that they are greater than the Great Spirit, because they comprehend it all, and therefore even comprehend or enclose, mentally speaking, the Great Spirit?

Yes, I think that some people have very nice odors, and we feel it in more than one way: their very presence is a benediction. Even the natural animal odor of the human body in some cases is not by any means unpleasant; and little children are very susceptible to these things in their unspoiled sense apparatus and instinct. Contrariwise, the animal odor of some other people is not at all pleasant.

Here is a question: "Why do some flowers go to sleep at night, and others stay awake?" Can you answer that? Why not remind your children of the sunflower which turns its face to the sun in the morning and which follows the sun across the sky by turning on its stem, and faces the sun to the westward in the evening? Can you understand that? The scientists cannot, although they have theories about it; but at least you can tell your child some fairy tale with application to this point, and teach it to think, and perhaps when it grows older it may discover why some flowers sleep at night and some stay awake. At any rate, we know it has to do with the sun, and your fairy tale can deal with the sunbeams.

I am sorry for the mothers and fathers, the mothers in particular. If they cannot answer the questions their children ask, in the name of the immortal gods, who will answer them? Therefore I say again if you cannot answer the questions, which is most likely the case, tell them one of the noble old fairy tales, and do not try to overload the child's mind by giving labored and theoretic explanations according to your own view. Let the child exercise its own faculties of imagination and intuition. There is never any harm in telling the child that there is a very beautiful truth at the bottom of the fairy tale which it ought to discover for itself, and if the child says to you: Have you discovered it? you can say: I think so; and then tell the child what your explanation is. Here again the child will respect you for your frankness, and in its turn will become frank, because it will look upon frankness as a beautiful thing.

Fire its imagination with these ancient truths, and you may have a boy or a girl who will grow up to see visions of splendor and dream dreams of reality. Its native faculties will have been exercised. You cannot make a silk purse — you know the rest. But you can give to your child every possible chance; and whether it be a "sow's ear," or whether it be a baby Jesus, matters not so much, as far as the principles which we are discussing are concerned. In the name of truth, I say, give the little child its chance to think for itself.

Another question: "Why does a stork stand on one leg?" That question was asked of me, and I took about half a minute to think, and then someone came to the rescue — another boy, and he said: "Stupid question! Why, if it raised its leg, it would fall down. That is why it stands on one leg." Now that is funny, it is really humorous; but, do you know, my sympathy was with the boy who asked the first question. Why indeed does the stork stand on one leg? No scientist can answer that question, although he may

theorize about it just as you and I can. But my sympathy was with the first boy, because he was not satisfied with the answer of his little fellow. He was thoughtful; he pondered and looked at the ground, as a child will. As for me, I did not say a word. I did not want to spoil the atmosphere of the situation. I knew that if I spoke or interfered, the growing thought in that little boy's mind might be hurt; and I left it as it was. I am glad I did so.

Another question: "Why is it that children are always naughty and grownups are always good; because grownups were children once?" that is a tough question. It really is. I think that if I had been asked that question, I would have said: "Well, dear, children are not always naughty, nor are all children naughty; and grownups are not always good, nor are they all good. There are good children and naughty children; and there are grownups who are good and grownups who are bad." I think that I should have said no more.

Here are two delightful little things. The children were at Sunday dinner, and they began to talk about the various things they had to eat. Lettuce, they knew, grew out of the ground, but how did crackers grow? This started a long conversation with the teacher about cooking. Suddenly Richard asked, apparently quite irrelevantly: "Did Mother Nature make my daddy?" "Yes, indeed," answered the teacher. "Then once upon a time he must have been a baby." "Yes." "Then," said Richard, "when all the world was full of babies, and there were no grownups, Santa Claus and Mother Nature must have done all the cooking!"

I wish that I knew enough to tell the little child, indeed to tell one of my grownup colleagues, just how and why lettuce grows. I can work out an answer which is perfectly satisfactory to me, but I don't think I could work out an answer that would be satisfactory to another grownup. Pause a moment over that still greater

question: "Why does lettuce grow?"

But you can answer these questions, at least satisfactorily to yourself, if you study theosophy, which is not of human origin, which has not been imagined by anybody, which is not just a collection of wise sayings from the various philosophies and religions of the world; but is, to those who have studied it, proved to be the formulation in modern language of the wisdom of the gods transmitted to us by the greatest, the most titanic, spiritual visioners and intellectuals that the world has ever known.

You think that you have not those faculties of understanding and imagination in your constitution, perhaps, dormant or active as the case may be, which will enable you to see true answers to any questions? I wonder if you really think that. I do not believe it. If a man can think, where will you set the limits to the possibility of growth of that faculty of thinking? Do you dare to say that it can never be greater than it is now, and that greater men than we have never lived in the past, or will never live in the future? Or did not live in the great and silent past of the earth? And how dare any thoughtful human being say that there are in the boundless spaces of the boundless universe no beings greater than we poor humans on this little dust speck we call earth? Pray, pray think about these things.

One of the boys asked his teacher the other day why caterpillars always "tangle up" when they walk. You know how some caterpillars go, those caterpillars who progress by looping as they move. Now, can you answer that question? It is a very simple question. Can you answer it? Can you say why some caterpillars progress by looping as they go? All caterpillars do not, but some do. Simply because they are built in that way. They have, as a rule, three pairs of feet on the forepart of their long body, and what are called prolegs or fleshy excrescences on the nether end,



and sometimes in the middle. The caterpillars who loop as they go do so because that is the only way they can go. They cannot go as other caterpillars go; they cannot run as a spider will, but they have to go in that way: they are not strong enough to dig their three pairs of forefeet into the ground, or into the bark of a twig, and pull themselves; so nature teaches them to make these loops of their body, and that is why they "tangle up" when they walk. Now surely you will know how to explain that to a child.

Now, the following are also pretty sayings — and as the time is passing rapidly, I shall not read many of these that I have collected. Mary (about four years old) seeing an alligator lizard for the first time, described it to her teacher as a "lizard that was so thick that there was no thinness about it."

One child, when rehearsals for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* began, asked her teacher if they were rehearsing that play "Do as you like."

Another child (three years old) when spoken to about a button that was unfastened, looked up at her teacher and said, very saucily: "You did it." When told she must not speak like that, a naughty twinkle came into her eyes. She glanced at the button, and then assuming a very demure expression, she said: "This button is undone. I don't know who did it. It *wasn't* my teacher." Another time she said: "I can't fasten this button, Miss X, it keeps crawling out."

Mary had watched with great interest when the children's temperatures were taken during a sick spell. She had heard the teachers warn a little girl who was inclined to bite the thermometer that it would make her dreadfully sick if she should do it. One day, she brought her doll and with the greatest concern said: "My dolly's very sick, she's swallowed her temperature."

Teacher: "What is the capital of the United States?" One little girl shouted: "George Washington, D.C."

Louise, trying to repeat a poem of which one line was: "Where the gray trouts lie," was heard to say: "Where the gray trousers lie." Another time, trying to sing: "Love divine through all things flowing," she sang: "Lovely vine, through all things flowing."

One little girl was inclined to eat too fast, but one day she folded her hands very firmly and looking at them, as though talking to a real person, she said: "No, tant take more bread till you's told." Now that is a pretty little example in self-control.

Here is something about *you*, friends: Annie was much interested in knowing why public meetings were now given in the Temple of Peace. We explained that Katherine Tingley was trying to teach the same lessons to the public that she teaches to Raja-Yogas. She looked up quickly and said: "That's just it. There are many things which are not true that people believe, just because someone has told them, and we are trying to get it out of them, aren't we? Madame Tingley doesn't want people to grow up knowing stupid things, does she?"

That is what you might call *ad hominem*, an argument directed to the man.

To our children brought up here in the Raja-Yoga School, death has no horror. On the morning after Mrs. A--- R--- passed away, and the children were told, some little girls who had been brought up at home to think of death as a sad thing, put on long faces; but Dorothy, who thought of death as going to Fairyland, clapped her hands, and with a face lighted with joy, exclaimed: "Oh good! Now she will rest and when she comes back to us, she will be all well and won't suffer any more, will she?"

What a beautiful thing a child's mind is! And on the other hand,

how our children's minds are stultified and how their hearts are hurt by the old terrible atmosphere of the old home-religion that enshrouded some of the most natural and beautiful things in the world!

Tommy came back from the beach with a dripping bathing suit over his arm, and his hair all wet. "Well, Tommy," said his mother, "how was it the waves didn't swallow you up today?" "Because *I* swallowed *them*," he promptly replied. (Tommy is five years old.)

One day Tommy asked: "Have *caramels* (which he pronounces carrmulls) anything to do with Karma?" "Sometimes," said his teacher. Tommy stood thinking for a moment, and then said: "Don't you think they are *very good* karma?"

Here is a pretty thing: Tommy had been for an outing with his mother and daddy. The daddy had to leave them for a little while, and while he was away they happened to see a flock of wild turkeys. When Daddy came back, Mother said: "Tommy, aren't you going to tell Daddy what we saw?" "Oh yes!" said Tommy, and then very impressively: "Daddy, we saw a flock of Thanksgiving!"

Before parting this afternoon, I recall to your minds, if you please, what I mentioned in the first part of our talk this afternoon about fairy tales as being true and false. Those fairy tales are true which embody some great natural fact, some great element of the universe, one of the great operations of universal being, and these great natural facts, at least some of them, which have been given to ancient humankind by the seers and sages, are embodied in two kinds of treasuries of natural lore, so to say.

One is the native folklore, varying in different countries according to different peoples, but in very large degree everywhere containing the same elements of truth. The other is a

body of great and wonderful legends and stories which have been brought westwards to the Occident from the motherland of religions and sciences, *archaic India*; and to show how these wonderful stories that were put by great minds into the form of myth and legend, and therefore form a part of the mythology of various peoples, passed from mind to mind and from age to age, and from people to people, I took the trouble this morning to investigate one single instance and to draw up the results of my investigation in simple form.

In ancient India there existed a collection of delightful fables and tales inculcating high moral virtues and philosophic and religious truths, under the form of the so-called Beast Fable. Kipling's *Jungle Book* contains stories copied after the style and matter of some of these tales which still exist in the Sanskrit literature, such as the *Panchatantra* and the *Katha-Sarit-Sagara*.

Centuries ago, by command of the Persian Sassanian king, Khosru Anushirwan, in 531-579 of the Christian era, a translation from the archaic Hindu collection was made into Pehlevi, the literary language of Persia.

From this Pehlevi version were made two notable translations: one into Syriac, about 570 AD, and one into Arabic about 760. These two versions were called respectively, the Syrian, "The Fables of Kalilag and Danmag," from the names of two jackals Krataka and Damanaka who figure prominently in the original Sanskrit; and the Arabic Kalilah and Dimnah or "The Fables of Pilpay."

From this Arabic version came in turn one into later Syrian dating from the tenth or eleventh century, one into Greek about 1080, one back into Persian dating from about 1230, one into Hebrew dating from about 1240, and one into old Spanish dating from about 1250.

From the Hebrew translation came the version into Latin, made by John of Capua, dating from about 1270 and called *Directorium Humanae Vitae*, or "Directory of Human Life."

From this Latin version came the German translation, first printed about 1481 at the instance of Duke Eberhard im Bart, and called in old German, *Das buch der byspel der alten wysen*, or, in modern German, *Das Buch der Beispiele der alten Weisen* — "The Book of the Examples of the Ancient Sages."

From the Latin version of John of Capua also came the English version of Sir Thomas North, 1570. La Fontaine, the great French Fabulist, in the second edition of his Fables, 1678, confesses his indebtedness to Pilpay, the "Indian Sage," and elsewhere says:

"Fables, in sooth, are not what they appear:  
Our moralists are mice, and such small deer.  
We yawn at sermons, but we gladly turn  
To moral tales, and so amused we learn."

And Dr. Johnson, quaint old Englishman, in his *Life of Gay*, says:

"A *fable* or *apologue* seems to be, in its genuine state, a narrative in which beings irrational, and sometimes inanimate, are, for the purpose of moral instruction, feigned to act and speak with human interests and passions."

And how truly the child understands all this, with his unsophisticated, unspoiled, mind and heart.

There is one point to which attention should certainly be called before I conclude my lecture this afternoon. It is this: that the brief summary of the translation or transmission of the elements of the Beast Fable as above outlined, from archaic India to modern European countries, shows how nearly to heart, sober

and serious-minded men took these fairy tales, legends, myths, and what-not, their minds being less sophisticated than ours, however sunken they may or may not have been in superstition, religious and other; so the great value and intrinsic beauty of these old moralistic tales, while they understood very little of the esoteric meaning behind them, and probably in fact understood very little at all of them, nevertheless the beautiful appeal these stories made to their minds, as well as to their hearts, is significant enough. We are so sophisticated in our ultra-modern egoisms that we fail to see beauty where beauty lies, and run after skeletons clad in velvet and paint!

In concluding, friends, Katherine Tingley describes her system as follows:

"The truest and fairest thing of all as regards education is to attract the mind of the pupil to the fact that the immortal self is ever seeking to bring the whole being into a state of perfection. The real secret of the Raja-Yoga system is rather to evolve the child's character than to overtax the child's mind; it is to bring *out* rather than to bring *to* the faculties of the child. The grander part is from within."

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[Vol 1, No 3](#)  
[Contents](#)

No. 3 (October 15, 1929)

### SOME QUESTIONS THAT GROWNUPS ASK

For two Sundays last past, I have been talking about the questions and observations that children ask and make, and I have tried to point out to you the deep elemental wisdom that lies in the unspoiled child's mind. I fancy that some people do not altogether like that idea: that is to say, the idea that we grownups do not know so very much after all, in the sense of knowing more than the little ones know — because adults naturally ask themselves: how about our growth and the experiences that we have?

Grownups of today are still psychologized in the idea that children are "created" or are born with their minds a *tabula rasa*, a blank page, on which nature — what is this nature? — writes everything that forms a child's character as it grows up to adulthood.

But as you must know, that theory is no explanation of a child's intrinsic character, and cannot be understood at all, because what is this "Nature," this recording angel, in the first place; and in the second place, where and what is this supposititious *tabula rasa*, this blank sheet, this blank tablet, on which this abstraction called nature, writes the results of a child's experiences?

On the contrary, theosophists, with the wisdom-religion of the ancient times behind us, say that the little ones come into incarnation bringing with them from past lives treasuries of experience of all kinds, good, bad, and indifferent, and it is precisely these treasuries of experience, good, bad, and indifferent, which manifest the character and which, by the effect they have on the character, make you different from me, or you different from others.

From ages upon ages of the past, out from the past, have these incarnating entities, these incarnating monads, come into life after life, and in each life improving — let us hope that it is an improvement — if not degenerating, what previously had been developed in the individual being as character. Character is not inbuilt as a work from outside; nor is it builded by the mere adding of brick to brick of experience, or stone to stone of experience, after the manner in which a mason will insert new stones or bricks in a wall. But character is the product of evolution, as the ancient wisdom, today called theosophy, teaches it; that is to say, it is the bringing *out* of what is *within*: the expansion or development of the faculties that lie latent and innate in the very energies which form human beings as they are.

We are the expressions of these energies, for these energies are the seeds of beings — collectively speaking, these energies are the monads of beings, and these monads are the manifesting energy-consciousness-points — call them by what name you like, for the name matters very little indeed. As these spiritual energies, these forces, come out and express themselves in manifestation, they do so as character. Thus is genius builded; thus does love divine finally shine forth with a splendor that nothing else ever attains; thus too the lovely fruits of intellectual genius — talent, ability, in all their various stages — come into flower and blossom in the life of the man.

So you see, there is no reason to be offended at the thought that an adult is merely a grownup child. It seems obvious enough, and also obvious that the elemental wisdom of little children is due simply to their unsophisticated and unspoiled minds, and to their native instinctive vision, their native instinctive genius thus expressing itself, and the child's not knowing how to express this genius in the sophisticated terms and modes that adults are



usually so proud of.

I have before asked you the question, friends: if we are so proud of our sophistication, and think it is a mark of excellence which distinguishes adulthood from the little one, from the mind of the child, why cannot we answer their questions? Yes, why cannot we answer their questions satisfactorily even to ourselves? It is usually much more difficult to answer a little child than it is to answer an adult. An adult is so sophisticated that he is perfectly sure he knows it all; and if he is polite, he will listen to you politely, and go away thinking that he knows more or less than you do, as the case may be; but his mind is already so full of what he thinks are facts, that you can hardly stuff another fact in.

That is sophistication, and most of our life is passed in unlearning what we think we know, actually in order, just before we pass out of life, to attain some small realization of the fundamental fact of consciousness.

Ruskin says very beautifully: "Childhood often holds a truth with its feeble fingers, which the grasp of manhood cannot retain — which it is the pride of utmost age to recover." It is true. You look at very old people, and look at them with sympathy and understanding, and you will find that their minds are not childish, but often childlike in their simplicity; for they are quick and intuitive, in their own lines or views of things, and are growing unsophisticated, recovering the childlike nature and instinctive vision that the little ones have. We think we know so much, we adults: we think that we can answer all possible questions: questions that the angels in highest heaven, as the Christians might say, would hesitate before presuming to touch upon even as an overture to an answer.

The simplest questions that the little children ask are often filled with mysteries and wonder. Walt Whitman expresses this

beautifully in his *Leaves of Grass*, page 33:

A child said: "What is grass?" fetching it to me with full hands. How could I answer the child? I do not know what it is any more than he.

If you know what grass is, then in the name of the immortal gods, send your knowledge to the academies. How grateful will they be — if they only accept it!

I have some questions here today that adults have asked, a list of them, and I find them just like the questions of children, plus sophistication, and they are just about as hard to answer, these particular questions at least. The greatest difficulty in answering any question is in breaking the molds of the mind of the questioner that he may receive a new truth — as our first great theosophist in modern times, H. P. Blavatsky, said, "breaking the molds of mind," — so that the new rays of truth may enter in, the rays of the new truth.

You know what difficulty every new discovery has to make its way in the world, the reason being that men are averse to new knowledge, not because they are averse to accepting something new, but merely because it is unfamiliar to their previous modes of thought, therefore is not in accordance with accepted rules and regulations, and with our sophistications and with the things we think that we know. We have thus to break the molds of mind, and finally a little light enters into the tiny cranny thus burst open in the mind, and with its own magic power it works a marvel; and the mind is finally bursted, and then we see, we see!

Here are some hard questions that I am going to answer today, or try to answer; because these questions are many, I shall try on the Sunday following, and perhaps on the Sunday after that, to answer the rest of them. I do not know who sent in to me these

questions, doubtless some kind friends.

- Why are so many of the truths that you teach so familiar to us?
- Why is it that people generally will not accept the truth when it is put so clearly by you?
- The velocity of light, usually estimated in modern physics to be 186,000 human miles a second, is claimed to be the highest speed limit in nature of any material body. Modern science asserts that it is impossible for any higher material speed to exist, and that Einstein's Relativity Theory proves this. What have you to say?
- Who am I, and what am I? What am I here on this earth for?
- Am I all mind, or all matter, or both mixed? What is mind?
- What is matter? What are force and energy?
- Are mind, force and energy, and matter real or unreal; in other words, are these three separate things, each existing always by itself, or are they only three modes or pulses or events of some underlying reality?
- Are there other planets in the universe than those we know of in our own solar system?
- If not, to what can be ascribed the unique fact of our planetary existence?
- Were we created or have we evolved? What is evolution?
- Are education and knowledge reminiscence, as Plato said they are, or are they instilled into or put into the human mind as bricks or stones are put into a wall?
- Does the soul of an infant enter its body at birth, or before birth, or after birth?
- What is the soul?
- Have twins or triplets, etc., the same soul, or different souls?
- Was Jesus Christ a man or was he God?
- Is virgin birth, or immaculate birth, possible in nature?

- Why is it that the human race exists in two sexes, whereas certain and many forms of animate beings are dual-sexed or hermaphroditic?
- How many dimensions of and in matter are there — three, or more?
- Since science tells us that matter is the only solid and real thing in the universe known to us, how can there be such a thing as spirit which is said to be immaterial and unsubstantial? And if spirit does exist, how can something so shadowy, weak, and unsubstantial affect matter which is so gross, dense, and solid?

These are certainly some difficult questions!

Why are they familiar to you? Because you have heard them before, perhaps not in this life, but certainly in a previous life, and your character built in that previous life, recognizes familiarity with them. On the same line is built true love between human beings, trust above all things, and confidence and sympathy and respect.

Familiarity in the sense just employed signifies knowledge previously acquired. We reject precisely those things that we are not accustomed to see or to think about, because they are strange and oft appear to us to be baroque or queer, but the trouble is not in us and not in the things themselves. But those things which have become native to our souls, and have become a part of our own inner fabric — them we like, for they are familiar, for they are a part of ourselves.

People who ask such questions as the two first above named must have been theosophists in other lives, unquestionably so; and people to whom the wonderful theosophical truths — the truths of natural being please remember, that is our theosophical

teaching — are unfamiliar, are just they who have never studied them before, in other words they whose minds have not been awakened to recognize this mode of natural truth.

A theosophist is not made; he is not one by means of instruction, that is to say instructed to be one. He is born a theosophist; he comes out of the past a theosophist, perhaps unconsciously to himself: he comes out of the ages, unconsciously to himself or herself "trailing clouds of glory" with themselves as they come, as Wordsworth puts it beautifully. They are superior people. We do not say this because we theosophists look upon ourselves in an arrogant way as being superior people. That is not the idea. We say it because it is true. Any man or woman who is interested in the great questions involving the nature and destiny of man and of the universe, and of man's inner spiritual constitution and the inner constitution of the universe, and in the origins of these, must *de facto* have a superior mind.

"Why is it that people will not accept the truth when it is put so clearly by you?" Because they don't recognize it to be true. What was the experience of the founder of the Theosophical Movement, H. P. Blavatsky, when she first brought the ancient wisdom to the western world? Rejected, persecuted, reviled, mocked at, single handed she fought the battle; and now, fifty years or more after her first labors began in this country, theosophy is a word known in every civilized country. And greater than anything else perhaps, theosophy as she taught it is accepted in many of its principles, by the most eminent scientific thinkers of today, although, we must suppose, unconsciously, because they never refer to it by name as having originated with the great theosophist, H. P. Blavatsky. In any case, there is tribute of intellectual acknowledgment.

Why has not the whole world turned theosophical? Because the

whole world does not know theosophy. People don't recognize the truth in theosophy — they are not awake — and all that theosophists can do is to keep on budging along, budging ahead, and hammering and hammering the truth home into their minds, until finally these raindrops of theosophical words entering into their mind will succeed in bursting the rigid and crystallized molds of thought.

The time is coming — and I personally believe that it is coming rapidly — when a revolution in human thinking shall take place, stealing into men's minds and hearts from the East: from the sunrise of our being; the great truths of nature and of man will become familiar if only by force of theosophical repetition, of mental repetition, of verbal repetition. Then we shall see a renaissance of the ancient wisdom-religion in every civilized country, for it is the universal religion, the natural religion-philosophy-science of mankind.

For all things are inseparably bound together. You cannot really separate anything from anything else. The words that I am now trying to utter, create vibrations in the ether, which go out from my mouth, spreading into eternity. Think you that they have entered into my mind from nowhere, haphazard, fortuitously? Never. They have come to me out of the past; every word that I say, or that any one of you says, has come out of my or of your past. We human beings are not automata, however; we are not mere automatic repeaters. That is not the idea. Things come to us which are ourselves, in fact which we ourselves have created in ourselves in other lives, and these are parts of our character; and we revoice them and relive them — only on higher planes and with wider sweeps of effect each time, let us hope!

I mean this is so unless we have degenerated, lost the link with our spiritual being, and have become so enfeebled and weak that

we have taken the downward path. But such unfortunate and misfortunate human beings are exceedingly few and are negligible therefore in number. As Francis Thompson the poet says in this connection:

All things by immortal power  
Near or far,  
Hiddenly  
To each other linked are,  
That thou canst not stir a flower  
Without troubling of a star.

This is poetry, but it is also a scientific truth, as all real poetry is.

The troubles that beset and plague men do not arise outside of themselves, so far as men are concerned. The trouble is not in or with the world in which we live; it is in and with us men ourselves. Verily our troubles are in ourselves. None of us is perfect, and we are all so prone to see the motes in the other man's eye, but fail to see the great beam in our own eye. Every thoughtful man and woman knows that this is perfectly true. It is a saying of the Christian New Testament, but it is as true today as it ever was. I repeat it: the trouble with men is in themselves, and therefore the troubles that men have arise within themselves.

I came upon a very interesting series of observations in this respect in the journal *Southern Medicine and Surgery*, issue of March 1929, in an article written by a Dr. J. K. Hall, who says:

Most of the difficulty in modern life is not caused by our struggle with matter, but with our own beliefs and our thoughts, and with the thoughts of others. The field of man's battle is within his own mind — with his own instincts, his own thoughts, his own feelings.

This means everyone of us, not the other fellow, it means me, you.

His life is made constantly more difficult, not only by the multitudinous devices with which he has to work, but even more so by the network of laws and customs with which he has entangled himself.

Most of the tragedies of life are due to conflicts between primitive ways and the demands of civilization. Let us know ourselves as we are. Does the causative factor of the failure lie in the individual or in the complexities of a social order that are too much for his faculties of adjustment? How much civilization can we endure? May we not be fabricating a social structure about us that may be unendurable?

I think that the first part of this citation is fine. The second part I think is partly fine and partly not. I do not think that the fault alluded to by Dr. Hall is in civilization itself. What a curiously distorted idea that is! Men sow evil, build awry, and then say: How can I live in a faulty house like that? Civilization is the product of men's own hearts and minds, and therefore if the civilization is faulty, it is because the man is faulty; because civilization is merely the offspring of man himself. When man rights himself, there will be nothing to complain of outside of him.

It is quite likely that men may build social structures which topple under their own weight; but that is due to the human egoism and folly in them, and not due to any outside power; and the idea that civilization should be renounced for barbarism or indulgence in the so-called natural things, which merely mean license and lawlessness, as an idea is both erratic and baseless. Isn't that true? It is a curious idea that civilization is something outside of men which men have to live in.



Now I turn to the question regarding force and energy: I have referred to this question, and have tried to explain it in this Temple, many scores of times. I now try once again: Force or energy on the one hand, and matter on the other hand, are two sides of the same underlying thing or "event," to adopt the modern scientific terminology. This is an ancient archaic teaching which modern science is beginning anew to see, anew to proclaim and to teach.

Look at the moral and ethical aspect that this teaching has. No longer can a man say: "I am a living soul in a material body, and there are no links between them of which I am conscious." This was a curious state of mind, and a curious idea, because if a man is responsible to anybody or anything, he is responsible first to himself — that is to say, he is responsible for the body which came to him out of nature's womb, because he himself put himself there. He has got, in body as well as in character, precisely what he himself builded in the past, and he builded it with his own life-energy and life-forces, which are the links intermediate between the so-called soul and the body.

And there could be no connection between the one and the other if they were not of the same fabric, of the same natural stuff, of the same underlying river of life, of which matter and energy are but the two manifested aspects.

Matter is but another form of energy. Energy is but another form of matter, if you prefer to put it in that way. Theosophists prefer to say that matter, physical matter, and indeed any other kind of substantial existence, is but crystallized spirit or energy, as it were, crystallized force: spirit in one of its modes or phases. And this is also purely ultra-modern science, although the scientists might use different words in order to express the same idea — and mark you well, it is archaic philosophy which only twenty

years ago was mocked at, ridiculed, and derided.

Secondly, mind, force, or energy, and matter, are, strictly speaking, unreal all three of them, that is to say relatively unreal, and hence of these three, mind is nearest reality, then comes force or energy, and matter is the least real of all. Yes, the most unreal is matter which, as we perceive it, really does not exist *per se* at all. In that sense it is purely an illusion, as I have often explained here, our bodies being mostly vacuum, to use the popular word, or so-called empty space.

There is no such thing as empty space, but I use this phrase because by it you will know what I mean. If a man could collect the ultimate substantial "mind particles" of himself around which these "empty spaces" exist, into a single point, that point would be so small that he would have to use a microscope in order to see all the actual ultimate substantial particles, energy particles, which comprise the only reality of his physical body; and these substantial mind-particles are themselves only real in a strictly relative sense, for they themselves are but the offspring or resultants of something still more fundamental and radical.

That is what your matter is. And these ultimates that I have just spoken of are not physical matter. You might call them points of energy-substance of the nature of mind. Consequently none of these three are separate things in themselves, existing in eternity by themselves apart from the others, but they are three modes or phases or 'events' of an underlying Reality.

What is reality? None has ever fully known. Reality *per se* in the loftiest theosophical sense, is unknowable, unspeakable, immortal, deathless. Man's imagination is creative in thought; and the imagination fired by a spiritual vision has spoken of this reality as spirit and ultra-spirit, and of the divine. But these three are human words and merely express man's incapacity to do

other than figurate by verbal symbols what in itself cannot be understood. All that we can say is, in the words of the Hindu sacred writings, the *Upanishads*: the Reality is That. The ancient seers and sages did not even attempt to qualify it with an explanation, and all explanations that were made concerned merely its modes of manifestation. Reality is the source, the root, the seed, of all that is: of everything that is — and it is boundless, infinite, timeless, and therefore unthinkable.

"Are there other planets in the universe than those we know of in our own solar system?" Where do *our* planets come from? Why should our solar system be the only system in the spaces of boundless space to have a central sun, and planets, solar satellites, whirling around that central sun in regular mathematical orbits? Why should we be unique? The question is so unreasonable that it answers itself: we are not unique. We are merely one of innumerable others: one solar system among innumerable other solar systems; but this does not mean, however, that every sun has a planetary family. There are exceptions, as the human phrase puts it, to every rule; but the rule is: where there is a sun, there are sunlings, or sunlets, or planets.

"If not, to what can we ascribe the unique fact of our planetary existence?" We cannot ascribe it to anything, because this unique fact does not exist. If it did, it would be a perfectly unsolvable enigma.

"Were we created, or have we evolved?" Well, that is an old question which has been answered so many times that it would bore you to go into it at any length. We were not "created." Who would have created us, or what? Have we evolved? We have. But what do we mean by evolution? The question indeed is: What is evolution really? Is it Darwinism? *Bunk!* Is it Lamarckism, or neo-

Darwinism, or neo-Lamarckism? *Bunk!* These are theories, transitory theories, honest theories if you like. I am not questioning honesty. I am questioning the fact. None has ever been proved, and all are simply attempts by scientific specialists to create a form of scientific theory which will answer some of the problems that nature presents biologically; but everyone knows that other problems are unsolved by any or all of these theories.

We were evolved, or rather we have *evolved ourselves*, along the method which I have so often set forth here. Everything that is, is in its ultimate center a consciousness point, a monad. Please don't rebuff this thought because you object to the words in which I phrase it. If you don't like the words, then choose your own words, but pray get the idea. This monad is deathless. It is spirit, and it is also super-spirit. It is linked with all everywhere; and no man knows the distance, spiritually speaking, between this inner monadic center of our own being and That: at any rate, all we know is that this monadic center is in and from That. It cannot be out of it.

This individual consciousness center is a focus of energies, forces, substances, and possesses all the characteristics of individuality, and these forces and substances and characteristics this monadic center is pouring forth constantly, thereby more fully self-expressing itself in the vehicles, its own offsprings, in which it embodies itself from time to time, from period to period: as regards our human family this means the migration of the monad from incarnation to incarnation as it passes from one sphere of life and body to another sphere of life and body, passing a day-night in each such corporeal inn, as a traveler may be said to do.

Evolution is, in theosophy — that is to say in the ancient wisdom — just what the Latin word etymologically means: the unfolding,

the throwing out, the bringing forth, of what is within — not the adding of brick to brick, or of stone to stone, or of atom to atom, that is to say of mere experience to mere experience. That process would create merely an inchoate and senseless pile of unindividualized human beings. Such beings would be just heaps, piles, without individuality, without centralized individualizing consciousness.

On the contrary, evolution springs in its action from within outwards; and man or any other entity, and the beast, the vegetable even, the mineral, the angels or archangels above us — if you don't like these terms, then call them by the name of gods, or super-gods, or dhyan-chohans, call them by what name you will; all the vast hierarchies upon hierarchies of beings in space, inner and outer space, visible and invisible space — all are progressing, growing: for that is evolution. Evolution is the bringing out of what is within.

Why is a lily a lily? Why is a rose a rose? Why is an oak an oak? Why is a man a man? Why is a god a god? By chance? What is chance? Will you tell me what chance is, please. I can tell you. When we don't know the explanation of a thing, we say that it happened, just happened,' and that is chance. Chance is a word hiding our ignorance, and it is a confession of ignorance.

"Since science tells us that matter is the only solid and real thing in the universe known to us, how can there be such a thing as spirit which is said to be immaterial and unsubstantial? And if spirit does exist, how can something so shadowy, weak, and unsubstantial affect matter which is so gross, dense, and solid?"

I suppose that a greater mistake could hardly be made than that involved in the above question. We have just seen that matter is holes, vacancies, "empty space." Matter is the one thing that really is not. What then does exist? What holds the stars in their course?

What builds the universe? What governs the growing of the grass, so that, according to the beautiful old myth, he who has the ears to hear could hear the growing of the grass and the burgeoning of the trees?

Spirit is energy, the finest form, the purest form, energy-substance: the originant, to use a philosophical term, of all the various energies or forces and substances and matters that exist. All these latter, all these others, are modes, phases, events, of spirit. The forces involved in spirit are so unspeakably tremendous that no human being can adequately conceive them, much less adequately explain them.

Consider the forces locked up in a single atom — a subject of thought which for some time has been engaging the attention of our chemical physicists, as well as the imagination of romancers. These forces are so great that were foolish man enabled to unloose these forces for his own selfish purposes, he might readily disintegrate the very fabric of the world on and in which he lives.

I now come to this last question which I am going to touch upon today. "The velocity of light, usually estimated in modern physics to be 186,000 human miles a second, is claimed to be the highest speed limit of any material body in nature. Modern science asserts that it is impossible for any higher material speed to exist, and that Einstein's Relativity Theory proves this. What have you to say?"

In the first place I say what I have said before, that Dr. Albert Einstein's relativity theory is in principles a truthful and exceedingly interesting contribution to the treasury of human knowledge today; but in saying that, I refer to fundamental principles, not to any particular mathematical demonstration that he may have uttered, not to any particular mathematics by which

he may attempt to express these fundamental principles of the theory which he has given to the world. It is the fundamentals that the theosophist has so heartily acclaimed.

The speed of light estimated to be 186,000 miles a second on our earth, is directly involved in Einstein's demonstration of the relativity theory; and it is just this one mathematical constant, so called — that is to say, the practically invariable speed of light — that the theosophist does not accept as a natural fact of universal application. It is *not* the highest speed limit of any material body, and I will prove it to you shortly, at least by suggestion and a series of suggestive facts which I will briefly lay before you.

Doubtless light travels faster, with greater velocity, than any other material thing known to us *on this earth*. That is unquestioned. But when men on this earth, basing their estimate of the velocity of light upon the experiments of Fizeau, who gave to the world the results of his findings in light experimentation in 1849, and of Cornu, who improved upon and checked up Fizeau's experiments in the seventies of the last century — these two scientific experimenters being Frenchmen of the last century — and according to the later corrections of Foucault, another Frenchman, and according to a still later experimenter of the United States, Michelson, an American, and according to the work along the same lines of the famous American Simon Newcomb: they disregard, perhaps not in thought but at least in results, one thing, to wit, the electromagnetic phenomena that happen on this earth in our dense atmosphere, and according to electromagnetic conditions which pertain to this our globe, by no means necessarily prevail as identical phenomena and subject to identically the same natural conditions in the stellar spaces. This seems to me to be an obvious statement, and hence that any generalizations of a universal character are, to say the least, risky.

The short distances with which these eminent scientists have worked, to whom we are obliged for the impersonality and for the partial success of their labors as far as those labors have gone; even the short distance along which they have measured the speed of light on our earth, is a distance which is, by comparison with the stellar spaces, virtually infinitesimal: a few miles only, some twenty-two kilometers and a little more in France, and something a great deal less than that in this country; and as regards their opinion that light moves in a vacuum with a speed slightly greater than in the atmosphere of our earth, it must be remembered clearly that all such estimates of the velocity of light *in vacuo* are wholly based on theory only and have never as yet been proved by actual experimentation — at least if such has taken place, it is utterly unknown to me.

Now, let me tell you something interesting. The Milky Way is today supposed to be our universe. We theosophists say likewise that it is so: our own particular home-universe; and the nebulae — those faint wisps of milky light, a very few of which can be seen sometimes with the unaided eye in the skies at night — are in most cases supposed to be today what are called island-universes, that is to say, vast bodies of stars, doubtless with their planets around them, gathered together in these individual world clusters, island-universes as they are today called.

Of these nebulae there are doubtless tens of thousands, and possibly hundreds of thousands of them, and some are actually star clusters, the great distance of which makes them appear to our vision, unaided or aided by the telescope, is faint patches of milky light. But as none of these has been discovered to be as large in diameter, or as thick through, as our own Milky Way system is, which system has the shape of a lens, or of a thin watch, the astronomers call our Milky Way by the popular name of continent-universe; and the other nebular star clusters which



we see and which are in many cases really vast masses of millions of suns, are called island-universes.

Among these nebulae there are some which are irresolvable, that is, no telescopic power has ever been able to break them up into their component individual suns, whose collective light makes them appear as wispy stellar wraiths in the night sky; and, on the other hand, some of these irresolvable nebulae are probably vast bodies of glowing primordial substance-matter which the astronomers popularly call bodies of glowing gas.

But others of these nebulae are resolvable, and, as just said, they are now found to consist of millions of millions of suns clustered together: some of the nebulae being annular or having a ring-shape: some of the nebulae are spiral with wisps or streamers issuing from the heart of them.

A good example of the nebulae so far irresolvable is the great nebula in the constellation of Orion, which is probably original world-stuff, and therefore of an evolutionary date younger than the bright nebulae of any other kind.

There are also known what are called the dark nebulae, very recently discovered to be such. If you look into the spaces of the Milky Way when the moon is not shining, you will see, especially those who are near the equator, certain very dark spots or lanes or spaces, which it has been customary to call in the English tongue coal-sacks, because they seem so black, both to eye and to telescope, and no telescope has ever been able by itself to see beyond or through these coal-sacks. It was thought originally, when telescopes were first used and for many years afterwards, that these so-called coal-sacks were simply holes through the Milky Way, and that the blackness was simply the visual effect of the bottomless deeps of space.

Now the astronomers think that they have discovered what these dark or black stretches are. They are now considered to be dark nebular masses consisting of some kind of unknown substance or matter which obscures the light of the stars beyond them, and which appear black or dark to us, perhaps by comparison with the brilliance of the stars, perhaps not.

On the other hand, if we see a few stars apparently located in these coal-sacks or black stretches, it is now thought to be simply because these stars are suns between us and the coal-sacks or black spots. We see them because they are projected against these dark nebulae in the background.

In our theosophical teaching, these dark nebulae are elemental or primordial matter: sleeping matter, dormant matter, matter in a state of atomic dissociation. Do you get the idea? They are primordial matter in which the kinetic activities of world building have not yet begun; whereas the illuminated nebulae are nebulae already engaged in the process of world making, and running the gamut in order of brilliance and evolutionary development from the diffused or irresolvable nebulae, like the one in Orion, to the various figure-nebulae composed of clusters of millions of millions of stars.

Some of these illuminated nebulae are what the astronomers call the spiral nebulae on account of their spiral and more or less flat or lenticular shape, that is to say, the thin watch-shape of a lens, and our Milky Way, could it be seen from some vast distance, would doubtless appear as a nebula, and probably a spiral nebula, or perhaps in annular nebula. Be it remembered always that our own sun is one of the stars in the cluster of the Milky Way and is said to be situated not far from the central portion of the Milky Way system, and a trifle to the north of the plane passing through the figure-center of the Milky Way.

[[a page of three illustrations here (p.46-7)]]

I am going to take as an example, for the purpose of the observations which I shall now make, the great and wonderful spiral nebula in the constellation Andromeda, one of the constellations in the northern sky, because it is one of the most beautiful examples known to us of the spiral nebulae, and further because it is one of the nebulae situated most near to us, and furthermore because it is now considered to be one of the island-universes.

This diagram which I now draw on the blackboard gives some vague idea of what the nebula looks like when seen through the telescope. Its elongated appearance is due to the fact that it is seen partly edgewise. We do not see this nebula flat or face on, but the line of incidence of our vision strikes it at a more or less sharp angle, which gives the appearance of an elongated figure. If you will hold your watch before your face, and look at it almost edgewise, it will appear to be elongated to you, although it is round.

Now, when it became known that the Milky Way was much larger than had previously been thought, and that some of the nebulae clustered over the heavens, such as the great spiral nebula of Andromeda, might be another universe like our own Milky Way, in other words an island-universe, great interest was aroused among astronomers, and astronomers and mathematicians and stellar physicists began to study the matter with much greater thought and care than ever before; and only a few years ago a conclusion was reached that the spiral nebulae were in rotation, that is to say, each whirling around its own center, and the spiral nebula of Andromeda was a typical instance in point of argument. They found that this particular nebula rotated, that is to say, made a complete turn, in one hundred thousand of our

human years, that is, one hundred thousand solar years. They likewise found that the diameter of this Andromeda nebula was 50,000 light-years. You know, I suppose, that a light-year is the distance which light, rushing through space at the estimated earth-figure of 186,000 miles a second, travels in one human year.

Thus, then, the spiral nebula of Andromeda was discovered to be in rotation, making a complete turn in 100,000 years; that its diameter was 50,000 light-years. What then happened? The scientists were dumbfounded as well as perplexed at this combination of conditions. Do you know why? I will tell you.

You know how to get the circumference of a circle if you know the length of the diameter. Pi is a letter of the Greek alphabet, properly pronounced as is the English alphabetical character *P*. It is the Greek character for the sound *P*, and is the first letter of the Greek word *Periphereia*, meaning periphery or circumference. In mathematics pi is a mathematical constant and equals in numerical value 3.14159265 plus.

Now the way by which to get the circumference of any circle, if you know the length of its diameter, is to multiply the diameter by this pi-value:  $(\pi)D$ , or what comes to the same thing,  $2(\pi)R$ . The diameter of the spiral nebula in Andromeda is 50,000 light-years. Multiplying that figure by pi, the mathematical constant just spoken of, you will obtain the periphery in light-years of the Andromeda nebula; and you will find therefore that a ray of light speeding along the circumference of this spiral nebula in Andromeda will make one circuit in about 158,000 human years. (For the purpose of this illustration I am accepting the usual and estimated value of the speed of light as being 186,000 human miles a second, and I accept this merely for the purposes of my illustration, because it is what the scientists accept.)

What does all this mean? It means that as the nebula of

Andromeda in its peripheral parts, rotates in 100,000 human years, and that as it would take a light-ray traveling at the rate of 186,000 miles a second 158,000 years to run around the circumference, the nebula is therefore rotating faster than the speed of light.

There was indeed consternation and perplexity in the camp of the scientists! Light, according to the relativity theory, is supposed to be the utmost speed that any material thing can attain; and yet here we have a nebula which in its outer or peripheral portions, that is to say, along the boundary of its circumference, is tearing through space at a speed of rotational velocity one and six-tenths times the speed of light. This of course is scientifically "impossible."

What happened to the alleged fact of the discovery of the rotational speed of the Andromeda nebula in 100,000 years? The so-called discovered fact was quietly thrown overboard, and the theory regarding the rate of the velocity of light was retained.

I will read to you in this connection an exceedingly interesting extract from a simply worded radio talk made by a very eminent astronomer, Dr. Willem J. Luyten, who, if he is not a Hollander, is at least apparently a Hollander by name, and who shows a most commendable spirit of frankness and honesty, although I do wonder indeed why he did not call attention to the fact which I am now trying to set forth.

More recent researches made it appear that the Milky Way system was very much larger than it had been thought to be, and other observations indicated at the same time that the spiral nebulae were in rotation. It was this rotation which very nearly proved fatal to the theory that spiral nebulae are objects like our own Milky Way. For the spirals rotated too fast; so fast that they would make a complete

turn in the incredibly short time of one hundred thousand years. We say "the incredibly short time", of one hundred thousand years, because these spirals are so enormous. At least, they were supposed to have a diameter of about fifty thousand light-years, which would mean that, if the whole spiral rotated once in a hundred thousand years, the outside portions would travel a distance of one hundred and sixty thousand light-years in that time. Consequently they would travel more than one light-year per year, and would be going faster than a ray of light — faster than one hundred and eighty-six thousand miles a second.

These were the alleged facts that were discovered.

After they had performed these calculations, the astronomers paused to reflect, for such a result was incredible.

They had a theory. The facts did not fit into the theory, so the facts were incredible.

You may think that astronomers are not conservative, and that they welcome new observational results. True enough, but if there is one thing that modern science regards as absolutely impossible, it is for any material body to travel faster than light. The velocity of light is a rigid speed limit enforced by the theory of relativity, and cannot be exceeded by any material body whatever. Indeed, it is more than that. The fact that the velocity of light cannot be exceeded is a fundamental tenet of modern physics — the Constitution of the Universe. Science may continually change its by-laws; it may continually scrap old theories and adopt new ones, but it thinks twice before it amends its Constitution.

Well, they must have worked over the problem for a long time, as scientific time goes today, and finally "conclusive evidence" of the actual existence of island-universes came in the year 1924.

Conclusive evidence came in 1924. . . . The distance [of the spiral nebula in the constellation of Andromeda] that we derive from these measures is one million light-years. . . . .  
Island-Universes have come into their own.

Now listen to this. After proving certain things which had already been proved before, we reach the conclusion of this interesting extract, which I will now read to you, merely pointing out that I wonder why Dr. Luyten says not a word about the estimated rotational speed of the Andromeda nebula of one hundred thousand years, which today would undoubtedly be an accepted scientific fact if it did not conflict so violently with the theoretic speed of light, the so-called ultimate speed limit of the material universe.

Now that we know its distance, we can say more about the great spiral nebula in Andromeda. Its diameter is about fifty thousand light-years, and it contains millions upon millions of stars. All of those stars we can see in the nebula are thousands of times brighter than the Sun; indeed, if we were to put the Sun at this distance, we could not possibly photograph it, even with our most powerful telescopes. We can now also calculate the brightness of that amazing star that flashed up in the nebula in 1885, and remained visible for but a short time. At the time of its maximum brilliance, it was one hundred million times brighter than our Sun. While it was at this splendor, this gigantic star was giving out so much light, and pouring out so much energy into space, that it was thereby losing, according to the theory of relativity, more than two hundred trillion tons of matter

every second.

You see, friends, not a word about the important point in this Dr. Luyten's conclusion — a point which is passed over in perfect silence: I mean the rotation of the Andromeda nebula in one hundred thousand years, which apparently had previously been scientifically proved. Dr. Luyten's own words are evidence of this. Were I to wax a trifle ironical, I might say that the astronomers, at least most of them, evidently think that something is wrong about the facts of nature, but not with their theory — earth-proved, but not universally — that light is the fastest traveling material entity in the universe: forgetting, as we theosophists might point out, that what exists in the vast spaces of space, outside of the mighty electromagnetic attractions of such a body as our gross, dense, earth, must be, and is indeed, very different from what it is here.

I refer of course to conditions in which matter finds itself in nebulae and in suns, as contrasted with the conditions under which we humans know matter in our gross, dense earth; and similarly I refer to the conditions under which energy or force manifests itself in star and nebula from what it must manifest itself in our own physical sphere and even in our own solar system.

Theosophy teaches that the speed of light may very readily be 186,000 miles more or less a second on this earth, and yet have quite a different rate of velocity when it is traveling under conditions very different indeed from what exist here on our planet: in fact, theosophy teaches that light travels much faster in what the astronomers call empty space, or the spaces of interstellar and internebular stretches, from what it does here on earth.

Before I leave you this afternoon I have what I believe to be a duty to perform, and in closing my lecture I will briefly fulfill it. I



have received a pathetic communication in the form of a question. I debated long after the receipt of this communication whether I should speak of it in public or not: but as the writer of it, who withheld his name, gave me his permission to read his communication in public, if I so chose, and said that he would have a friend in this Temple, or himself be here, today or on next Sunday, I have finally decided to read it, because his appeal has touched me deeply; and as it is in the sense of a call for help, I do not care to be critical and ask why he preferred this way rather than receiving a written private reply from me.

The writer of this letter, which I now read to you, is, an employee in some bank, I believe:

. . . .California, *June 17th.*

Prof. G. VON PURUCKER,  
Theosophical University, Point Loma, California.

Dear Sir: . . . . Asking your pardon for asking this question, for perhaps you can give me some real help, here is the situation:

I am a man under middle age, and about a year ago I met up with this girl or young lady. She attracted me very much, because she had no other fellows hanging around her, that I could see. We soon became deeply interested in each other, and in a little while we were exchanging signals like lovers will do, though nothing else passed between us. She knew I admired her at the first time because she was self-respecting, and kept to herself, which made me think that she would be faithful to the man she would love; I told her of this once.

One day I accidentally discovered her with another chap: I saw at once that they were more than friendly, but nothing

bad at all, just half-way lovers so to say. I did not say anything then to her. I was too hurt. She did not see me, and I never said a word to her, just sort of watched, and hoped.

Soon after again accidentally I saw her almost throw him a kiss; and that same day later on, she saw me and she threw me a kiss. I just turned my head away, and walked on. I think my heart was breaking. When she saw me next time, she said: "What is the matter? Anything wrong with me?" I was so heartbroken I could not speak easily, but I finally told her what I had seen her do. She said I was silly, that she cared only for me, and only did it with the other fellow so nobody would know about me, because I was not well off and her parents might object, and she did not want a fuss.

I cannot help feeling that a girl like that is not the kind I want to marry, though I really did care for her before this happened. I am a decent man, and I want to marry a girl who her children will respect. Should I marry her do you think? I feel that I cannot love her now. . . .

How difficult it is for a man to answer a question like this one. All I can say is that the pathos of such a situation is very great indeed; and will be so understood by most of us. Most of our trials and difficulties come to us because we ourselves, however hard it may seem to say so at the present time, have brought these afflictions upon us. A man must be a man, and must act as a man, under all circumstances.

I will say the following: I do not blame the woman he speaks of. I know nothing about her, and I know nothing about her side of the difficulty. I can only say, in answer to this unfortunate man's query, that as confidence, or trust, and sympathy, and respect, are

the only real bases for a happy and honorable married life, if he have not these, I think that to marry this unfortunate woman would be a most grievous mistake. Whether she be at fault, or he have misunderstood her, matters, I think, not at all, if he have described the situation correctly; for although she may be innocent of any moral delinquency in any sense, yet a woman who will, if the facts have been accurately reported, consider it harmless to encourage two men at the same time, is in the wrong so far as the action goes. First, she is doing a deep wrong to the other man; second, she is doing a still deeper injury to the man she says she loves; and third, she is doing the deepest injury to her own soul and womanhood.

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[Vol 1, No 4](#)  
[Contents](#)

**Vol. 1 No. 4 (October 22, 1929)**

**QUESTIONS THAT ALL OF US ASK**

I have received so many questions from interested inquirers that I am beginning to feel like an animated encyclopedia, or a perambulating dictionary. Most of these questions have come from outsiders who are interested in what theosophy has to teach on the subjects which interest them. I think that this is a very good sign indeed of the manner in which theosophic thought is affecting the mind of the public; and before trying to answer these questions, some of which touch upon the deepest problems of human life and of nature, I am going to read them all to you, in order to give you an idea of what kind of questions people ask, thus showing what their minds are brooding upon, what they are interested in, and what they want to know.

People may talk about this being a very materialistic age, in which nothing interests except the things of matter — how to make money quickly, or how to choose a wife or a husband, or how to break the bank, or how successfully to run some commercial enterprise, or whatnot — but I don't believe that these things are the only ones which interest serious and broad-minded folk. On the contrary, I think that questions such as the above run in the minds of people who have not yet learned to see the wonderful possibilities in themselves. For there are most lovely horizons of vision, of insight, of possibilities of many kinds within each human being; and the questions that men and women ask along these higher lines in which they find deep interest are like the whisperings of their souls — queries which must be answered before they can have peace.

Yes, these are the things which really and deeply move and

interest men and women, and only incidentally do things of matter move and interest them. I suppose that there are really very few men or women who spend much time, when it really comes to matters of importance, in giving serious thought to anything except to those things which are profoundly worth while, such things, for instance, as are embodied in the following questions: Whence came I? Who am I? Whither am I going? Am I or am I not? Is all this an illusion: is it a mockery of the hope within my breast, or is it real? These are the questions that *thinking* men and women ask; and they are certainly going to have an answer — otherwise, no system which does not answer them will or can stand.

How glad we are, teachers and exponents of the age-old wisdom-religion which has stood the test of unnumbered ages, and which has never failed to answer any question that any inquiring human soul has asked, that in the light of our blessed Theosophy we can give adequate answers to human souls.

I have twenty questions jotted down on the paper that I hold in my hand, and I am going to try to answer them, or some of them, this afternoon. The answers of necessity will be brief, but I will do my best to make them as clear and responsive to the questions as time and circumstance will allow me to do. Here are some of the questions:

"Who am I, and what am I?"

"What am I here on this earth for?"

"Am I all mind, or all matter, or both mixed?"

"What is mind?"

"What is matter?"

"Has matter any real being *per se*"

"What is force or energy?"

Now, friends, you may see why I said at the opening of my lecture to you this afternoon that I felt as if I were an animated encyclopedia or a perambulating dictionary. Kind friends sent these questions in to me, and I feel that they won't be satisfied until they get responsive answers to these questions — and indeed theosophy enables us to give responsive answers.

"Who am I and what am I?" What answer would you give to that question? I would like to answer this first question by asking in my turn a question, after the style of Socrates of old Greece. What do you mean by this "I"? Which I? The I of the streets, or the I of the counting-house, or the I of the study, or the I of the home, or the I of the prison: in other words, is it the spiritual I, or the human I, or the animal I? Which is referred to here?

For the above reasons this question is vague. In the first place, according to our wonderful theosophical teachings, the I here which I think is unquestionably meant, is the human I, the ordinary human soul: and to the theosophist this is an expression distinctly vague because the human soul includes, in a general way, all the factors that I have just pointed out: it is a consciousness center to which various names in different religions have been given. Some philosophies and religions call this particular consciousness center soul, others call it the ego, others consider it to be both soul and ego as one unity, and others look upon it after still other manners, and therefore give to it other names; but the questioner evidently means: Who is the human soul, and what is the human soul?

It is that entity which is neither immortal nor mortal *per se*, and which is the seat of will, consciousness, intelligence, and feeling in the average human being. It is not immortal because it is not

pure enough to be truly impersonal; if it were, it would not be human but superhuman. It is not wholly mortal, because its instincts, its movements, the operations of itself, are in a sense above purely mortal things of matter.

Human beings have holy loves, they have aspirations, they have hope, they have vision, and many other similar qualities. These things belong to the spirit, which is immortal and deathless, and are transmitted, through this intermediate nature or human soul, which human beings ordinarily call I, much as the sunlight streams through the pane of glass in the window. The pane of glass is the vehicle or carrier or bearer or transmitter of this wondrous quality or force streaming from the spirit above. We human souls are like these panes of glass: we reflect as much of the golden sunlight of the spirit, as our evolutionary development enables us to do. Is not this simple? There is nothing difficult to understand about it at all.

Now, this human soul has nevertheless the seeds of immortality within it. Every human being who thinks, knows that the high and lovely qualities of which I have just spoken, and many more of which I have not spoken, can be cultivated to the *n*th degree, if people only will do so. When this is done in some grand and sublime degree, then you see what the human race can bring forth in the shape of the great sages and seers of the ages — the great, wonderful men and women who exemplify the deathless energies of the spirit: the Buddha, Jesus called the Christ, Apollonius of Tyana, Lao-Tse the great mystic seer and sage of China, Confucius — hundreds of them exemplify to what states of grandeur this human I, can attain when it allies itself straitly and directly with the spirit which is at the core of everything that is.

Thus we see what the human I is. It is conditionally mortal; it is conditionally immortal, if we ally ourselves by our will and our

vision with the deathless spirit within and above us, and mortal if we allow ourselves to be dragged down into what is commonly called matter and material instincts and impulses, which are wholly mortal and which all die; and we thank the immortal gods that it is so, for the death of these lower things it is which frees the immortal spirit within us and above us when death comes, so that when we go to our sublime home for the inter-life period of rest and peace, we have only bliss and high vision and a memory of all that is great and grand in our past life.

You see the natural basis that ethics has in such thoughts as these: the basis that morals naturally have in right and noble living, in high thinking. These are no vain words: indeed, they are verily the teachings of the sages of old, and are the very basis of every religion, of every world religion that exists: the very basis of every great philosophy; and I tell you further, as I hope to point out today, the very basis of the facts of science, the facts of nature which are rooted in the fundamentals of the Great Mother, likewise reposes on the same spiritual substratum of being. This question, had I the time to answer it properly, would require the compass of a book.

"What am I here on this earth for?" I have already told you in large part: to expand your self-consciousness, to become yourself, evolving, growing, expressing that which is within you, in the very spirit of you; expanding in self-consciousness as time goes on, ever more and more, until not only are the signposts of genius passed, until not only are the signposts of seership and mastery over life passed, but in time to come the human race shall have evolved to the sublime degree of evolutionary development in the future when they shall rebecome gods, divine beings, — but *self-consciously* so.

Existing in the very beginning of this present stage of cosmic



evolution in the bosom of the superspiritual source and root of all that is: leaving it as unself-conscious god-sparks, we passed through many existences and lives on various spiritual spheres, as also in various material spheres, among these latter our own planet Terra; in them all learning, growing, expanding, evolving, manifesting forth outwards what we are intrinsically and naturally within our inmost center. This is the procedure of evolution: becoming or manifesting what we are latently within; for in the name of truth, what else can a man or woman, or any other being for the matter of that, become except that which lies in the evolving entity itself? After the passage of many aeons of evolution after this manner, we shall re-enter, mystically speaking, or rebecome, or self-consciously recognize our kinship with the All, and thus find ourselves again in the bosom of the universal Life, but no longer as unself-conscious god-sparks, but as fully self-conscious gods.

This is the teaching of all the sages of all the ages, and any thinking man or woman must feel the instant appeal that it makes to both mind and heart. Deliver me from the moonshees and Sir Oracles of brain-mind knowledge, who think that they know all things, who indeed think that they know so much that they cannot know truth when they see it. The mind is already so full and packed with ideas and thoughts about supposed facts that they have lost the direct vision and simplicity of what some philosophers have called the child state.

Give me the child's heart and the child's unsophisticated vision, unspoiled by the false lessons learned during life; for verily before we die, we have to unlearn very largely what we think we have learned in order to regain the child state of vision and trust, which is that inner spiritual knowledge latent in the core of our being.

"Am I all mind or all matter, or both mixed?" I would say none of the three: I am not all mind; I am not all matter; I am not a mere mixture of mind and matter. Only relatively can this third be said. Do you know why I give the answer thus? On account of the unnecessary and naturally false antinomy, contradiction, in the idea that there is a fundamental or radical difference between mind and matter. There is no such logical or fundamental difference. Can you have in the universe two absolutely radical — that is, from the root up — contrasted things: mind on the one hand, and matter on the other hand? Two infinities? No.

They are one, fundamentally one; and mind on the one hand, and matter on the other hand — or to put it in another way, spirit on the one hand and substance on the other hand — are but two poles of the same thing, two manifestations of the same underlying reality.

What is this underlying reality? Let me call it consciousness. It is mind; it is matter; it is spirit; it is substance; it is form; it is formless; it is energy or force; and it is what is called matter, the supposed opposite or carrier of force. Why, even our modern scientists are beginning to tell us that energy or force and matter are fundamentally one: that what we call matter is but a manifestation of a showing forth of what energy is, of what force is. They have even gone so far now as to say that the fundamental of everything is electricity, which from one viewpoint is considered to be matter and from another viewpoint is considered to be energy, or the resultant of energy.

In the days of our fathers, it was thought that there was nothing but matter and that force was merely a mode of matter, one of its movements, so to speak. But whence arose these movements? Now scientific opinion is going to the other extreme, and in many quarters we hear voiced the opinion that, strictly speaking, there

is no matter at all and that fundamentally there is naught but force and energy.

We theosophists take the middle course between these two extremes; we say that both mind and matter exist, but neither *is*. These are philosophical terms; they exist, that is to say, they have all appearance of being; they are the modes or manifestations or manners of manifestation, of the fundamental, underlying reality which in the age-old wisdom-religion is called pure consciousness.

Therefore, having these thoughts in view, it is proper to say that I am not all mind, which answer would limit me merely to this human mind, because that human mind was in the mind of the questioner. In my inmost parts I am far greater than mind. The root of my being is undiluted consciousness. On the other hand, I am not all matter, because matter is an illusion which has no actual existence *per se*; and I can be said to be mixed of mind and matter only in a relative sense: as a being imperfectly evolved, I manifest forth imperfect things, among which are mind and matter; but the root of me, the fundamental thing in me, the core of me, is pure consciousness, rooted in cosmic consciousness, and this core of me manifests through the underlying energy-center of my being which center theosophists call the monad, and which has often been incorrectly spoken of as the soul.

I hope that the man who asked this question is here.

"What is mind?" I have already answered it. "What is matter?" Now we come to something perhaps more familiar. I will answer the next question at the same time. "Has matter any real being *per se*?" No, none. What then is matter? Well, philosophers, some of them, say that matter is that which manifests force; substance is that which manifests spirit; that matter is the vehicle through which energies work.

That is all right as far as it goes — no objection to that expression whatsoever; no objection to that way of looking at things — but by that we merely describe a process; we are not telling what matter is. *Is matter*, or does it merely *exist* In other words, is it a noumenon or a phenomenon: does it exist in itself, or is it merely an appearance? You know the meaning of the Latin word "exist," "to show an appearance of things," *existere*. But matter *is* not. Let me try to give you an idea of what I mean here.

I always like to quote the eminent men of science whenever I can make them pay tribute, whether they want to or not, to the age-old theosophical philosophy; and it is most interesting to see how their latest discoveries are bringing them into line with our fundamental theosophical teachings, which have been invented by nobody, which are older than the enduring hills because they are as old as human beings, as old as thinking man, and man is older than the hills; belonging to no nation, belonging to no race, universal teachings which are the same in every country on the globe, and in every geological age, for they are formulations of the truths of nature as seen by the great seers and sages.

I will quote first, in order to show you what matter is in the opinion of eminent modern scientists, from a very eminent British scientific philosopher, a man as well known in the social circles of his country as he is in the scientific circles: the Honorable Bertrand Russell. He said:

To the eye or to the touch, ordinary matter appears to be continuous; our dinner-tables, or the chairs on which we sit, seem to present an unbroken surface. We think that if there were too many holes the chairs would not be safe to sit on. Science, however, compels us to accept a quite different conception of what we are pleased to call 'solid' matter; it is, in fact, something much like the Irishman's

net, 'a number of holes tied together with pieces of string.' Only it would be necessary to imagine the strings cut away until only the knots were left.

This is very clever, because it is true. I have often pointed out that what is called 'matter' is mostly 'empty space' as popularly called: vacancy, vacuum, vacuity; and the actual solid points of my own physical body, for instance, who am a six-foot man and more, are utterly invisible even under the most powerful microscope. If I could gather the actual so-called 'solid' energy-points of my body, I mean the electrons of the atoms, composing my body, into one single point, and do away with all the 'matter' which makes the seeming bulk and size of my body, that collective point would be so small that you would have to hunt for it with a powerful magnifying glass, with a microscope; and I am not certain that you could even then see it.

So what is your 'matter'; your wood, and your lead, and your steel, and your trees, and your stones, and all the rest of it? Mostly holes, so-called 'empty space,' vacuity. What is it all then but an illusion? But by 'illusion' we Theosophists do not mean something that does not exist; we really mean *illusion*, something which we, in seeing it, do not understand because we do not see the noumenal causal substance behind it or beneath it. What we see is an illusory or deceptive presentation. That is what we mean by an illusion.

Let me read to you another extract of the same type of thought, from a very modern book, *The Romance of Chemistry*, by William Foster, Ph.D., as I find it on page 36. Dr. Foster is professor of Chemistry in Princeton University. He says:

It has been computed that one cubic centimeter (less than a small thimbleful) of a gas, say oxygen, at standard temperature and pressure, contains approximately twenty-

seven billion billion [twenty-seven quintillion] molecules. Professor R. A. Millikan says we can now count this number with probably greater precision than we can attain in determining the number of people living in New York City. . . .

. . . W. R. Whitney of the General Electric Company has calculated that if the molecules in a glass of water could each be changed into a grain of sea-sand, the sand thus produced would be sufficient to cover the whole of the United States to the depth of one hundred feet.

If we poured a quart of water into the sea and, after complete mixing with the entire body of water, dipped out from any part of the sea another quart of the liquid, the second quart would contain many thousands of the original molecules which were poured into the sea.

So incomputably numerous are the molecules in a glass of water!

I suppose that you know what the modern scientific conception of an atom is: that it is no longer an ultimate particle of substance; and, according to the latest theories of science, an atom is furthermore composed of elements or particles still smaller than the atom, and called electrons, of two kinds: the positive kind, which is called protons, and the negative kind of electricity-points of negative electricity which are commonly called electrons.

Furthermore, the atom has frequently been likened in structure to a solar system, with a central proton or group of protons as the atomic sun, and an electron, or numerous electrons, whirling around this central protonic nucleus in an orbit or in orbits very much after the fashion in which the planets circle around our sun. Again, these spaces in the atom which separate electrons from the protonic nucleus, or electron from electron, are

relatively as great as are the spaces separating planet from planet and planet from sun in our own solar system.

Thus you see that an atom in its structure and bulk is mostly so-called empty space. That is what your matter is: your wonderful "solid" matter, the most unreal, unsolid, unsubstantial, illusory thing that human intelligence has ever speculated upon.

What is behind or underneath matter, as its noumenal or causal principle? That is the question to be answered. But this writer, Dr. Foster, on page 37 of his book, writes as follows:

An atom is therefore largely a vacuum. It has been computed that if the nucleus of a helium atom were represented by a pea, its two planetary electrons could be represented by two peas a quarter of a mile away. Imagine that a tiny demon possessing vision infinitely keen is standing, gun in hand, an inch from an atom. Now if the little demon fired a ball the size of an electron at the nucleus of the atom, there is hardly a chance in a billion that he could hit the almost infinitely small bull's eye.

As stated by Bertrand Russell, the electron of the hydrogen atom goes round its tiny orbit very rapidly, covering, under normal conditions, about fourteen hundred miles per second, which means that it has to revolve seven billion times in one millionth of a second! In other words, the electron completes seven billions of its years in a millionth of a second!

In other words, seven quadrillions of its years in one human second. For all we know, in this short space of time a planetary electron may live the entire course of its life, and then vanish for an equivalent period of repose, only to return again to resume its cyclical coursing about the protonic nucleus. How do we know

that on these infinitesimal bodies called electrons there may not exist infinitesimal intelligences, beings possessing will and consciousness and feeling and all the other energetic spiritual and intellectual faculties and capacities that we humans have, live the courses of their lives in these tiny solar systems invisible to us on account of the grossness of our sense of vision? I repeat it: How do we know that infinitesimal entities may not live and run all their life course in these infinitesimal spaces even as we do on our own dust-speck, our planet Terra, in this small part of what we call the cosmic spaces? The thought is very suggestive: the atom on the one hand, composed of its infinitesimal structural parts; and the vast spaces that our intelligence and senses apprise us of somewhat on the other hand.

How well we recognize the truth of the ancient Hermetic axiom: "What is above is the same as that which is below; and what is below is the same as that which is above"; for nature is ruled by one universal all-permeant consciousness, which, in order to give it a name we call the cosmic consciousness; and its operations and its essence are the same in all and through all, and therefore its laws are the same through all and everywhere, and its manifestations and the results of its operations must be at least closely similar everywhere in both great and small, in the cosmic and in the infinitesimal.

That is what matter is. It is truly only an illusion. As I strike my hand on the desk before me, we hear the sound of the blow, and both hand and desk seem quite solid; but both are really so-called empty space striking empty space, and the repercussion, the noise which you hear, is an electromagnetic phenomenon, as our ears receive it.

We theosophists likewise, with the ultra-modern scientists, say that the quasi-ethereal basis of what we call matter is electrical in



character; but behind this basis, and underneath it, and beyond it, and above it — use what word you will — there are vast ranges of substances and matters still more ethereal, running up through constantly etherealizing stages or ladders of life until we attain spirit and then superspirit and then Divinity — and then what? We humans know not. All we do know is that there is no reason for stopping there; our imagination is powerless to go farther, the wings of its vision carry it no farther into the Great Mystery.

But with constantly expanding vision as we evolve more, shall we know more: and the more akin, the more alike, shall we become to the Divine within us. So that the time shall truly be, in the far-distant aeons of the future, when we shall confabulate with the gods.

Has matter any real being *per se*, then? No.

"What is force or energy?" — the next question. It is that which produces matter in a sense; it is matter, because matter is nothing but another term for the manifestation of force or energy. But is force or energy something of which we can know somewhat by the study of matter? Yes, to a certain extent we can, but force or energy, and most emphatically physical force or energy, is not the ultimate. Force or energy is merely etherealized or spiritualized matter, if you like to put it in that way; but theosophists prefer to put it in the other way: matter is merely sleeping energy, dormant force, spirit in that particular phase or mode or event of its eternal being, manifesting itself in the form of atomic infinitesimals which in a sense are actually little souls, learning entities, enshrining growing or evolving beings of what we may rather quaintly call infinitesimal size. It is exceedingly difficult to find the proper and appropriate words with which to clothe the thought in matters so abstract and, to the Occidental mind, unusual as those which we are now discussing.

We human beings are not the only hierarchy of self-conscious entities in this vast universe. Let us remember this and make place in our minds for the idea of vast hierarchies of intelligences and consciousnesses in all-various grades of evolutionary development. If there is one thing about theosophy which, more than any other, is helpful to us, it is that it takes all the egoism out of us, and gives to us peace and joy in the sense of oneness with the universal life.

"Do the stars or suns and their planets, if any, come into being fortuitously or by chance, or is there an inner governing life-essence ruling the entire course of their existence from beginning to end, as religion says is the case with man and his so-called soul?" Certainly the latter. Will you please tell me, if this be not so, what fortuity or chance is? I can tell you what they are, just as you can tell me what they are, if you pause to think a moment.

When a man does not know how a thing has happened, or how it happens, he says that it "happened," that it comes about through "chance." What then is this word chance? It is a word signifying our ignorance. We are cheating ourselves with a word. The stars and the suns and the planets, the meteors and nebulae, and all other celestial bodies, are ruled and governed by a soul whose fiery life courses through them as it courses through us. They are all on different stages of evolutionary progress or growth, cosmic growth, for they have their cycles even as we human beings have them.

You may remember the beautiful words of Vergil, the Latin poet, in his *Aeneid*, book VI, verses 724-727, as translated by an English poet:

"Know first, the heaven, the earth, the main,  
The moon's pale orb, the starry train,  
Are nourished by a soul,

A bright intelligence, whose flame  
Glow in each member of the frame,  
And stirs the mighty whole."

The idea here is not that this bright intelligence of cosmic sweep is what the Occidental mind pictures to itself when it uses the term God. For the sake of immortal truth, friends, do not limit our conception of these wondrously beautiful thoughts by a word like that, with its unfortunate Occidental implications of theological and popular fantasies. Let us rather think of the cosmic life, of the cosmic spirit, that great intelligence "whose flame glows in each member of the frame, and stirs the mighty whole," even as the human soul glows in each of us, and stirs us.

Look at the beauty of the picture that this gives to us — an animate universe filled full with bright intelligences, filled full with gods, demigods or half-gods, quarter-gods, so to speak, with beings striving to become gods, like us humans; and also those sublime entities whom we may call supergods: and the ladder of life ranges through all these from the highest that we can conceive of through beings less in intelligence, less evolved, down to humans, and below them.

I have already frequently told you from this platform what evolution in theosophy is, — the bringing out or unwrapping of what is locked up within the evolving entity. What else can develop except what is within yourself, or within any other evolving entity? Neither you nor it can become anything which is not latent within you or it. That is evolution as the theosophist understands it: not the adding of something into yourself from the outside, after the manner of a mason putting a brick into a wall; but the bringing out, the self-expression, of innate powers and faculties of the spirit within.

In opening my lecture this afternoon I made a promise that I

would try to answer all the questions that I had on my list. I have answered very briefly eight of them. That leaves twelve more still to be answered, and as my time for this afternoon is now drawing to a close, before leaving you I will give you another thought about this matter of stars and suns and so forth, because it is very interesting and it will show you some of the beauties of the deeper sides of our wonderful theosophical philosophy — our religion-philosophy-science.

You know, I suppose, that there exist in the cosmic spaces, what have now been recognized to be dark nebulae by modern astronomers. These so-called dark nebulae are clouds of cosmic matter, or nebulae which are not shining, which are not bright, but which are dark — at least they appear to be dark by comparison with the bright nebulae and with the scattered clusters of suns. Astronomers have photographed these dark nebulae, which cover vast stretches, and you may see some of these dark patches in the Milky Way.

It was long customary in England to call these dark patches coal-sacks, because they are so black. They are sometimes of various shapes, more or less round and sometimes stretches of darkness in the body of the Milky Way; and when they are photographed they look exactly like black clouds of a very rugged and storm-cloud appearance. They are actually of enormous extent, spacially speaking, enormously extensive, and probably because those in the Milky Way are nearer to us than the bright nebulae, they seem to be far more extensive than the bright nebulae are.

Theosophy will tell you that these dark nebulae are, if I may use the expression, mother-matter — that is an expression which will be easily understood by you. In the theosophical teachings there are actually two classes of these dark nebulae, one class which is in the very beginning of cosmic evolutionary development and

represents what we may call primordial matter, matter in its highest state. This matter is not spiritual substance, but an intermediate state between spiritual substance which is the origin of things, and gross, physical matter.

Therefore may we properly call this first class of dark nebulae stretches of mother-matter or primordial matter. We may also perhaps call them matter in a state of dissociation, or matter in which the component atoms exist in dissociated form.

Now, this first class of dark nebulae comprises nebulae which are very young cosmically speaking, in the sense of the development of worlds to be, for they are on their way in the process of the making of worlds. The bright nebulae are stages much farther advanced towards the making of suns and worlds.

The second class of the dark nebulae are at the other end of evolutionary development: they are what may be called cosmic dust — dust of the cosmic graveyards, if we may so express it. And probably most of the dark nebulae or so-called coal-sacks in the Milky Way belong to this second class.

How did the ancients know about these dark nebulae — a discovery of very recent years? Let me read to you something. I have translated an exceedingly interesting passage from an ancient Hindu work, which is known in the Sanskrit tongue as the *Manava-Dharma-Sastra*, usually translated as the *Scriptures of Manu*. Manu is supposed to have been, in far distant times, a Hindu sage of very high degree. In the first book of this archaic Sanskrit work, verses 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 are as follows — and I may say in passing that it is very difficult to translate these ancient thoughts into language of modern times, first because the words are unusual, and second because the thoughts are new to us, with our sophisticated Occidental minds; but I have done my best and will now read my translation to you.

"This physical universe was become quiescent darkness, indistinguishable, without its characteristic forms; inconceivable, unrecognizable, as it were wholly sunken in deep sleep." (5)

(Asid idam tamobhutam aprajnatam alakshanam:  
apratarkyam avijneyam prasuptamiva sarvatah.) (5)

Here we find precisely what theosophy also tells us. The dark nebulae of the first class are here alluded to, and they are, as I have just said, mother-matter, which in a sense we may also call sleeping matter or dormant matter: matter in the very beginnings of things before its cycle comes to awaken into pronounced, manifested activity.

"Thence the Self-becoming, celestial, unmanifest, of cyclical power, manifesting this physical universe, the elements and so forth, came forth, dispelling the darkness. (6)

"That one, to be perceived by a faculty transcending the senses, subtle, unmanifest, ancient, consisting of all beings and things, unthinkable, shone forth verily of itself. (7)

"It — Swayambhur — sunken in deep thought, desirous to engender from his own body, sent forth all-various progeny: into these it sent forth seed. (8)

"That became a golden egg, shining forth thousand-rayed. In this — egg — it reproduced itself, ancestor of all the world and beings. (9)

"What that cause was, unmanifest, continuous, both the illusory and real, from it came forth Individuality, called by men Brahma — Expander." [The self-expanding Soul] (10)

Tatah Swayambhur bhagavan avyakto vyanjayann idam:  
mahabhutadi vrittauajah pradur asit tamonudah. (6)

Yo 'sav atindriyagrahyah sukshmo 'vyaktah sanatanah:  
sarvabhutamayo 'chintyah: sa eva swayamudbabhau. (7)

So 'bhidhyaya sariratswat sisrikshur vividhah prajah apa  
eva sasarjadau: tasu bijam avasrijat. (8)

Tad andam abhavaddhaimam sahasransusamaprabham.  
Tasminjajne swayam brahma sarvalokapitamahah. (9)

Yattatkaranam avyaktam nityam sadasadatmakam  
takvisrishtah sa purusho: loke brahmeti kirttyate. (10)

It is very remarkable that in this extract, although it is written in the style of a bygone age, we may see the whole procedure of cosmic evolution outlined in a few lines. How did these ancients know that the beginnings of things were "darkness"?

The Hebrews also taught, but in a very small and restricted view, of these matters, practically the same ideas; and let us remember that the Hebrews were one small people in a district of Hither Asia. "Darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of the Elohim moved upon the face of the waters." Then came light.

My time for closing this afternoon has now come. I will try in my lecture on next Sunday to interest you further by answering some or all of the other questions that I have on my list; and I shall try to do so with the same earnest desire to enlighten and help that I have felt today. I thank the kind friends who have sent these questions in to me. I do not know whence most of them come, but I personally have found them very interesting, and I may also add that I have learned not a little from studying them.

**No. 5 (October 29, 1929)**

**QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK**

I am going to try to answer some of the questions which we all ask; but truly, in receiving some of these questions, I have asked myself a question: Is each one of these questions a fishing expedition, or are they asked in all sincerity of heart? We have practical jokers in the world, you know, and I am reminded of a certain great man of science, who one day saw a little boy fishing through a grating in the pavement, and he said: "What are you fishing for, my little man?" "Wooglies!" "Wooglies, what are wooglies?" "Don't know, haven't caught any yet!"

Well, I sometimes wonder if the people who ask these questions are fishing for wooglies, or are they asking questions from their hearts?

Now, in attempting to answer such questions as all of us ask, this does not mean, of course, that no question would occur to one man if it did not occur to all other men. I can think of questions, I am sure, that I have a notion have occurred to no one else excepting me. Among these queries that I have received there are questions regarding the nature, and the origin, and the destiny of man and of the universe: who we are, and whence we come, and whither we are traveling. I have received also questions of less wide import, questions to which I have alluded on other occasions, such as — "How may I make a fortune quickly?" "How shall I marry happily?" "Shall I be president of the United States?" "Shall I inherit a fortune?"

Questions like these I pay no attention to, and I have received very few of them. Should the mind of anyone hanker after answers to queries of this type, I advise him to go where he will



receive answers to them — to the palmists perhaps, and the fortunetellers perhaps, and the so-called astrologers perhaps — but questions dealing with the great riddles of life are the questions which a theosophical lecturer likes to answer, and it is just these that are the questions that all men ask.

Preceding my lecture of last Sunday I received a number of questions that were sent in to me — some of them very interesting questions; and some of these latter were, furthermore, questions that have puzzled the minds of men who have not been taught the ancient wisdom-religion by initiated teachers: and these questions are they which revolve around the subjects:

- "Who am I? What am I? and Why am I on this earth?"
- "Am I all mind, or all matter, or both mixed?"
- "What is mind?"
- "What is matter?"
- "Has matter any real being *per se*"
- "What is force or energy?"
- "Do the stars or suns, and their planets, if any, come into being fortuitously or by chance; or is there an inner and governing life-essence ruling the entire course of their existence, from beginning to end, as religions say is the case with man and his so-called soul?"

It is with reference to this last query, friends, that I have received another question — a question about a question; I am going to try to answer this first. Here it is, and it is a thoughtful mind who asked it.

"I have been much interested in what you have said about the dark and bright nebulae. But you appear to have made different remarks about each at different times, recently and in past lectures. You seem to speak of the dark nebulae as

being both in and out of the Milky Way; you seem to say that they precede the bright nebulae in evolutionary time, and also that they are later in evolutionary development than the bright nebulae. Are these statements contradictions or have I misunderstood things? Also you have said that the nebulae are universes in the making, and you also have spoken of nebulae as being only planets in the making; how about this? Further, you speak of some nebulae as being clusters of suns so far distant from us that their combined light blends into a blur, somewhat as the thousands of lights of a great city seem to be a blur of light; and you have also spoken of nebulae as being 'glowing mother-stuff,' that is to say clouds of glowing stuff which have not yet become concreted into suns. How about this?"

One question? Many in one. First, I have indeed on different occasions spoken of the dark nebulae as being both within and without the Milky Way; but as I was dealing, on these separate occasions, with very recondite facts of cosmic origins, I tried to give a hint of the theosophical teachings without overloading the minds of the audience with too much detail.

As a matter of fact, there are two kinds of dark nebulae. Both can be found within the Milky Way, although it is true that the scientists of today, to whom the dark nebulae are a very recent discovery, know of only the dark nebulae as such, without having as yet been able to distinguish between the two kinds.

These dark nebulae, one class of them especially, are also found outside the Milky Way, not merely in other universes, in other Milky Ways, in other star systems, but scattered like seeds-of-things-to-be through the boundless spaces of cosmic space.

It is also true that I have spoken of dark nebulae as preceding the bright nebulae in evolutionary time, and also that dark nebulae

are later in evolutionary development. I had in mind the two classes of the dark nebulae that I have just spoken of: one extremely ethereal, being the very first stage of material concretion of cosmic substance — and these dark nebulae are diaphanous, you can see through them; you can see the stars beyond them — and as regards this class of the dark nebulae, I really do not know whether any scientist has as yet discovered their actual existence, although in most recent months their existence is more than suspected.

The other class of dark nebulae are more or less heavily concreted matter, existing in a state of atomic dissociation, and are, instead of being the beginnings of universes or of worlds, the material debris of universes that have been — the graveyard dust of the cosmic spaces, so to speak.

Also, I have spoken of the nebulae as being universes in the making, and likewise as being planets in the making. I suppose that because a speaker should use the word eggs, he ought not to be held to mean hens' eggs only. There are eggs of many kinds, seeds of living beings of many kinds, which may be classed under the general term of egg; and so it is with the nebulae. There are nebulae which are universes in the making, which are Milky Ways in the making, and which are solar systems in the making; and there are others which are much smaller, and which are scattered through the spaces of space, and which, when the time comes, rush forth from their bed in space, and become comets, drawn, attracted, to one or another sun, around which they circle in elliptic or hyperbolic orbits, or in perhaps parabolic orbits, for a time; and finally settle into becoming satellites or planets around the sun to which they have been attracted.

All these nebulae, large and small — the ethereal dark nebulae and all the bright nebulae — are the rebirths of worlds that

existed in the aeonic past: they are reïmbodiments of former universes, or worlds, or, more accurately, the beginning of the reïmbodiments of universes or worlds that have existed in the past, and therefore are worlds to be in the future.

Our own planet Terra was at one time a comet, and before that it was one of these smaller diaphanous nebulae sleeping its long preparatory sleep in the womb of Space before entering upon the cycle of its new life-beginning. Then when the time came, when the karmic time came, it rushed from its layic bed, carrying its laya-center in its own heart, attracted by some distant sun, and, furthermore, drawn by the links of past destiny — drawn magnetically, so to speak, but indeed drawn by spiritual and psychological links of the past — to become a planet around the center towards which it has rushed.

Then, as regards that part of the question referring to some of the nebulae as being clusters of suns and others as being masses of mother-stuff: is not this theosophical statement precisely what the modern scientist also will tell you? That is, that some of these nebulae are resolvable, under high telescopic power, into clusters of suns; whereas others cannot be so resolved into individual suns, but are what the astronomical men call masses, vast in extent, of "glowing gas." But our theosophical philosophy tells us they are not gas whatever the appearances, spectroscopic or otherwise, may seem to indicate. Gas is so material in comparison with this nebulous stuff that, to use an analogy, it bears the same relation to our earthly gas as that earthly gas known to us on earth bears to lead.

This is a most fascinating theme. We have modern scientists today dreaming dreams of truth and seeing visions of the real. Scientists in all countries are awakening. The great Danish scientist, Nils Bohr, and Einstein and Planck of Berlin, and Jeans

and Eddington of Britain, today have thought thoughts, and are thinking thoughts, which with every epoch of five years are approaching more and more closely to the teachings of the ancient wisdom-religion of all past time, not only in generals but frequently indeed in particulars; and when Dr. Jeans speaks of the "singular points" existent in the nebulae of space, from which, according to him, there pours down into our own physical universe matter from what he calls another dimension, he speaks as would one of the ancient mystical scientists of archaic days, for he voices, however feebly, an archaic theosophical teaching.

Dr. Jeans speaks of the stuff flowing from these his singular points as being the "creation of matter," a term which theosophists would not use, for with us there is no creation in the old sense, but only change of state and condition in an unending series of evolutionary developments. His singular points, his channels or canals, his points through which matter pours down, not from another dimension as he says, but from another world as the theosophist says, are what the theosophist calls *laya-centers* or *critical centers*, or points where ether becomes matter or universal matter resolves itself back into ether. Nor does the theosophist use the word dimension as Jeans does, but instead uses the phrase "another and more ethereal world or plane."

Dr. Jeans in these ideas is giving utterance in this twentieth century to the age-old teaching of theosophy; and, as I have just said, we theosophists call these singular points of Dr. Jeans *laya-centers*, dissolving centers where matter dissolves itself into spirit, and equivalently where from the super-ethereal realms substance condenses into the physical matter of our universe.

Thus are the worlds born through and by these singular points, these centers of energy, these energetic centers, as we may call them. Through them pour, as through channels, the energies, the

life-forces, the characteristic individuality of a stream of self-imboding life, of cosmic life, or world life: and with that cosmic life comes all its freightage of things such as the rocks to be, the vegetation to be, the animals to be, the humans to be. These are indeed wonderful thoughts, strangely and marvelously accurate conceptions; and when we realize that they form the material of the most advanced scientific thought of today, we realize how greatly modern science is becoming religious and is thinking thoughts of deep mystical philosophy.

Well, has anybody caught a wooglie? I wonder. At any rate, as the little boy said, when you do catch a wooglie, you will know what it is. But, friends, if any questioner is fishing for "wooglies" I am trying to give him a wooglie that he will understand, not something that any theosophical speaker has invented, but the ancient teachings of wisdom which have come down to modern men from immemorial time, which have been voiced and taught and formulated and cast like thought-seeds into the minds of men by the great seers and sages of all the past ages.

These seers and sages have lived. Whence came their wisdom and knowledge that the wisdom and knowledge of today are progressively proving to have existed with every new natural discovery that is made? The more we learn and know today, the more we know that those great sages and seers of the past had wide and deep knowledge of natural truth. Whence came their wisdom and what they knew? Were these sages and seers merely human biological "sports"? To call a thing a biological sport is merely describing the phenomenon in other words; it is no explanation of it at all.

The only thing we do know is that unparalleled genius suddenly flashes meteor-like over the skies of human thought, and men stand in awe and in certain cases they even worship and adore —

wrongly, it is true — but so profound was the impression that these great ones made on history.

Here is another question on my list:

"Were the so-called Mystery Schools of the ancients the product of the various priesthoods working to enslave the human mind by means of supposititious mysteries in nature; or were they based on natural but almost unknown facts of being, which certain exceptional men called seers — to use your word — had explained in religio-philosophic formulations and systems of thought?"

The latter, certainly. The idea — and it had some faint basis of truth — that the priesthoods of the olden time were nothing but a body of men who lived on the fat of the land and imposed so-called religious and philosophic and scientific mysteries on the people who believed in them, was largely due to Voltaire — a very bright man, a very able man, a deep thinker but an erratic thinker, and one who lacked the spiritual, penetrating vision which sees beyond phenomenal appearances.

Wisdom lies in the ability to penetrate beneath the surface and to ascribe to true greatness a nobler visioning of Being than the mere and tawdry impulses of men of small mind and smaller heart. The idea embodied in the latter part of this question is the truth. There is in man not merely a fountain of wisdom, but an inner eye. He can see, and seeing he can formulate what he sees into knowledge as it is called; and that knowledge he can deliver to his fellows.

How may we see? How did these great sages and seers see? Through growth, through evolution. They had evolved to the point where the inner eye was open, and hence they were awake; being awake they saw; seeing they taught. Either that, or we must

have recourse to the supposition chance — a word utterly void of meaning. Which is your choice that you will make for yourself, evolution or chance?

Was Jesus a faker? Was the great Buddha a faker? Was Krishna or Sankaracharya of India a faker? Were Lao-Tse and Confucius charlatans and frauds? You must have a high opinion of yourselves if you believe that! Do you know how difficult it is to make men accept something that perhaps they do not want to accept — how difficult it is to break the molds of mind —= and do you realize that this is just precisely what these great sages and seers do?

Take a people as pragmatical and matter-of-fact as are the Chinese — set like iron in their mental molds and casts — and look what the two Chinese geniuses whom I have just mentioned did: they made a mark so deep, so profound, on the mental characteristics of their people that only today are the Chinese arousing themselves from the degenerated mental impress of ages originally left upon them in splendor by the promulgation of the teachings of those great men of 2500 or more years ago!

There is nothing in the universe so difficult to move as the minds of men: set like crystals and as hard; and I sometimes think that the hearts of men are almost as hard as their heads. But we know that spiritual force and titan intellectual power have done it, and done it many times. In every man there is the instinct of beauty and of truth and of the good and of the high and of the noble and of the pure. Let the appeal be made to these facilities and there will be an answer, and the molds of mind will burst, and then comes the inner rebirth.

It is these great sages and seers, these unparalleled geniuses, these human gods or god-men, who began, who founded, the great Mystery Schools of the ancients; and while they lived they



taught in them; and it is they who have moved the world; it is they who have made the civilizations of the past whose laws and customs we inherit, and whose sense of moral right and wrong we inherit also; it is they who have told us of the truths of nature; and these Mystery Schools founded by them imbodyed their teachings, kept very holy, very secret, very esoteric, very mystical.

You know what Jesus is reported to have said in substance: "To my disciples I open the door to truth; but to them outside I speak in parables." That was wise. You cannot teach a baby everything at once; and we are all babies in a sense. Knowledge grows by degrees, as everything else does; so it was only to the more evolved, the wiser ones, the more intuitive ones, who gathered around these great seers and sages, that were taught the real explanations and secrets and esoteric teachings of the Masters.

But the generality of men outside of the Mystery Schools were taught ethics, morals, the laws of duty, high thinking, noble living, accompanied always with the invitation: "Come up higher; come to us; come to me; prepare yourselves. I am the Way and the Truth and the Life. Knock, and it shall be opened unto you." True words!

I might say before leaving this question that our own modern theosophical teachings are in large part the esoteric, mystical, secret, teachings of these great seers and sages of past times. You can prove this statement for yourselves by impartial, honest study. Knock, friends, and it will be opened unto you. This is a promise.

Here is another question that I have received:

"Are genius and knowledge reminiscence, remembrance out of the past, as Plato said they are: or are they instilled into or put into the human mind somewhat as bricks or stones are put

into a wall?"

Certainly not the latter. I cannot conceive how genius and knowledge can be stuffed into a man's mind: into a mind molded and cast into crystallized prejudice, unwilling to receive a new truth unless the brain-mind can debate it, think it out, and see all its ins and outs and whys and wherefores, quite forgetting that these lower mental processes obscure the truth and prevent the action of intuitive vision.

Knowledge is not merely an accumulation of facts. Knowledge *per se* is a faculty; it is not merely what you learn — what you learn after that manner is the lessons that you study and the facts comprised in them that your mental apparatus can accumulate and hold — but knowledge is what you are enabled to draw out of it through the working of the intellectual consciousness. To know, the faculty of knowing, is knowledge strictly speaking; and wisdom is something still higher.

Yes, genius and knowledge and other things that accompany them — such as love, and the sense of devotion, and aspiration, and the instinct of duty, and the recognition of the high beauty of self-sacrifice falsely so-called — these and other things are innate in the character. They do not come into you from without. They spring forth from within, and are the beauteous flowers of lovely seeds which are latent in the heart and mind of the individual. They are innately in him; they are reminiscences out of the past: the fruitage of past lives in the character so developed and evolved, enabling this character to express its own inherent faculties and powers and energies, and the workings of its own consciousness.

What is evolution? It is unfolding, bringing out what is within you. How can you be something that you are not yourself? Character is development or manifestation from what is already

within; so are wisdom and knowledge and love and duty and aspiration and high living and high thinking — all these beautiful and noble things that make men truly men and that make some men greater than others. They are from within, they are from the spiritual side of our being: the deathless, the immortal part — and not merely from the human soul, the evolving entity, growing ever more perfect it is true, and as it perfects itself expressing ever better, ever in more perfect form and shape, and ever in larger degree, the streams of illumination from within, flowing into the human consciousness from the divine center which is the root of us, the heart of the heart of us, the core of the core of you and of me.

Plato was right, but he did not tell all. Knowledge and genius are reminiscence, rememorations of past lives, and are not merely fruits of what we know in this life. A child comes into life with character which develops as age proceeds, with ability, power, capacity. As these develop, all the beautiful forces accompanying them spring forth into bloom; and then when this takes place in the flowers of the human race we may truly say that a great man has come into the world.

Here is another question before me:

"Does the soul of an infant enter into its body at birth, or before birth, or after birth?"

The theosophical teaching is that the soul of an infant does not enter into its body at birth, nor before birth, nor after birth. Therefore the general answer to this question is No, in none of the three cases. It does seem to a theosophist an extraordinary thing that the idea should have gone abroad so widely in the Occidental world that a man has a soul imprisoned in his physical body, and that when the physical body dies the soul has to come out of it. The ancients used to represent the true natural or

spiritual fact mystically, metaphorically, by figuring a homunculus or infant human coming from the mouth of the dying man with his last breath; but this figuration was a mystical representation which unfortunately was taken literally by later people, the Christians, who followed the ancient Pagans in time; and for many ages in occidental Europe, in European countries, it was believed that man had a soul inside his body; and the soul, again, was confused with the spirit.

No, man is a soul and also has a soul. It all depends upon what you mean by the word "soul," and upon the localities where we place man and soul and spirit. A subject of deep psychology is involved here which it would take me far too long a time this afternoon to explain, but a the explanation of which I will try to hint and of which I have given a brief explanation on a number of other occasions.

Man is a complex and compound entity. His constitution ranges from body to spirit with all intermediate degrees of ethereal substances and energies and powers. The theosophist says that these intermediate degrees are seven in number. When these seven different degrees or grades are cooperating in vital activity and thus form what we theosophists call man's seven principles, then you have a complete man, a fully living man, in other words an incarnated man.

But how about this soul? Is it in the body or out of it? Well, I don't dare say that it is out of it, but on the other hand it most emphatically is not in it. I will try to make my meaning clear. Let me ask you a question first. Where is the electricity in the wire which carries it? Is it inside the wire or in an atmosphere or aura around the wire? No physical scientist really knows yet, but a perfectly parallel question is: Where is the human soul, in the body or out of it, or around it and permeating it?

Now, our theosophical teaching is this: the spirit of man works through the human soul, and this human soul works through the vital-astral or ethereal vehicle or body or carrier: the transmitter of the energies or powers of the soul, which is psychomagnetically connected with the organs of the physical body; and this vital astral principle thus works through the physical body and is carried into all parts of our physical frame, very much as the electric current is carried not only in but also over and around the wire. The spirit enfolds and guards and produces the human soul from within its own womb of selfhood; the human soul similarly permeates and produces the vital astral vehicle; and this in its turn permeates and produces the physical body.

The soul therefore is neither in the body nor out of it nor surrounding it, but all three at the same time, and belongs to an entirely different sphere or plane or world of being from that of the gross physical vehicle. The soul does not enter the body at birth, nor before birth, nor after birth, and why? Because that supposition would immediately set up the argument that the soul and the human physical body in and around which it is — how shall I say it, with which it is to be linked in the next life — are different, and that they are different now. The physical body is built up by the incoming, incarnating ego, cell by cell, from the very beginning of the former. Consequently there is no entering of the body by something outside of it and different from it, for the soul is that which is; the body being merely the offspring or the fruitage or effect of one of its activities. This is not a medical lecture hall, but I think that I have made the idea sufficiently clear.

You know, I suppose, that the teaching of the great German biologist Weismann was regarding the human race, that from the very beginning the vital plasm, the seed of human life, has been

carried down from generation to generation, from father to son; and that, secondly, the generation of men today, quite apart from the state of evolution that they have reached, contains the very life-essence, physically speaking, that existed in the first races of men on earth.

A human seed comes from the ethereal worlds and is the laya-center, — the "singular point," of Dr. Jeans, when he was speaking of the nebulae through which streamed into this physical sphere matter of the new world to be — and which in the case of the laya-center of the human seed is the vital point through which streams into and builds up from the interior worlds, the body to be, cell by cell. This seed grows into the physical body and, as it grows, incarnation of the human energies takes place concordantly, coordinately, and progressively until maturity is reached, and at that point you see the full-grown man and more or less fully incarnated human soul.

Thus, then, the soul does not "enter" the body for it is not something outside of it and not belonging to it. This last idea is quite wrong. The soul therefore does not enter the body either before birth or at birth, or after birth. As the English poet Spenser says:

"For soul is form, and doth the body make."

At the death of the physical body, the soul casts the latter aside, as a worn-out garment, and goes on to something higher: more accurately it evolves, in the theosophical sense of the word, others of its latent powers preparing it for residence in the ethereal worlds, for it is itself an ethereal vehicle or carrier of the deathless and immortal energies of the productive spirit or Monad.

"What is the soul?"

I think that I have already answered that question — at least I have tried to answer it. The soul is the part intermediate between the spirit and the body, between spiritual matter and physical matter; but if you were to ask me to be definitely accurate and to particularize, then I should have to say something else, and to begin by asking you: What do you mean by soul? Do you mean by that a generalizing term comprising all the capacities and energies and powers that man has, spiritually and intellectually and materially, and including such qualities as love and hate and aspiration and wisdom and knowledge, and the passional nature and all the other things that I have spoken of, and also the things which are mean and ignoble and whatnot? They are indeed all of them parts of man. But do they belong to the soul? If so, then I ask you which soul? The spiritual soul, or the human soul, or the merely animal soul?

You see the reason why the theosophical philosophy, the ancient wisdom, is obliged to divide the constitution of man into its component parts, for man is a complex being and therefore has separate parts. He is indeed a complex entity, and you all know it; consequently all these various energies and powers and faculties and energies do not spring from one point, from one center, from one source: they spring from different parts of the constitution of the human being. So, therefore, when this bald and too general question, What is the soul? is asked, it is obvious that of necessity I have great difficulty in answering. A true answer would require a book in itself.

However, speaking generally, we may say that the soul is the intermediate part between the spirit which is deathless and immortal on the one hand, and on the other hand the physical frame, entirely mortal. Thanks be to the immortal gods that it is so!

Thus then, answering briefly and generalizing, and calling it the intermediate part, we may say that the soul is the center of human will and human consciousness, the human ego, the personal "I"-feeling. It is an evolving entity of course.

"Have the animals souls?"

Yes, most decidedly they have, but not human souls. Please do not misunderstand me here. I do not mean that a dog or a horse or a bull has a human soul; but I mean that a dog has a dog-soul, and a horse has a horse-soul, and a bull has its own type of intermediate, self-expressing consciousness. And so have the lovely flowers of our gardens flower-souls; and that is the reason why a lily is always a lily — I mean why the lily-stream of life will produce nothing but lilies. It has the characteristic of individuality, what in human beings is called the ego; the egoic energetic power self-expressing its own inherent individuality. That is the *soul*.

Here is another question that I have before me.

"Have twins or triplets or quadruplets the same soul or different souls?"

I wonder if this is a 'wooglie,' or at least is a fishing for 'wooglies'? Well, take the twins. There are different kinds of twins: there are what the biologists call identical twins, being twins of the same sex so much alike that it is practically impossible to tell them apart. This kind of twins is called identical. There are other kinds which are not identical.

Answering the question, then, I may say: no, twins have not the same souls, they have different souls, but there is an exceedingly close psychological relationship existing from other lives, between or among beings born together at a single birth. The same applies not only to twins but to triplets and quadruplets,



and to other cases of even larger birth-products. Each individual has a distinct and separate soul or, if you like to phrase it otherwise, each one is a distinct and separate soul.

The next question is:

"Was Jesus Christ a man or was he God?"

I have in idea that a broad-minded Christian has asked this question, and I respect him for his frankness. Not being a Christian myself, I will answer it as a theosophist, who is a follower of the teacher Christ, but not a Christian — but a theosophist is not only a follower of Christ but also of all the great Sages and Seers of the ages. Christ, inspiring the man-body called Jesus, was but one of these great sages and seers; and theosophists reverence that great and holy man as much if not more than the most devoted Christian does.

Jesus Christ was the theosophist of his time to his own people. He was a man. But he incarnated a god — not the infinite and eternal Spirit in the Christian sense, for that to the theosophists is monstrous: not what is popularly called God. To theosophists, if you will pardon me the frank statement, that idea is simply blasphemous; but Jesus, the great Syrian sage, was a man-god, or a god-man. He is an avatara, *avatara* being a Sanskrit word which means "a passing down": the idea being that a divinity chose a great and holy human to be its vehicle for work among men. There have been many avataras in the world, I may say in passing.

There is much more to this doctrine of avataras that I cannot go into now — I have no time to do so, nor is this public meeting the proper place — but this doctrine is nevertheless one of the most beautiful, one of the most lovely, of our theosophical doctrines; and in one sense of the word, many, but by no means all, of the

other great seers and sages were men-gods likewise.

There is a high stage of evolution which ranks fully as high in spiritual grade as does the avatara, and this stage of evolution is where the human being, through long aeons of evolutionary development and ceaseless striving towards perfection and wisdom and purity, has evolved forth from out of himself his own inner god which thus takes the place of the avatara incarnation selecting some high and noble human being, and in one sense of the word this self-evolution is nobler and superior to the avatara incarnation. Such a self-evolved entity was Gautama Buddha.

In each one of you there is a god: it is that part of you which is immortal and deathless, stainless and divine. And when your inner god manifests in inner fullness consciously through the highly evolved human soul, which is the only path or method for it so to manifest, such a human being is also a god-man, but not an avatara because of the difference which I have just set forth.

I ask you to pardon my inability to explain this sublime doctrine more fully this afternoon. On some other Sunday I hope to do so, perhaps. But in every case such an incarnation, such a birth among men, is an example of a god-man or a man-god. Each one of you has the power to be such an example of human spiritual splendor. Oh, what a doctrine of hope this is! What a doctrine of high and supreme beauty! Consider the inspiration of it.

There remains in my hand one question more.

"Is virgin-birth or immaculate birth possible in nature?"

I think that this question came from this same kind friend who asked the immediately preceding question. I will answer it briefly. It is possible as a natural fact, but practically impossible as an event that may occur. However, in the far distant past virgin birth or immaculate birth was the regular mode that

nature had evolved for carrying on the human race. This method was superseded in time by the present method of procreation; and the present division of the human race into the two sexes is but a transitory event or phase of human evolution. Even today man shows in his physical body his androgynous past — the remnants of organs appearing imperfectly in either sex are simply remnants of what were once fully developed organs — and, in the future, the present method of sex-procreation will be an evil dream of the past.

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[Vol 1, No 6](#)  
[Contents](#)

**No. 6 (November 5, 1929)**

## **QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK**

Why do people ask questions? Because they want to know something. And why do they want to know? Because they have something within them which is desirous of consciously re-allying itself with the foundations of the universe — truth. If we did not have within us this divine instinct, this divine hunger for and instinct towards truth, we never should ask any questions at all. We should be like the senseless stone or, perhaps, having no further spirit of divine curiosity than might be expressed by the unvoiced questions of the beasts.

The asking of questions, serious questions, is an attribute which appertains to the spiritual part of man's being, and is, in a sense, the voice of his higher nature attempting to express itself through the intermediate nature and the brain-mind, the intermediate nature being what is commonly called the human soul; and this attempt to express the divine-spiritual consciousness of us through this psychic or intermediate nature, and through the latter's vehicle, the physical body, stimulates this latter or intermediate part of us into a questioning mood or attitude.

The spiritual psychology of this process is rather difficult to understand by one who has not deeply thought on the matter, nevertheless what I have just said is an exact explanation, albeit imperfectly developed here, of what takes place in the human constitution.

We question: Who am I? What am I? Whence am I? Whither go I? Why am I here? What is life? What is the purpose of life? What is death? What is the purpose of death? What are trust and love and friendship and self-sacrifice and aspiration and hope and joy? All

these questions, and many more like them, arise from the divine energies in our inmost parts seeking expression through the intermediate vehicle which, sensing the inflow and stimulated by it, automatically as it were assumes a questioning mood or attitude.

It is an amazing thing that so many thinking human minds through the ages have asked themselves: Is there a soul? Is there something more of me than the physical body? Whereas they have merely to examine themselves, each man to examine himself, to find the answer written large in his own nature and constitution.

Had you not this divine hunger for knowledge, had you not this urging instinct within, had you not these aspirations for knowledge, there would be nowhither to go in thought in order to understand yourselves and the universe in which you live and of which you are an inseparable part.

Do you understand the drift of my thought? My meaning is that these inner impulses, irresistible in their force and unceasing, are a proof of an inner nature, popularly called the soul, seeking its own, and therefore proving that that thing exists; for nature never cheats itself. If there were no higher things than the physical, there would be no urge towards higher things, because nature could not have an urge towards something which does not exist. This questioning attitude, this desire or hunger for knowledge, are proofs of the existence of a spiritual nature within.

You know perhaps that we Occidentals are the worst psychologists that the human race has ever brought forth in historic times. We know nothing about what psychology really is. Our Occidental idea of psychology is that of a sort of sublimated physiology, something pertaining completely, wholly, entirely, to

the physical body and the energies which move it along; whereas the physical body is but an expression and also the vehicle of these inner, psychological, and spiritual energies and powers which play through it, and, alas, often disrupt it and bring it pain and sorrow, paradoxical as it may sound. Sunlight, for instance, is a gloriously beautiful thing, but too much sunlight at the wrong time and at the wrong place can induce disease as easily as the deprivation of sunlight. Health is harmony and adjustment to environment and the coordination of the relations of the individual to the All, and where there is disharmony and lack of coordination and failure in adjustments, then what is called disease ensues.

So then, the asking of questions, even in its most vulgar form, that of mere curiosity, proves the existence of a divine instinct for something greater than the things which the physical brain cognizes around itself. The desire for knowledge is an elevating desire. Hence, when I receive questions similar to those that I have received during the last two or three weeks, it is exceedingly interesting to me to see the mental drift or bias of the minds which asked these questions; and curiously enough, most of these questions tend more or less in the same direction. People want to know who they are and what they are, and whence they come, and what life is, and questions of great problems similar to these.

I have not received a single good-for-nothing question, not a single good-for-nothing query. I have not received a single question as to, for instance, How to make money quickly, or What kind of husband shall I look for? or What kind of a wife shall I marry? and things like that. It is rather absurd for any sensible man or woman, young or old, asking questions of that kind, which a man or woman of normal capacity should solve for himself or for herself!

In asking questions of that kind of any public lecturer, you must remember that he will merely tell you in answer what he himself happens to think about the things, and nothing more; and if he does not himself understand, how can he understand you and direct your life?

But questions of great interest, questions of wide and general reach, questions which show that the querent has dipped, in his thoughts, into the very structure of the universe, which is in the inmost of the inmost of us all: these are questions which can be answered, and answered by anyone who is developed enough to understand himself somewhat, and hence these are the questions which the great seers and sages of the ages have answered in full, and it is just here that the real hunger for knowledge of the human heart lies.

In taking up the series of questions which I hope to answer today, I will first read all of them to you:

- "What is death? Is it something to be feared?"
- "Is suicide ever permissible?"
- "Is a man who deliberately gives up his life for another, or for some high and noble and impersonal end, a suicide?"
- "Do theosophists approve of marriage?"
- "Do we ever suffer unjustly? If so, how explain your theosophical doctrine of karma?"
- "Is it possible that the time is here for a new phraseology for some philosophical dicta?"
- "If the body is a 'bunch of sheaths of energy,' why say 'inside' or 'outside'; or why point upwards for heaven or downwards for the opposite place?"
- "Is not the word 'relativity' sufficiently understood, and the fallacy of 'time and space' sufficiently impressed upon the modern minds through the demonstration of radio, to warrant

new lines of expression?"

- "If the body is a 'bunch of sheaths of energies,' is not the universe similarly constructed? And, if so, why do we talk or think of trillions and quadrillions of miles of space in light-years, etc., etc.? Radio would suggest no distance or space for any of the 'bundles of sheaths' except one — the densest or physical."
- "Is not everything within reach — here and now?"
- "Might not an electron at the end of one's foot get instantaneous communication with an electron in the brain notwithstanding the distance of separation?"
- "Is there any such thing as time or space?"

"What is death? Is it something to be feared?"

All men fear death, except the wise ones, those who know. Is this fear an instinct, a common instinct, something native to the human heart, something which it manifests because it is a truth, and therefore to be feared by us? Never! Fear is an unreasoning thing as well as unreasonable, and usually exists in human minds and hearts which are more or less undeveloped in the particular line where the fear lies. Knowledge kills fear. There are men who fear reverses in business. Such fears show ignorance and weakness; they do not show knowledge and strength, for the man with knowledge and strength is successful in business as in other things, and often successful despite the frequently severe blows of karmic destiny, and is always successful in the end.

Death. O beautiful, sublime death, the greatest and loveliest change that the heart of nature has in store for us! What is really painful about it is the loss of our physical presence to those whom we leave behind us. That alone is the pain and agony of death, but not to those who pass, but to those who are left behind. But in itself, if we poor human hearts only knew the truth, we would do



as a certain ancient people did: put on white robes of gladness, and our faces would be lighted with unutterable hope, with the knowledge not only that all is well, but that the one who has passed has entered into the sublime scenes of a larger and a far greater life.

Death is change, even as birth through reincarnation, which is death to the soul, is change; and there is no difference — and please take these words of the ancient wisdom literally — there is no difference between death, so called, and life, so called, for they are one. The change is into another *phase of life*. Death is a phase of life, even as life is a phase of death. As Paul of the Christians said: "I die daily"; and as a theosophist might say: I die constantly, I die all the time. I am not what I was when I was a little boy, nor shall I be what I am now when I am an older man. Death is change. Some optimists call it a release. Well, yes, if you are on a bed of pain and suffering, it is indeed a release from pain and suffering.

Oh, there is so much that I could tell you about death. Death is not something to be feared. Let me tell you how the ancients looked upon it. Incarnation into a physical body — reincarnation into a physical body — is "death" to the entity which reincarnates. And when this body, this vehicle, this lamp containing the immortal flame, passes, breaks up into its constituent parts, it is rebirth for the consciousness — the thinking, hoping, aspiring, loving heart of us, the core of us. Death is as natural, death is as simple, death itself is as painless, death itself is as beautiful, as the growth of a lovely flower.

Would you that I should describe to you the process of death? It would take me one or two or three hours, but briefly, no man, no human being, ever dies completely unconscious. The body may be still, the heart may have ceased to beat, the train of thought of

recollection, of everything that the departing entity has passed through, is on its transit through the brain; but death has not yet ensued, and the dying one is conscious, even conscious of what takes place around the bed. That consciousness is a beautiful one. There is a cognition of what is coming, there is a realization of what is passing. There is a recognition of what it knew before. There is a bright promise of what is to come. These are the thoughts and the feelings of the passing one.

Therefore, as one of our great teachers has told us, be quiet, be still, all ye who assist at the deathbed of the dying; so that the entity passing into the brighter promise, into the most lovely and unutterable peace, may leave its train of thought untouched by anything of earth. Be still! Cruel is weeping to the passing one, cruel are any exhibitions of suffering and pain. Wise indeed were the ancient people, who put on garments of snowy white and with jubilant faces saluted the rising sun. Pass on! Pass on!

That is death, literally not poetically, please. Many of you who have been at the bed of one whom you loved, and who has passed out and has had that experience, will know, if you have been observant and watchful that what I have told you is true.

There are some deathbeds which are not painless. I have not spoken of these, because they are painful. They are the passings of those who have lived wrongly, and only because they have lived wrongly the separation of the passing entity from things of earth and matter is difficult.

There is the basis, in part, of the teachings of the sages of all the ages that to live aright is to live wisely. Death is nothing to be feared. Our hearts go out in tenderest sympathy to those who are bereaved, because, friends — and may I say comrades, in thought at least — it is those who love the passing one, those who are left behind, who feel the wrench of the personal separation. These

are they who merit our sympathy; these are they who should be comforted.

Death is beautiful. It is a passing into another phase of life. May I go a step farther? It is a passing into a life of consciousness, after a time of sleep and repose which is more real than is this physical earth-life; for the veils of matter there are thinner, the sheaths of material substance there are not so thick as here. The eye of the spirit sees more clearly. But the life in the realms and spheres beyond is precisely as is this life, making the proper changes — to use a Latin phrase, *mutatis mutandis*, with the necessary changes of circumstance and time and occasion.

Please take this statement literally. You know the old Hermetic axiom, the beautiful saying of the wise old ancients: "What is above" — meaning in the spiritual spheres, and here we point upward, which is merely a symbolic gesture — "is the same as what is in the material spheres below; and what is here below is the same as what is above." Death releases us from one world, and we pass through the portals of change into another world, precisely as the inverse takes place when the incarnating soul leaves the realms of finer ether to come down to our own grosser and material earth-life into the heavy body of physical matter.

The inner worlds to the entity passing through them, as it has passed through this world, are as real — more real in fact — than ours is, because it is nearer to them. They are more ethereal, and therefore are nearer to the ethereality of the eternal pilgrim passing through another stage on its everlasting journey towards perfection; and these changes take place one after another, before the next incarnation on the returning wheel of the cycle; the pilgrim passing from one sphere to another through the revolving centuries, ever going higher, that is to say, to superior realms, until the top of that individual's cycle — I had it on my lips to say

transmigration, but I knew I would be misunderstood, for I do not mean it in the customary sense — till the topmost point of the cycle of that particular pilgrim's journey is reached.

Then come into play the attractions of the lower realms to which the lower parts of the pilgrim are native, to which it still has psychomagnetic bonds; and these attractions finally pull it downwards into a new cycle of manifestation on the lower realms. This our own earth is the lowest point in the cycle of human evolutionary progress; therefore "release" if you will, death to use the proper term, is an advance upwards. Death is the portal through which the pilgrim enters the stage higher.

You ask, perhaps: Do all human beings follow this path? Normally, yes; some few, no. Who are these few, the exceptions? They are the great ones, the great seers and sages of the ages, who come into the world, not for their own sakes, because they have learned pretty much all that this world can teach them; they come into the world as saviors of their fellowmen. They have consecrated their life for the service of others, to teach others who know less than they do and are less far along the pathway of progress.

With these great ones the change of body is a different thing. The body, even of these great ones, in time wears out. Its latent fountains of vitality are exhausted, and they change a body then as an ordinary man would put on another suit of clothes — at will and when they will and how they will and where they will.

Death is the entering into unutterable peace; and with the passing of the great ones, the heroes of the race, the peace is of short duration; for it is deliberately renounced, even as our own great teacher, Katherine Tingley, who has recently passed away, has entered into her unutterable peace for it there, and then will return to take up the sublime work. We who loved her bear

testimony to her life and her work.

"Is suicide ever permissible?"

Never. And why never? Because it is a coward's act. Suicide means the deliberate taking of one's own life in order to escape the consequences of what one has earned; and if any man or woman think that he can cheat nature in that way, he greatly errs. He but adds to the heavy burden that he has to carry in the future; and what awaits him on the other side I will leave unsaid. He has deliberately forced nature's hand, so to say; he has deliberately exercised his own willpower and consciousness for an unholy deed in an unnatural way, and done an act which nature, through its unerring laws, has not itself brought about; and when you break a law of nature, what happens? In suicide you break one of nature's fundamental laws, and there you have your answer. Study our theosophical books. I have no time this afternoon to go into the details of this. Study our Theosophical books, I repeat, try to understand the wonderful philosophy of life that you will find there. There you will discover arguments, statements, expositions, regarding this matter of suicide, and of what happens to the unfortunate wretch who suicides.

"Is a man who deliberately gives up his life for another, or for a high and noble and impersonal end, a suicide?"

He is not. A man who will jump into the water to save a fellow human being, and who perishes in the attempt: will you call him a suicide, from the true definition that I have just given? Obviously not. Where is your coward in that heroic act? He has obeyed one of the fundamental laws of nature which says that we are all knitted together with unbreakable bonds which nothing can ever part, and it is our bounden duty to help each other in all circumstances and at all times. There is the beauty of self-sacrifice, giving up one's life for another. As the Christian New

Testament nobly puts it, "Greater love hath no man than that he should lay down his life for his friend."

And so far as giving up one's own life deliberately for a noble and impersonal end is concerned, the truth is the same. A man, for instance, who consecrates his life to the service of others, and perishes in the attempt by some disease — fatal, painful, lingering — that he may thus have contracted, does he commit suicide? The immortal gods, no! He is a hero and his reward shall be great.

You know, of course, that the annals of history tell us that a great many of the ancients, many of them great men, deliberately committed suicide, and there were also some philosophical celebrities, among them men of real capacity and power, who suicided; and even today, among one or two of the Oriental peoples, it is considered an honor to suicide under certain circumstances, to give up one's life individually, not in mass, but individually, on the theory that by so doing you offer yourselves as a sacrifice for the wellbeing of your country in times of danger. I am thinking of the Japanese idea; and in speaking of the ancients a moment ago I was thinking of the Greek and Roman idea.

Is such self-killing truly suicide? I do not think that it is so absolutely. I am positive, however, that even here it is entirely wrong to self-kill oneself in such a manner, yet it is not quite suicide. It is an error of judgment and feeling, but the motive is not cowardly and is beautiful. There is nothing cowardly about it, it has in it a touch of impersonal heroism, for it is impersonal and done for others; nevertheless it is done under a totally wrong idea. The contrary is the better: live for your country! Live to fight the battle of life! But we can admire, nevertheless, the spirit of heroism, even though we may believe it to be misplaced, even though we may disapprove.

"Do Theosophists approve of marriage?"

There have been many times in my life when I have thought that marriage was a kind of suicide. But I am not so certain, because I have seen so many beautiful marriages. At any rate I do consider it an act of heroism — for both!

Theosophists most certainly approve of marriage, decidedly so. The only trouble is that so many marriages, as our late great-hearted teacher, Katherine Tingley, has so often said from this very platform, are "merely farces." Marriage itself is beautiful; the principle is holy; and if true marriage take place, life is sanctified for those two human hearts. But all marriages? That is another matter. Oh the wrecked lives!

Marriage in my mind — and I am a bachelor: I don't know that I have any right to speak about it; I have had no personal experience of it; and therefore I will merely give you my impressions about it briefly — is a very serious problem. I think that young people usually marry too early and that older people have a greater chance for happiness; and I have an opinion that the loveliest marriages are those that take place when one is not young, because then one knows oneself. I think that a long time should elapse between first acquaintance and marriage. This doubtless might seem very difficult to many young people. The heart-strings are plucked very forcibly in what is called love; and indeed it is love — sometimes; and true love is beautiful; it is holy.

But, on the other hand, they who marry not from love, not from any purely impersonal attachment, but from mistaken ideas of romance which is one of the mental diseases of the younger people — that is not love at all, that is merely a notion of what love might be, and the notion is often distorted. I tell you that such as these don't know what true love is.

True love is so impersonal that it never thinks of itself. It is so impersonal that it thinks of the other all the time and only. Here is the highest test of all, as I, a crusty old bachelor, see it: the truly loving heart will renounce all love for the love of another and lay the sacrifice on the altar and find joy in the self-giving. Can you love in that way? Then I say that you are safe to be trusted to make for yourself a happy marriage.

Do you see the reason why in my bachelor's judgment very young people should not marry? They do not know themselves. How they regret it when they grow older, if they find that they have made a mistake! How much better it is to wait a little and to think and to reflect. Pause! The greater injustice is not to yourself, it is to the other; but the greater pain is to you. That is what I think as a theosophist about marriage.

Some of my friends have called me a woman-hater, simply because I never married. I am not a woman-hater. I have the highest admiration for the other sex — at a distance especially; simply because I am afraid of them. I know the charm that a good woman has. I know how it has attracted me; and therefore I say I have the greatest admiration for it — at a distance. There I am safe.

Here is a very profound question:

"Do we suffer unjustly? If so, how explain your theosophical doctrine of karma?"

Yes, we suffer unjustly sometimes. "If so, how explain your theosophical doctrine of karma," which tells us that there is nothing unjust in the universe, that everything that is is a natural consequence of a thing and of things that went before, the natural fruitage of one's own individual acts, and nothing else.

You know, this antinomy, this apparent contradiction, arises from



the fact, as I have said before, that we Occidentals are not accustomed to real psychology. We don't know what it is, for we have no real psychology. What is called psychology in the universities, is mostly plain bunk, ninety-nine percent imagination, and the other one percent medical facts.

But psychology in its essential meaning, as the science of the constitution of man, and the working and interaction of spiritual man playing through it, of that line of thought the Occident knows nothing, except the few things that everybody knows and that are given long Greek and Latin names frequently. Did we know psychology better we should realize, first, that everything that comes to us, just or unjust, comes to us because we were originally the cause of it, and hence we are the individuals to which those coming things have been naturally attracted back to us.

But, suppose that, being in a position of responsibility — and this will illustrate my point — I take upon myself the burthen of others: not taking the burden from their shoulders, but in a mystical and a symbolic sense do more than what would be considered a good man's duty well done: deliberately resign all, and give myself to others; bring upon myself, as a buffer or shield, the blows of fate in order that others may be saved. In such case I deliberately use my willpower, my energy, my intelligence, my consciousness, to do this, and the suffering which is natural that must ensue is unjust in the sense that I have not earned it by evil action; but I have brought it upon myself nevertheless. The karmic law operates just the same, but it is, I repeat, unjust in the sense that the present personality in which I live and through which I work is not morally responsible for the suffering which follows.

Do you see the distinction that I am trying to draw? On the one

hand suicide, a coward and weakling; and on the other hand the man who lays down his life for his brother gladly and willingly, because he loves him; the latter gives up his own life in order that the other may live, whereas the other gives up his own life in order that he may escape the consequences that he thinks his own evil acts are bringing upon him. The case of self-sacrifice and of resignation and of taking unto one's heart what does not properly belong there, in other words the act of the hero, was done deliberately by the exercise of will.

The suffering, whatever it may be, was unjust to use popular language, and yet it was done. Here is the spirit of all the great sages and seers. It is the spirit also of the three Leaders of the Theosophical Movement, the great-hearted Founder, H. P. Blavatsky, William Q. Judge the Holder, and she who has just passed into her unutterable peace, Katherine Tingley, whom I have always loved to call Great Heart.

These are three beautiful lives, taking unto themselves the blows and buffets that were aimed at the noble work that they loved and gave their all for. There is high nobility of soul; there is beauty of soul; there you will find heroic strength.

Often have I seen Katherine Tingley suffer; often have I seen her bear the agony and pain (being a human being) of the blows that were aimed at the Society and the work that she so loved — misunderstood, reviled by the witlings, alas! who knew no better (and therefore I judge them not), carrying the burden of a worldwide organization for which she gave everything she was and had, and into her devoted breast received all the blows and buffets — somewhat like the Swiss hero of medieval time, Arnold von Winkelried.

You know the story of the battle of Sempach between the Swiss and the Austrians. This devoted Swiss knight, in order to make a

way through the solid wall of the Austrians' spears, rushed forward, and gathered as many of them as he could into his own breast, broke the way for his countrymen to enter the opening thus created by his sacrifice. As a man of German descent and Austrian origin myself, I bear tribute to this noble Swiss knight.

That is what our theosophical teachers and leaders have done. There is where you will find suffering which is "unjust" because unmerited. But oh what unspeakable reward is theirs for the heroism thus manifested!

When you think of the lives of the Buddha and of Jesus called Christos, and of the other great sages and seers like them, there in their lives you will find lessons of unparalleled heroism, and you will find things that will give you comfort and solace in times of stress and trouble — yea, peace, and happiness, and wisdom!

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[Vol 1, No 7](#)  
[Contents](#)

**No. 7 (November 12, 1929)**

**QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK**

(Lecture delivered July 28, 1929)

An announcer of glad tidings always has a happy heart; and, as the Hebrew poet says in substance: "Beautiful on the mountains are the feet of them who come bringing tidings of good cheer." I always feel, when standing on this platform to speak, that I am like the messenger of glad tidings to men; for our wonderful philosophy is replete, is full, of the most noble and elevating thoughts — not garnered merely from the storehouse of the thoughts of the great seers and Sages of the ages, but thoughts that you and I can prove to be true by entering into our own fora, going within ourselves, into those silent places that every human heart possesses, which are so similar to, and yet so different from, each one as contrasted with all the others.

In these silent places we receive illumination, we receive visions of truth, because our spirit — the core of us, the heart of us — has gone into the very core of being, where it is native, from which it is separated never, from which it originally sprang, and with which we are all in direct and unceasing communication.

Realize this wonderful truth; take it to heart; for there are fountains inexhaustible of wisdom, of knowledge, and of love — yes, and power — power over self first of all, which means power over the so-called inanimate nature in which we live and move and have our being.

What is this core of your being? That is the question, friends, that the great sages and seers of all the ages have answered: it is the inner god in you, the divine spirit, the Christos-spirit, the living

Christ. These are not vain words, not poetical terms; for there is nothing so real, nothing so actual, nothing which gives such comfort and help and solace in time of stress and grief and sorrow and suffering.

It is a wonderful experience to go into the silent places of the heart. It is pitiful how the average man fritters away his time in a fevered and restless search for the things that amount to so little after all, and that perforce he needs must leave behind him when the great and beautiful angel of death is at his bedside.

But in life, while we are living as men and women on this earth, we can at any moment, if we so will, not merely ally ourselves with, but become at one with, be, the very heart of the universe. This is the substance of the noblest, the most elevated, religious and philosophical teachings that the world has ever received.

It is into these quiet places of the soul, if you like to put it so, into these deep silences of the heart — that is to say, the inmost of the inmost of the human being — that enter the great seers and sages when they want to acquire more light and greater knowledge; for by so doing they enter into the very structure and fabric of the universe, and therefore know truth at first hand, because they become in their own minds and intelligences, in the interpreting organ we call the mentality, one with that universe, vibrating synchronously, sympathetically, with the vibrations on all planes of the Eternal Mother. There they become at one with all, and therefore know truth intuitively.

People ask questions. Now why, as I said on last Sunday, do they ask questions? Because they desire to know. The reason why people ask questions is obvious, because it is an instinct for more knowledge; but this instinct for knowledge is a hungering for light, is a search for truth, and no heart, no mind, should be satisfied with any answer which does not at least contain some of

the elements springing forth from this fountain of light itself, from this fountain of life inexplicable, resident in the core of the human being.

Men differ in their expressions of forms and about forms; but they never differ when the strings of the heart are plucked by the intelligence, for then they recognize truth to be truth.

I have before me a list of questions that have been sent in to me for answer, and I might say in passing that although I have called myself an animated encyclopedia, or a walking dictionary, in answering so many questions, I am always glad to receive these questions, and I shall try to answer them with the same sincerity that I have all other questions that I have received, whether from inside or outside of the grounds of our International Headquarters. If you are interested in any subject at all that you think I may be able, with my theosophical training, to throw light upon, send your question to me and I will try to answer it.

First then: I will read all the questions I have here and then I will try to answer them in order. Some of these questions are rather obscure. I think they refer to previous lectures that have been given here in this our Temple of Peace. At any rate, I will read them as I have received them.

- "Is it possible that the time is here for a new phraseology for some philosophical dicta?"
- "If the body is a 'bunch of sheaths of energy,' why say 'inside' or 'outside': or why point upwards for heaven or downwards for the opposite place?"
- "Is not the word 'relativity' sufficiently understood, and the fallacy of 'time and space' sufficiently impressed upon the modern minds through the demonstration of radio, to warrant new lines of expression?"

- "If the body is a 'bunch of sheaths of energies,' is not the universe similarly constructed? And, if so, why do we talk or think of trillions and quadrillions of miles of space in light-years, etc., etc.? Radio would suggest no distance or space for any of the 'bundles of sheaths' except one — the densest or physical."
- "Is not everything within reach — here and now?"
- "Is there any such thing as time or space?"

(What a philosophical mind this questioner has! I think that he or she must be an Einsteinian. At any rate, it sounds like it, and in a certain sense I also am an Einsteinian.)

- "Might not an electron at the end of one's foot get instantaneous communication with an electron in the brain notwithstanding the distance of separation?"
- "Do human beings come into earth-life haphazard, or according to laws of cause and effect?"
- "I believe that your theosophical doctrine of reincarnation is true; but why should some souls reincarnate as men and some as women? What is the cause of it if the human soul is without sex, as I understand is the case?"
- "Who are the Masters of Wisdom of whom I have read in theosophical literature? Are they spirits of dead men?"
- "Is it possible for anybody — the plain man or woman — to enter into personal relations with these great sages? If so, how is it done? Where do they live?"
- "Is the Theosophical Society under the guidance and control of the great seers and sages you so often speak of in your lectures?"
- "I understand your theosophical doctrine of karma to be simply the formulation of the laws of cause and effect. Who or what laid down these laws in the universe?"

- "Is not intelligence the greatest and profoundest quality of nature? Or is there something still deeper?"

Yes, I think the time is here for a new phraseology for philosophical dicta. I believe that the time has come for an entire reshaping of philosophical thought itself in Occidental countries. The philosophical systems in Occidental countries are outworn. They were outlined 150, 250 or more years ago, before the recent great discoveries in science took place that are now so enlightening the minds of men regarding the physical nature surrounding us. Hence new views of nature have become imperative; and naturally, for the philosophical systems themselves are bound to change as greater knowledge comes, and indeed they are now so changing. Therefore the phraseology in which they have been couched is also bound to change, and it is also indeed changing.

I have never found a better phraseology in which to express the facts of nature than our own theosophical terminology. It is ancient, it has stood the test of time, it is very expressive, it is exact. Even in those modern theosophical words that we have had to develop, or bring forth, or invent, in order to give some distinctly clear idea of what our own Sanskrit terms mean, we see the working of this natural element of change.

"If the body is a bunch of sheaths of energy, why say 'inside or outside,' why point upwards for heaven, or downwards for the opposite place?"

It has never struck me that these gestures upwards or downwards as made by a speaker or as used by a writer in verbal expression mean anything more than symbolic suggestions of superiority or inferiority as the case may be. A man in speaking may point upwards or downwards, but certainly a theosophical lecturer by



using these two gestures in either direction would not signify that in his view heaven is above the spot of our round globe on which he stands, or that hell is below it. They are merely symbolic gestures understood by everybody: a species of sign language signifying, as I have already said, inferiority or superiority: elevation or the opposite.

The questioner is quite right in criticizing the terms inside or outside, for not merely the physical body but the entire human constitution, as our theosophical teaching says it is — visible and invisible, so-called inner and so-called outer — is composed of sheaths of energy-substance working all together as a unit through the physical body, which is the grossest of the remaining parts of the human constitution; and it is this larger part of the human constitution working through the physical body which controls the body, manifests through it, and that physical body like all other sheaths of the constitution is composed of substance-energy. Verily indeed, there is neither "inside" nor "outside," strictly speaking. It would in all cases, I think, be better to say inferior and superior, higher and lower — not meaning in any case mere spacial location but difference of intrinsic quality.

Next:

"Is not the word 'relativity' sufficiently understood, and the fallacy of 'time and space' sufficiently impressed upon the modern minds through the demonstration of radio, to warrant new lines of expression?"

I think this querent is the same one who asked the first question. No, I do not think that the word "relativity" is sufficiently understood. I think that very few people understand it even in its simplest meaning — this wonderful Einsteinian phrase. Dr. Albert Einstein in his fundamental scientific or philosophical teachings touched upon a very ancient truth which has been taught in the

theosophical philosophy for ages upon ages upon ages, and it is this: that everything that is in the world, visible and invisible, high or low, inferior or superior, is relative to one another. There are no hard and fast lines of demarcation, no absolute separations, nothing absolute — that is to say anything standing by itself, and utterly radical from the root up and therefore utterly different from any other thing. On the contrary, everything is relative to everything else. All things are interlocked and interlinked and interblended and interwoven; and this web of being is the great universe of which we human beings, in common with all other beings, are inseparable parts.

We are relative to the Universe as it is relative to us, and so is the humblest of things and the highest of things and beings. That is the fundamental idea of the theory of relativity.

Now whether Dr. Albert Einstein has successfully proved his theory mathematically is another question entirely. I do not think he has. I may be wrong, but I do not think that he has proved it with completely satisfying mathematical demonstration.

Nevertheless, his fundamental idea is a wonderful natural truth.

There is no such thing as time utterly separate from space; but space and time are two aspects, two sides, two phases, or events, of the same underlying reality. Matter and energy again are not utterly different, but are two aspects, two phases, two events, as I have just said, of the same underlying reality. And substance and spirit — or force and matter, if you prefer the words — and time and space: all these four are but four aspects, four phases, four events, of this one underlying reality.

Never mind by what name you call this underlying reality. No human intellect can encompass it in itself. It is deathless, it is immortal, it is infinite, and it is eternal. Theosophists, adopting the ancient Sanskrit terminology, simply call it That. We give to it

no other name except That; and how much more reverent this is, is it not, than to give a name to it which limits it, if only by small and petty human association of ideas.

I do not know really what the questioner means by saying, "through the demonstration of radio." It is true that time and space, considered as separate things, are fallacious. I mean that they are fallacies and have no existence in *themselves*. They do not exist separately from each other, as I have just said. They are two sides, two aspects, two phases of the same underlying thing. But I do not see what radio has to do with it. I think the idea is that because radio is an electromagnetic effect, and because some man's voice can be heard practically instantaneously on opposite sides of the earth, the querent seems to believe that this proves that there is no such thing as time and space, or rather, as Relativists say, time-space.

But why so? Remember that spacial distance and intervals of time we judge solely by the effect of outside nature upon our senses acting as reporters to our consciousness, and our senses are very imperfect and therefore report to us imperfectly.

Consider the question of time. Remember how slow our life is as contrasted with other lives and how rapid it is in its cycle as compared with other entities. Speed has nothing to do with life or consciousness except as mere effect. The electrons of the atom whirling around their central protonic nucleus, let us say six or seven quadrillion times in one human second, may have on them — on these tiny atomic planets — infinitesimal beings, thinking beings, living beings, even as you and I live on this earthly planet Terra whirling around its central sun.

But note how rapidly the entire cycle of their electronic life runs — seven quadrillions of their years in one human second; and, on the contrary, how rapidly we must live in comparison with

supernal Intelligences in the vast abysses of the spaces of space, whose life periods must extend over quadrillions and quintillions and sextillions, and heaven knows how many -illions of human years. You see therefore how relative all these things are to circumstances and conditions.

So, therefore, radio to us is practically instantaneous transmission of thought, but to beings of another order of intelligence it might be exceedingly long between the speaker's word and the one who receives the voice; and again contrariwise, it might be much more rapid even than it is to us. All these cases are instances of the poor fallacy of considering time to have existence in itself, and to be judged of by our own imperfect sense receptions. We are so apt to judge these things, as just said, by our own sense organs, forgetting how imperfect these sense organs are. Very imperfect senses indeed have we, and we live so much in our physical sense "apparatus" that we are apt to think all the foundations of the universe are builded according to the way our so imperfect physical senses interpret those foundations to us. Remember that carefully, please.

"And if so, why do we talk and think of trillions and quadrillions of miles of space in light-years, etc.? Radio would suggest no distance or space."

Well, but it does. Even electricity, rapid in movement as it is to us humans, takes a certain time to pass over a certain extension of physical matter and so also does radio transmission take time, however short that period of time may seem to be to us.

"Is not everything within reach — here and now?"

Yes, provided you can reach it! Provided you can reach it! Everything is here and now, no matter how great or how small. That is all there is to the fact. It is the inner spiritual evolution,

bringing forth what is within, as the flower manifests the vital energy of its parent seed, bringing forth what is within itself: its evolution, the development of the inner faculties and powers, it is this evolution which prepares us ever more and more as time goes on to reach out and take not only what belongs to us, but what pertains to circumambient life; but if we do it according to nature's fundamental laws, we take only in order that we may give, we gain only in order to use what we gain for others, for nature is one harmonious and completely interblending organism of which every part by the fundamental law of Nature works for every other part.

That is the fundamental law of the universe, and that law we theosophists briefly and perhaps rather inaccurately call universal brotherhood, meaning by that the absolute inseparability, fundamental, radical, basic, of everything that is. Consequently everything is within reach if only you have learned to take it: and I may remind you here that only those may take who themselves can give, paradoxical as it sounds: and those who can take more than others are precisely those who can give more than others, and those are what we humans call geniuses. Those again who take still more than do the geniuses are what we call the great sages and seers of the ages. Those who take less are what are commonly called humbler men, men less evolved; and finally there are those who take still less from nature's reservoirs and storehouses, and those are the entities in the inferior or lower walks of life, evolutionally speaking.

"Is there any such thing as time or space?"

Yes, there is time-space, what Einstein and his followers call the time-space continuum, a thought which does not mean that time exists on the one hand, so to speak, and space exists on the other hand, so to speak, as entities radically differ, for as I have just

pointed out to you, time and space are but two phases, two events, of the underlying reality, and it might be better to phrase the matter in an entirely different way and say that time and space are merely two aspects of the underlying reality as our imperfect senses interpret natural phenomenon to our minds. It is only our physical senses that makes us think these two things — time and space — exist absolutely separately, the one from the other; while the continuum idea briefly expresses the natural fact that both are the continuous and uninterrupted existence of reality. Energy and matter, or spirit and substance, are still two further aspects or phases of the same underlying reality. All this may be to the average man rather high philosophy; but I must point out to you that the questions which I am trying to answer touch on points of high philosophy.

"Might not an electron at the end of one's foot get instantaneous communication with an electron in the brain notwithstanding the distance of separation?"

Why certainly; but it all depends upon what you mean by "instantaneous," as I have already tried to explain. Electricity is practically instantaneous in its passage from point to point as we humans sense it, but to other beings different from us humans the time which elapses between the pressing of the electric contact and the response of the light which flashes on in the electric globe might be exceedingly long to an order of intelligences evolved along different evolutionary pathways than those followed by us humans. We are so apt to judge nature by the reports given to us by our own imperfect physical senses, and also according to the way nature has builded our own little dust-speck which we call Mother Earth: we judge the whole universe by what our senses enable us to learn of Mother Earth and hence we think the entire universal nature must be builded in the way and after the manner and according to the plans by which our

planet Terra has been builded.

We humans are physical children of Mother Earth, even as the inhabitants of other planets are children of their planets, living in vehicles or bodies that nature working on those other planets has builded as appropriate vehicles for existence there.

"Do human beings come into earth-life haphazard, or according to laws of cause and effect?"

I don't think that this friend has ever been in our Temple of Peace before; otherwise he would have remembered that I have answered this question already many times in past lectures. Human beings most certainly do not come into earth-life haphazard. Haphazard is a word which means chance. Now chance is simply a word which men use when they do not know the true answer to a thing: men simply say that such and such a thing happened, or that it chanced. But in a little while perhaps they know more about it, and then the word chance is forgotten, and we give an expression to this little more of knowledge that we have then acquired by a word which we think embodies our greater knowledge and which perhaps is a long neo-Greek or neo-Latin name. In such circumstances we have acquired a little more knowledge than before, it is true; but let us also remember that there is much more knowledge still to attain about the same thing.

If there is one thing that a theosophist learns above everything else, it is not to build ideas of finalities into his mind and to refuse to recognize any absolutes, whether these be of the nature of barriers or complete endings. There are always greater things to know, there is always a beyond in knowledge, in growth, in wisdom, yes, and in love. Love, the cement of the universe, which keeps the stars in their courses, which builds the worlds, which teaches men the noblest of things, self-sacrifice; and oh how

beautiful, how inexpressibly lovely, is the self-sacrifice originating in impersonal love!

Yes, human beings come into the world strictly according to the laws of what theosophists call karma. The average man may perhaps call it the law of cause and effect. I much prefer our own theosophical explanation of karma, as the doctrine of consequences, meaning the consequences of what one has himself sown, he alone must reap. To be sure, cause and effect — I mean these two words — have a scientific flavor about them, an aroma (I won't be discourteous), a perfume, of a moribund, that is to say, of a dying, if not dead, science. Therefore we theosophists like our own terms better; and instead of saying cause and effect I, at least, prefer to say consequences, meaning the fruits, the results, the consequences, of what one has sown himself or done himself or himself thought. These ye reap and nothing else, for ye yourselves sowed the seed of which you are now reaping the fruit.

Consequently human beings reincarnate or come into earth-life strictly according to what they have made themselves to be in other lives — into the nation, into the family, into the time period, and into the circumstances that they themselves have prepared for themselves in other lives. How simple, how appealing is this doctrine in its simplicity. Here then is the essence of the doctrine of karma, and also its twin doctrine of reincarnation, and surely you see that neither of the two doctrines is at all difficult to understand — at least to understand the principles of them.

"I believe that your theosophical doctrine of reincarnation is true; but why should some souls reincarnate as men and some as women? What is the cause of it if the human soul is without sex, as I understand is the case?"

Well, I suppose that this question must have occurred to



everybody who has heard of the doctrine of reincarnation for the first few times. I remember that it occurred to me as a youth when I first heard of reincarnation as being a fundamental theosophical teaching. Would you like to know the answer to this question? I will tell you, and please, friends, forgive me if from the necessities of the case I cannot speak as plainly nor as fully as I might if I were speaking in a medical lecture hall.

The human soul is sexless. It has no more sex than has this pillar at my side, it has no more sex than has the wood of this lectern at my side. But karmically, that is to say according to the law of consequences working throughout nature, at different periods the human soul takes unto itself or into itself different colorings or affections so to speak. It is modified in one of two directions — bent, biased, temporarily — but while this bias lasts, it exercises its influence. The result of this bias or bending or penchant or leaning or affection in one direction of the two brings through the process of reincarnation a man-child into the world; and the result of the penchant or bias or bending — or of what we may call "mental deposits," as William Q. Judge used to say — in the other direction in precisely identical fashion brings a woman-child into the world.

What causes these mental deposits — these storings up of thought and emotions, these seeds of the body to be, mental and moral seeds directing the course of the reincarnating soul into the body of a man-child or of a woman-child? The cause is what you have done in the last life or lives, in your emotions, in your thoughts.

Do you understand the drift of my meaning? If a man is strongly attracted to the other sex in any one life, he makes mental deposits in his psychological apparatus, he stirs up tendencies in a certain direction, and that apparatus is therefore biased or affected in a certain direction; and these tendencies lie latent

during the post-mortem period until their combined energy, their accumulated energy, attracts him or drives him into the direction — do you follow me? — in other words, leading him into the body to be of his next incarnation on earth.

It is therefore attraction to a body of a certain type that determines the sex of the child; or rather, to put it more clearly, it is attraction that determines whether a man-child or a woman-child shall be the next physical vehicle for that particular reincarnating soul. I think that I have spoken with sufficient clearness.

"Who are the Masters of Wisdom of whom I have read in theosophical literature? Are they spirits of dead men?"

Most emphatically they are not. They are living men, as alive as I am, as alive as you are. They are living men; sages, seers, great men, great ones, very holy, very wise, very compassionate. The great Buddha Gautama was one; Jesus called the Christ was one. Sankaracharya, the great Hindu sage was one. Lao-Tse the great Chinese philosopher and sage was one, as was also Confucius. Among Greeks the names of Apollonius of Tyana, of Pythagoras, of Empedocles, occur to me; and there have been many, many more, and there are today many.

Has it ever occurred to you to ponder over the fact that these great men have lived? Has it ever occurred to you to wonder about it? Why should they be so great that they move the souls not only of the men and women of their own time, so that in fact they have made and unmade civilizations, but also that the memories of their lives have come down through the ages as exemplars of superhuman greatness?

Yes they were men, great men. They are the sages and seers, and it is from their teachings, formulated into a system, that the

modern theosophical philosophy-science-religion has taken its present form. They are not the spirits of dead men.

"Is it possible for anybody — the plain man or woman — to enter into personal relations with these great sages? If so, how is it done? Where do they live?"

Well, it is possible for anybody, no matter how plain and what the world calls humble, no matter how rich and what the world calls princely — prince or peasant, black-skinned or pink, brown or white, it matters nothing at all.

The open sesame is none of these merely human qualities or attributes. It is what you are yourself within yourself which determines whether you shall be called to meet these great ones. Knock, and it shall be opened unto you. And if you give the right knock, the portals fly open before you as if by magic.

When such or another came to Jesus, did he say: Where were you born? How much money have you? What is your rank in life? No, he didn't. Nor do the great sages and seers ask these questions. They know these things. They can tell as it were by a glance of the eye.

Along the same lines of argument exactly: if you were a teacher of Sanskrit, as I have been, and want to know whether another man is a Sanskrit scholar, you don't ask him questions about where he was born or what his name is or how much money he has. You test him by the only means which common sense provides, and then you know. And they do the same, with this exception, however, that their means and methods are far more subtle than the illustration I have given because they know by spiritual and psychological tests and know instantly.

That then is the way by which to enter into relations with these great sages and seers. Be the highest you love. Live the noblest

you know; and the way to communication with them lies open before your feet. Anybody, plain or not plain, to use the questioner's words, provided that he comes and knocks, to use the language of the Christian New Testament, provided that he has that within him, that something which will not be denied, and which by divine right of spiritual growth requires an answer, will get it. I repeat: he will get the answer. Theosophists call the marks of majesty in this case the buddhic light of the self, and the Christians might call it the Christ-light. The meaning of these two expressions is the same in a general way, and only the words differ. There is the way by which to enter into personal relations with the great seers and sages who today as always compose the band or association or society of great men of which I have spoken before.

This teaching of the existence of this association of great men is nothing new. The great men have lived. That is a fact in history; and may I ask you: Has nature grown so enfeebled through evolution that she cannot now produce what once she produced? Are there no such great sages and seers today? Of course there are, and I invite you to use your common sense and to answer your own question.

"If so, how is it done?"

I have already told you. The Buddha told us how; Jesus told us how. Apollonius, Empedocles, Pythagoras, and all the others have told us how; and the telling is the same identically in all cases. "Come unto me," is the answer; "come unto me." And how can you come if you are heavy laden and burdened with egoism, laboring under the heavy weight of blinding selfish desires in particular? But come with the child-heart, come with the spiritual instinct that there are intelligence and love at the foundations of the universe, and that these are also in your own heart: and your

questions will be answered.

"Where do they live?"

Anywhere. More specifically, there are groups or lodges of them in different parts of the world, especially in Tibet, and also in a certain place in Asia Minor, in a certain part of India, and also in a certain part of South America; and these are the places where the busy marts of men are less in evidence, where the air is less polluted by evil human emanations, where the noise and distractions are less. Does the novelist, does the poet, does the scientists, do the thinkers, ever go by preference into the main streets of our great cities and try to produce the fine flowers of their thinking there with all the noise and hustle and hurly-burly around them? No, they go to the quiet places, into the places of peace and beauty. That is why these great seers and sages live in the unfrequented parts of the earth. There is nothing uncanny about their choice, as you readily see.

"Is the Theosophical Society under the guidance and control of the great seers and sages that you so often speak of in your lectures?"

Under their guidance in a general way, yes. Under their control, not at all. They inspire our theosophical work; they guide our efforts; they teach, they show the way; they light the path; they tell us of the sunny splendor ahead. But control! The questioner has not the remotest conception of the method of the great ones. Control of others is evil, it is mischievous, it is fraught with danger, it is selfish. They guide, direct, inspire, but they don't control in the sense of the questioner. They enlighten, they inspire, they guide, they point the path, and say: Higher, come up higher! Or, and this comes to the same thing: Come unto me; I am the Way and the Truth and the Life and the Light.

And poor mistaken human hearts have taken these words as signifying the mere personality of a great man. It is truly pathetic. The idea, on the other hand, was: the following of a noble life, the taking of the teachings given, the receiving and evolving of the inner native splendor, of the divine inner being, is the result of the buddhic splendor, the Christ-light. That was the thought behind the saying of Jesus.

"I understand your theosophical doctrine of karma to be simply the formulation of the laws of cause and effect. Who or what laid down these laws in the universe?"

The first part of this question I have already answered; and I will answer the second part by saying that nothing, nobody, laid down these laws in the Universe. These so-called laws of cause and effect are simply the operations of nature itself, its natural actions, movements, its intrinsic being. Do you understand me?

There is no supreme law giver. You will realize that fact clearly if you think about it. But permeating all nature, working through all nature, there is wondrous, mystic, splendid spirit, and "beyond" that spirit is superspirit, impersonal, divine. Remember that personality always has limitations, always has its restrictions; otherwise it cannot be impersonal or divine. Only impersonality is eternal and infinite. These laws of cause and effect therefore are simply the operations of natural being, radical, inherent in nature; and in fact are naught but the movements of nature itself. What else can they be?

Why is wood, wood? If wood had the texture and the qualities of gold, let us say, would it be wood? It would be gold. That is the idea. Gold has certain intrinsic qualities, certain chemical qualities, which are the very nature of this metal and hence it is gold. So these causal and effectual operations of nature are inherent in nature itself: so to say they are the very nature of

nature itself. Also never forget that nature is rooted in spirit, and spirit is rooted in superspirit, and superspirit in That.

"Is not intelligence the greatest and profoundest quality of nature? Or is there something still deeper?"

Intelligence in this abstract sense is universal. All nature is consequential in its action and in its structure. All nature is builded according to certain fashions which make it what it is. This is the work of universal intelligence manifesting in individuals — high or low, as in us human beings — in each after a certain fashion.

But is there something deeper in nature than what men call intelligence, something which appeals still more to the heart of man? Yes; and that is that wondrous mystery which I have called the cement of the universe, which holds things together, which keeps the stars in their paths, which keeps human hearts beating in aspiration and hope, which shows us the sunny splendors on the other side of death. Do you know what it is? Very great men have called it *Love*. Love — a holy, beautiful name; and I think that only human beings degrade it.

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[Vol 1, No 8](#)  
[Contents](#)

**No. 8 (November 19, 1929)**

**QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK**

(Lecture delivered August 4, 1929)

Questions that we all ask; and I myself this afternoon feel in a very questioning mood. I am wondering whether it might not be better to talk to you from my heart this afternoon instead of attempting to answer the questions that have been sent in to me; because these days with us at the International Theosophical Headquarters here are very beautiful ones: days fraught with a sublime message which has come into our hearts and minds more particularly since the passing of my great predecessor Katherine Tingley.

I am in that mood: Shall I ask you questions, or shall I appeal to your hearts and to your minds? And I wonder which I shall do. I have some twelve or thirteen questions here, questions which I shall try to answer, however, which have been sent in by friends, and I know that they are waiting for such answers as I shall be able to give to them — answers on a variety of subjects. I am now inclined to think — remembering one or two of these questions — that I shall answer them, because in answering some of these questions, I shall be able to talk to you from my heart at the same time.

I know you will be interested in what a theosophical leader and teacher has to say in answer to a few at least of these questions. The first one therefore that I have on the list before me is:

"What is to be your policy as the new Leader and Official Head of the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society as regards the conduct of that organization?"



I confess that I feel a bit nonplussed. This is a big question to answer: "What is your policy?" I have a very definite policy — a clear-cut one, which is not my own, in a sense, but which has been put upon me as a sacred trust to carry out, and which I have taken into my heart and mind and will carry out; and therefore in that sense it is my own. Who put it upon me? Katherine Tingley. You may know that we have a line of successorship in the Theosophical Society which is different perhaps from anything else in the world. Christianity in its early years had somewhat the same idea, which it called the Apostolic Succession, that is to say, that teacher succeeded teacher, or leader succeeded leader; but the spiritual aspect of this true system died out very quickly in the Christian Church and in the very early centuries of the history of that ecclesiastical society.

But it has not died out among us, and may the immortal gods prevent that it ever die out, because it is based on a spiritual fact or operation of nature. The light of the holy sages is transmitted from messenger to messenger down the ages; and certain ones, certain human beings, can be trained to transmit that light in purity and in fulness, and it is their duty and their joy to transmit it.

This chain of succession in teachers is what is often spoken of in Greek historical tradition as the Hermetic Chain or the Golden Chain, as it is sometimes called, and was considered among Greek philosophical mystics as reaching from Father Zeus through a series of spiritual and then noble human beings down to ordinary men. This was a teaching of the Mysteries where it was fully explained; and I may tell you here and now that it is a true teaching because it represents distinctly and clearly a true operation of nature. More or less faint copies of this Hermetic Chain or Golden Chain or succession of teachers was taken over by various later formal and exoteric sects, such as the Christian

Church wherein it was called the Apostolic Succession.

Of course when the Apostolic Succession, as actually took place in the Christian Church, became a mere form, a mere matter of election to the office of teacher, or mere appointment, the light, or what there was of the divine light, was gone; and consequently, the Apostolic Succession in the Christian Church is but a whited sepulcher filled with the ideals of men long dead, ideals which have left, as it were, but their aroma in the whited sepulcher. This is no criticism of the good people of the Christian Church. I am simply stating a historical and an esoteric, occult fact.

In all the great Mystery Schools of antiquity there was this succession of teacher following teacher; or, as the world would put it, of leader following leader, each one passing on the light to his successor as he himself had received it from his predecessor; and as long as this transmission of light was a reality, it was a spiritual thing. Therefore all such movements lived, flourished, and did great good in the world.

These teachers were the messengers to men from what we theosophists call the Great White Lodge of the Masters of Wisdom. It is time that the public knew something of these things — the truth about them; because these, our ancient theosophical teachings, have already been more or less distorted; and there are some fantastic ideas abroad about what we believe and do not believe.

So then, the cornerstone of my policy is the handing on of the light: undimmed, pure, and brilliant as I have received it. As I have received it, so shall I pass it on.

As regards the details of my policy, I will let you into a little secret which only recently I have communicated to my trusted officials here, and it is this: that my great predecessor, Katherine Tingley,

hid in her heart the policy which she told me to carry out after she had gone. She said: "G. de P., you must do what I have been unable to do, because none was ready; but you can do it; you can work with trained helpers and officials, which I did not have to work with in the beginning. I have spent my life, I have given all I am and all I have, to train the membership of the Society to understand; because understanding they might receive, and receiving they in turn could give."

That was Katherine Tingley's dearest wish; and the direction in which this line of policy shall be followed is a return to the original lines of thought and teaching which H. P. Blavatsky, the main founder of the Theosophical Society in modern times, laid down. Why weren't they followed before? Because they could not be. They were too esoteric, too difficult, for the membership even of the Theosophical Movement to understand and to follow, and therefore did my great predecessor give up all her life in her leadership to training, teaching, raising the thought and understanding of the membership of the Society so that when the time came for the deliverance into their hearts and minds of the most sacred truths of the esoteric teachings of the ancient wisdom, they could receive them because then they would be enabled to understand them.

You see what I mean when I state that the keystone of my policy is such-and-such and that to me it is a sacred trust. In telling you this I can let out my heart to you, talk to you frankly — to those of you who are interested, and even to those of you who have come merely to hear what a theosophical lecturer could have to say.

Realize, friends, that all such movements as the Theosophical Society are historical movements; and those of you who understand some of our teachings and of the history of the Theosophical Movement likewise know that it is in no wise

different from similar movements in the past; and that all these different movements, considered as bodies, have one common teaching, one core of doctrine, and that heart-doctrine is the ancient wisdom-religion of the ages, transmitted in ancient times, for instance, in countries bordering the inland sea of Europe through what were there called the Mystery Schools.

The teachings given in these schools of the ancient Mysteries lay at the foundation of all the great religions and philosophies of the past, and from them all these great religions and philosophies have today more or less degenerated. If I may indeed make one single exception, however, an exception which I make with one single reservation, and this exception is the great Buddhist religion. I make this exception simply in justice. Theosophists are not Buddhists, but that great religion founded by the noblest seer and sage that the earth has seen for thousands of centuries — not years — has the least degenerated from the original teachings of the ancient wisdom.

But here comes in the reservation I speak of: the above exception does not mean that the Buddhist teachings as they exist today in the Buddhist scriptures are technically theosophical: for this reason, that even those noble Buddhist teachings were framed by the great founder of Buddhism in more or less enigmatic and parabolic form — in the form of parables — so that to understand even Buddhism, you must understand theosophy which is the master-key opening the secret meaning of all these ancient religions and philosophies.

The sacred trust that I have received is to bring back to the hearts of men hope, the promise of a bright future, by delivering into their hearts and minds the doctrines, tenets, teachings, of the ancient wisdom-religion of mankind. And what is the nature of my policy I shall answer more fully in answering another

question which I have before me.

"I saw in yesterday's *San Diego Union* the report of an interview with you at your office at Point Loma. Is it your intention to work exactly as your predecessor Katherine Tingley worked? Or are you going to make changes which she would not herself have made? In other words, is the conduct of the Society under your direction to be the same as hers, or different from hers?"

I cannot answer that question by a simple yes or a simple no. If I said it was to be different, I would not be telling you truth. If I said it was the same, I would not be telling you truth either. That very remarkable genius, Katherine Tingley, hid her policy, the secret objective, the aim, of all her theosophical work, deep in her heart and communicated it to a chosen few only, and in fulness only to me.

But the methods which she pursued were different from the methods which it is now my bounden duty to pursue. Our policy, the secret policy, that which she and I and our two great predecessors aimed at, is precisely the same. The policy in its essentials, in the heart of it, has not varied and will not vary an iota. But the methods, of necessity, must vary with changed times. The time has come for drawing the curtain, for showing some of the ancient arcana; and that is what Katherine Tingley worked for; and she prepared the foundations sure and everlasting for the superstructure which is now in building, of which the building has now begun.

Which is the more important — the everlasting foundation or the superstructure? Neither. One cannot exist without the other. Therefore the policy which is the secret policy of Katherine Tingley is mine. The methods of teaching, methods of propaganda, are likewise what Katherine Tingley most earnestly

desired to be carried out, as the wish of her very heart; and I shall carry them out. And this wish was what she called a return to the methods of the great founder of the Theosophical Society Helena Petrovna Blavatsky.

Is this the so-called Back to Blavatsky movement? Not on your life! Actually that idea signifies that the Theosophical Movement has wandered from Blavatsky, the messenger of the sages, the first messenger in modern times of the great Masters of Wisdom to men. So far as those people who belong to the Blavatsky Movement are concerned, they no doubt tell the truth when they say they want to go "Back to Blavatsky" because they have wandered from her, but such is not the case with us. We admit not that the Theosophical Society has ever swerved from that direct line originating in H. P. Blavatsky and running, as to the pole star, up to the present day.

But it does mean that our membership has been trained, and can now carry on the work which H. P. Blavatsky herself could not fully carry on because the times then were not ripe and — the members were even less ready to receive than they were to receive the wish of Katherine Tingley's heart, and the heart of her predecessor, Mr. Judge.

Had H. P. Blavatsky taught what she wanted to teach and which she knew in time would be taught, it would have been a sowing of seed in stony places, and the hot sun would have come up and scorched and killed the seed, and the whole Theosophical Movement would have been a futile effort. She trained and taught her members. So did Katherine Tingley. And now, please, please understand, I am the servant of the Law; my duty is clear-cut, and I shall follow it to the end; and for me it is a happy and a joyful duty.

Here I have another question:

"Do you have to be rich to join the Theosophical Society?"

I can tell you no, most emphatically no. You know what somebody is alleged to have said in early Christian times; that it is easier — how does it run? — for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.

But that is a mystic saying. It would be an extraordinary fact if a man, because he has the fortune or the misfortune to be wealthy, knew nothing of human sorrow, knew nothing of compassion or of love or of hope or of aspiration: that his riches so crippled his soul that he never aspired to better and nobler things. Who believe that? Why should we of the Theosophical Society forbid or prevent the entrance into the Theosophical Movement of a man merely because he has a large bank account? We never say to anybody: Friend, sell all that thou hast and then come to me. We never say this to any rich man for the simple reason that we understand the meaning of this mystical saying ascribed to Jesus; for with regard to its various phases of sense the very least important is that it has reference to physical wealth.

On the contrary, if a rich man came to me and said to me: "Brother I am a rich man, I want to join your Society. May I?" I would say to him: "The Gods bless you, Brother, come in. You can make use of your riches here. Avenues by which you may help us are many; we are proud of what we are doing; it is the bringing of light to the human race, and we need your help." That is what I would tell him.

I might ask you: Can a poor man join the Theosophical Society? Most decidedly he can.

"What are the qualifications or requisites that one has to have in order to join your Society?"

The question is a bit vague. If it means the formal prerequisites, there is only one that I know of: that a man shall believe in the principle of universal brotherhood. If the question means the actual intellectual, moral, and spiritual qualifications, then I should say that these are they which will lead a man to desire to join the Theosophical Society: sympathy with its objects, a desire to join hands and throw his strength and power in with others who are working for noble ends. It is really all a simple thing. Love of the good and the beautiful and the true; living a decent life; and a desire to help your fellows. That is all. There are no creedal obligations; you don't have to sign anything to the effect that you will or that you won't believe in this or that or the other. You simply state your honest belief in the principle of universal brotherhood, and your application blank thus signed will be accepted.

After that it depends upon yourself as regards the progress that you make — upwards perhaps into the Second Section of the Theosophical Movement, what we call the Esoteric Section where the deeper teachings are given; and then, if you are one of the fortunate few — and by fortunate, I mean fortunate in having the necessary spiritual and intellectual and moral qualifications, in other words, if your own soul and heart are ready — you have a chance to enter into the Third Section.

"Are theosophy and occultism the same thing, or different things?"

Some of these questions are difficult to answer. I know just what should be said, but I am so afraid of giving an answer that will in turn give to you a misleading impression. I am not a gifted speaker, and the consequence is, as I have said before, that I feel on occasions a positive alarm when I try to answer these questions; and all that I can do is to take my courage in my hands



and go to it.

Theosophy and occultism are in one sense the same thing. In another sense they are different things. Let me try to illustrate that point. Do not the Christians, for instance, say that the teachings of Christ and the Christian theology are the same, yet different? They claim that the theological doctrines originated in the teachings of Jesus Christ, but that the actual teachings which Jesus Christ gave in his day were not — and it is true — the theological doctrines of later times.

So theosophy is the ancient wisdom-religion in an all-inclusive sense. These wonderful and sublime doctrines were originally given to mankind on this planet by spiritual beings from other spheres, gods among men, and have descended in the care of this great association of the Masters of Wisdom down to us even unto this day, and are given out from time to time, from age to age, when the world needs a spiritual rejuvenation. That body of teachings, of doctrine, is theosophy, the wisdom of the gods, the key, the master-key, to all the great religions and sciences and philosophies of the past.

But occultism is that part of theosophy which treats of the deeper, hid, mystic, esoteric, side of nature and of man. It is theosophy indeed, but that portion of theosophy which the average man cannot "eat" — to use the figure of the New Testament, the metaphor of the Christian scriptures — because he is still a little child. He needs must be fed the milk — to use again the figure of the New Testament — that is to say, to begin with the simpler teachings.

Discipline precedes the Mysteries. Occultism, therefore, is that branch of the general theosophical philosophy which treats of these operations of nature and the secret laws of nature and of man. These two are one and the same fundamentally, and yet that

same thing, as it were, is two branches: one for the esoterics; and the other is the all-inclusive source from which streams the current of the teachings for the exoterics.

Now these two divisions, friends, are not arbitrary. It all depends upon the applicant. "You cannot keep a good man down" is an old saying; and the man who comes to our doors and knocks and gives the right knock — we know what the right knock is — enters.

"Are the teachings of theosophy and spiritism the same or are they different?"

Quite different.

Here is another question which came to me this morning:

"In case a person is born with some occult power, clairvoyance for example, without any definite knowledge of the power or its correct use, what should he or she do? I understand from my studies thus far that such a person is in a very dangerous position."

Well, I think that it depends upon the individual whether he be in a dangerous position or not. If there are moral weaknesses or bias or "yellow streaks" in his character, to use the vernacular, it is a very dangerous, perhaps a fatal, gift to possess. In any case, it is not a high gift. Clairvoyance is nothing spiritual; it is what theosophists call an astral faculty, and ranks but little higher than the ordinary instinct of the beasts. I do not think that clairvoyance, or any other so-called occult power, and perhaps miscalled occult, is a dangerous thing for a really good man or woman to have; but I should never suggest that it be cultivated, that it be increased, that an attempt be made to develop it.

I have known men who could wriggle their scalps and make their

ears to wiggle, but I never considered that this was a particularly spiritual or intellectual pastime; and as compared with the great spiritual gifts — they which are universal, which link you with the seers and give you direct knowledge of truth — compared with these, I repeat, the so-called gift (the immortal gods save the word!) — this so-called gift of clairvoyance is too often like a robe of Nessus which will do you no good. Just think about it!

Cultivate spiritual gifts, those parts of your nature, in other words, which link you with the Heart of the universe, which make you become at one in thought and in feeling, in aspiration and in hope and in love, with the god within you, which is a celestial, a bright luminary, a real entity, not a mere poetic figure of speech, not a figment of the imagination, but is that which, when it manifests in a man, makes of him what the Occidental world calls a Christ, because he is filled with the Christ-light; and which the Oriental world, seeing it in a man, at least the Buddhists, call the buddhic glory or the buddhic splendor.

These are the links which link you to the heart of the universe. Developing these you are engaged in that great labor which the ancients and the seers and sages through willpower and self-directed evolution, as Katherine Tingley always taught in one of her marvelously epigrammatic sayings, have developed the power to follow within themselves.

Here is another question:

"What is intuition? Father and I both have it, what is it?"

I have just told you. It is one of the spiritual faculties: it is direct vision of truth. 'Vision' however is but a word. It is a direct sense of truth. Sense again is but a word. It is direct cognition of truth: direct and immediate knowledge of the heart of things — truth. Intuition is one of the spiritual faculties and powers of which I

have just spoken when discussing the question of astral clairvoyance. Think what it means to have this inner vision, this inner eye open — intuition. Whether you be scientist or philosopher or religionist or businessman, husband or wife — you who have it, know. No one can help you to attain it except yourself. The inner god, however, is forever within you, surrounding you, overshadowing you, waiting for you, waiting, waiting, waiting, brought out into manifestation only through the aeons, as the aeons pass by into the ocean of the past, through self-directed evolution, which is the development of the inner man into manifestation through the outer man.

And remember in this connection what evolution is in the theosophical sense, as I have often told you here in our Temple of Peace. It is not something added from outside, but is an unfolding, a flowing out, of what you are in the core of the core of your being; it is your self, your spiritual self, coming into manifestation. In other words, the theosophical teaching of evolution is strictly according to the etymological meaning of this Latin word, signifying the unfolding, or unfolding, or flowing forth, of what you yourselves are in your inmost hearts.

Here is a question of another sort. This is from some kind friend quite unknown to me, who signs his name in full, as some of those who send to me questions don't do. This is an odd question:

"What of the Aquarian Age which the seers assert we have already entered on? How would it differ from the age that has immediately preceded it? How shall we best meet its newer problems and responsibilities, how make straight the path for the passage of a wider consciousness of brotherhood and humanitarianism?"

I had ignored this question had it not been for the noble note of theosophic altruism sounded here in its latter part. That note

raised the question immediately into significance. This is a question which belongs to what is popularly called astrological thought. According to astrologers, we have entered, or are just about to enter, into the astrological constellation of Aquarius, the Water-bearer, after having finished or left the preceding astrological constellation of Pisces or the Fishes.

I admit that the astrological entrance into each one of the twelve zodiacal constellations brings with it a new cosmic force into operation, not merely on our earth generally speaking, but throughout our own individual lives. I will also add that the entering into this present astrological era will inaugurate the development in a certain line of powers to come in the human races that will be nobler than they of the last astrological era.

As to how we shall meet the new problems and responsibilities of the era now opening, all I can say is that they must be met as great-hearted men and noble-hearted women meet all responsibilities: by thought and impersonal care for duties, by aspiration, by developing the higher and therefore the more internal parts of our inner being: by aspiration, by hope, by love, by trust — these qualities never fail us. They last forever; they are builders of qualities which strengthen and cement not merely human hearts together, but they are also the very foundation-stones, so to speak, of the universe, for cosmic love which is one aspect of the buddhic splendor is the cement of the universe.

"How can a man really come to know truth? Merely accepting the teachings of others who have lived before, or who live at the present time, to me does not seem to put a man actually in the position of knowing things. Of course thus he merely accepts the opinions of others which he himself believes to be well founded as regards natural truth. In other words, my meaning is: is there a method or is there some way by which a

man can, so to say, come in contact with truth personally, and know it immediately when he sees it or feels it or senses it?"

Most assuredly there is. Go into the silent places of your heart; enter into the chambers, so quiet and still, of your inner being. Practice makes perfect. Soon you will learn to knock at the doors of your own heart. Practice makes perfect. Intuition will then come to you. You will have knowledge immediately; you will know truth instantly. That is the way, that is the teaching of all the seers and sages of all the ages. They tell us not to listen credulously to others who may talk to you: not to listen thoughtlessly to lecturers: not to accept the say-so's of any other man or men unless these appeal to one's own conscience, to one's own instinct, that what is said is truth.

Then be bold but not over-bold; be brave but not rash. Accept the truth and hold it until you know some nobler truth, and hold it until some greater light from the East strikes upon your vision.

"Is your Society something new in the history of the world, or does it belong to the same line of teachings that the ancient Mysteries of antiquity followed; and if the latter, do you believe in the necessity of having a teacher whose main duty it is to teach natural truths; or is it possible for a Society to live and exist without a teacher, the members merely trying to get hold of such natural facts as they can?"

Well, after what I have just been telling you, it seems to me that this question allows me to make a very ready and appropriate answer. Our Society is most emphatically not new in the history of the world. It has always existed, but at intervals it has disappeared as a public organization and has been preserved in the secret places of the earth. Our Society follows precisely the same line of teaching that the ancient Mysteries followed, not merely of Greece and of Rome and of ancient Hindustan and the

ancient countries of the Americas, for the same wisdom-religion of the archaic ages was and is identic in all.

We theosophists believe not as some people who merely call themselves theosophists believe; but we of the original Society, accepting the teachings of our predecessors — the teachings of the Masters of Wisdom — believe that to have a true teacher, to follow a true teacher, is the best and simplest way of learning and the quickest. Do not accept any teacher, however, in whom you have not trust. Refuse. But when you do give your trust, are you man enough or woman enough to accept that teacher honestly and courageously and to follow him? I am, for I have learned the wisdom of it. We theosophists most certainly believe in teachers. We most certainly believe in the successorship of which I spoke in the beginning of my talk to you this afternoon.

I myself have been a faithful servant and disciple under my predecessors. I gave them my heart-trust and all my life. I put all that I had and all that I am in their spiritual keeping, and I have never regretted it. I have learned, and I have a peace in my heart and happiness in my mind which are beyond all understanding of anyone but myself; because I know.

Here are two more questions:

"Do you believe in love as one of the methods of softening human relations as between man and man, and international relations as between nation and nation, or do you believe in strict, cold, impartial justice?"

Well, friends, of course I know that this distinction between love on the one hand and justice on the other is a very common one; it is a distinction often made, but I do not believe that this supposed antinomy of thought or of principle actually exists. I believe that the very soul of justice is love, real justice; and it is only the

feebleness of men's hearts and — forgive me — the weaknesses of our minds, which prevent us from seeing that even as nature is infallibly just, it is so because she loves without bounds and without measure.

"In your view, what do you think is the most beautiful thing in the world?

I could answer this question in various ways, in many ways. But precipitating my thoughts and examining the precipitate, I am inclined to believe that the most beautiful thing in the world is love, that love which keeps the stars in their courses, true, steady, unvarying: that love which is the very cement of the universe, as I have before said, because it is the flowing forth of the permeant light, the Christ-light or buddhic splendor at the heart of the universe; that love which, working in gods and men, teaches us to know beauty when we see it, especially inner beauty, to recognize greatness and splendor in others, from knowing the greatness and splendor in our own inmost being. Only greatness can understand greatness. Love, which teaches self-sacrifice — and self-sacrifice is perhaps the second most beautiful thing in the world — love, I say, is the holiest thing in the universe.

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[Vol 1, No 9](#)  
[Contents](#)



**No. 9 (November 26, 1929)**

**QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK**

(Lecture delivered August 11, 1929)

Beautiful are the pathways, sublime the goal, and quick the feet of them who follow the way of the still small voice within, which way leadeth to the heart of the universe. This is one of the sublimest messages that the ancient wisdom-religion, today called theosophy, gives to the men and women of the present era. It lies at the core and is the core of the messages of the great Mysteries of antiquity — the union of the simple human being with his divine source, with the root of himself, linked as that is with the All, for that core is a spark of the Central Fire, a spark of Divinity; and this spark is in each one of you.

Changing the figure of speech, it is what we theosophists speak of as the inner god — not the human soul: not the poor, striving, loving, hating, failing, falling, rising, aspiring, human soul, but that sublime entity which is the core of every human being and of every living thing and even of every so-called inanimate thing, and union with which means entering into full and complete knowledge of all the secrets of the universe. What a sublime thought this is! A union with this inner god, friends, self-conscious identification of the personal with the impersonal, of the merely human with the divine, is the pathway of initiation and the pathway of wisdom and of knowledge and of peace and of bliss, which pass all understanding of ordinary men and women.

The questions that I have received and am continually receiving and which I am always delighted to receive, all turn more or less around subjects or matters of deep moment to the human heart,

all of which signifies in what direction the thoughts of human beings today are tending. Men seek knowledge; they seek solace, and surcease from pain, they want to know, and to know with hearts at rest.

Is it not a sublime thing to be able to feed them — to change the metaphor again to the parabolic saying of the New Testament — to give the food that will feed these hungry souls? This our ancient wisdom of the ages can do. It is based on no one's say-so. It rests on no ordinary proof; it reposes on no dogmas of any kind, but is provable by each human being, if he or she go into the recesses of his or her own self in the search for reality — the sublimest adventure that human beings can follow!

I am going to read all these questions that I have received during the week and then try to answer them one by one. They have a wide range from how the worlds come into being, up to the nature of the soul and how man is to conquer his faults and failings. This is the first question:

"In what way does theosophy illuminate this subject of the origin of worlds, which is said to be under constant discussion at the present time?"

"People generally are very much confused in the use of the word soul. [Quite so!] Even Plato generally speaks of soul in a very exalted sense — as the source of all virtues, etc., — but in *The Laws*, Book V, par. 9, Plato says: 'The greatest evil to men, generally, is one which is innate in their souls, and which a man is always excusing in himself and never correcting . . . the excess love of self is in reality the source to each man of all offenses.' What soul does he speak of in these different cases? Can theosophy unscramble these souls of Plato?"

It can, easily. Next question:

"If a man has habits which he cannot control and which make himself or others trouble, what can he do about it? How can he cure them?"

"I have heard that Madame Tingley regarded all bad habits and faults and the tendency to crime as diseases. How simple and charitable this! But what is its basis? How can this be true?"

"I have heard that Madame Tingley spoke of criticism, pessimism, and the habit of making complaints and fault-finding as diseases of the mind. What do you think about it? What do they spring from? My observation is that the people who have these habits often seem to regard them as an act or a sign of superiority."

So they do. Next:

"The theosophical ideals are certainly lofty and sublime, but how can a man make them work? Are they abstract ethics, a sort of pulpit oratory, or concrete facts in human life? If they are facts how can we realize them? Are they workable?"

Friends, I am not an orator, I am simply a lecturer; but I will try and answer these questions — perhaps the better in that I never take refuge in meretricious figures or ornaments of speech. I try to talk to my audiences from my heart as well as from my head.

The next question in my hand is marked "Question," but in it I have counted many questions. When I read it, it made me think of the saying in the Bible about "our name is legion."

"How far is the human brain involved in memory? Where are the impressions of past events registered? What is the difference between remote and recent events in regard to memory? How is it that as people pass fifty years of age they

remember early impressions more vividly than recent ones?"

Another question: and this other comprises three in one. It is like the holy Trinity!

"What is the organ of will? How is it that there is no part of the brain devoted to it? How many kinds of will are there?"

The kind friends who send me these long and complex questions seem to think, as I remarked a week or two ago, that I am a perambulating encyclopedia or a sort of walking dictionary. But I am both happy to receive these questions, and delighted in trying to answer them, because theosophy can give answers to them all, and if the answers are not satisfactory, it is my fault, not that of the theosophical teachings.

"In aspiring to the stars beyond the Milky Way, is there not the temptation to consider lightly the tiny wild flower under our feet, when that flower may contain within itself all the potentialities (in miniature) of the most powerful, most distant, suns and constellations? 'As above, so below.'"

This questioner is a true-hearted mystic, shown not only by the thought in the question, but likewise by this illusion to the ancient Hermetic saying: "What is above is the same as what is below, and what is below is the same as what is above" — the meaning of which is that nature is not at battle with itself nor one part controlling any other part. It is a vast organism throughout: one consistent, coherent whole, and therefore what takes place in any one part of it takes place everywhere in all parts, making the necessary changes of time and circumstance. I beg you to think about it.

"In what way does theosophy illuminate this subject of the origin of worlds, which is said to be under constant discussion at the present time?"

Well, I do not know on how many occasions I have talked to you on this very subject of thought: it is indeed very important at the present time. Theosophy throws a brilliant light not merely on the question of the origin of worlds, but on the causes of the manifestation of worlds.

Has this thought ever occurred to you? It is all right, perfectly proper, very interesting, to ask: How is the world? How is it constructed? What are its different parts? But have you ever stopped to ask yourself: Why is the world? That is a much more difficult question to answer. Theosophy throws a brilliant light on these matters, as I have shown in many and many a lecture given from this platform. It shows how the worlds came into being, why they came into being, what they are at the present time, what they are destined to be in the far distant aeons of the future.

Are these thoughts mere speculations of high-minded but unilluminated men? They are not. They are the dicta, the findings, of the great seers and sages of all the ages who have sent their spirit behind the veil of the outward appearances: who have penetrated into the arcana, the mystic secrets, into the very womb of Mother Nature, and brought back the knowledge of what they saw, and therefore they taught; and what they taught was the foundation teaching of the great Mystery Schools of antiquity, to which belonged in all cases and in every country the noblest intellects, the mightiest minds, and the loftiest spirits of the ages. That is a significant fact. The greatest men of antiquity were all graduates, initiates, of the Mystery Schools of antiquity, those men who have left so deep, so profound, a mark on their own time, on the annals of history, that their teachings, as well as their names, have come down to us men of the present time not merely as symbols of wisdom and human knowledge, but as the very exemplars of spiritual and ethical conduct.

They were taught by others greater than they, spiritual beings with whom they had confabulated, exactly as the men of the far distant future, when evolution shall have wrought its wondrous, its mighty, work upon the human stock, will confabulate with the gods. These men were simply the evolutionary forerunners of us.

Think about it. See how logical it is, how coherent it is! The truth is in you. If it appeal to you as truth, dare to follow the call of your own souls. Do not take someone else's say-so. Be true to yourselves! That is one of the first messages that theosophy gives to us: find your own spirit, the god within you, the source of all illumination and genius, and follow that lovely light, that unspeakable splendor, forever.

If you want to know more about the theosophical teaching of the origin of worlds, friends, I refer you to our theosophical monthly magazine, *The Theosophical Path*, which contains all my lectures on this subject printed *in extenso*, one lecture each month.

Now, this question about Plato: and in this I am asked to unscramble two souls. Unscramble is an odd word, I think, but it is expressive. I rather like the word, because in a large sense it expresses just about what men's ideas of souls are. They are more or less scrambled like two or three eggs mixed up together — and I refer here of course to the various so-called souls of the human constitution. Men don't know how to separate one egg from another after the eggs are scrambled, nor does the average man know how to study out the different principles of his constitution.

Plato speaks, as all mystics do, of the duality of the human constitution — of the upper nature, the higher, the superior, which theosophists speak of as the spiritual soul. He likewise speaks of the inferior nature which we may call the animal, or rather the human-animal, and this is not the body. The body is the mere instrument or vehicle containing the human-animal;

and that which impulses the body, which gives it life, which gives it movement, acting through the human-animal, is the human soul as this in turn is inspired by the spiritual soul.

It was the custom among all teachers who had doctrines of great moment to give — and mostly to people who had not been initiated as they had been and who would therefore very likely distort and misuse these wonderful archaic teachings for purposes of profit or for ambitious aims — to hide, to conceal, the mystic truth, albeit giving it open-handed under words having ambiguous senses which those who had the eyes to see and the ears to hear and the minds to vision could understand, but which the evil-minded would pass by.

Would you wear your heart on your sleeve, wherever you go and on all occasions? Would you expose the noblest impulses of your heart to all and sundry? It would not be a wise thing to do. Reserve your strength! No man can possibly tell all that is in him; no man can possibly give to others all the foundations of wisdom lying latent in his own spiritual nature. It simply cannot be done. And this is the main side of the secret of the reticence of the sages of antiquity.

The word soul was one such enigmatic word. It was used in the two senses of the spiritual soul, the vehicle of the god within us, the vehicle or garment in which that inner divinity enshrouds itself; and it was also used of the merely human soul: that poor, falling, failing, aspiring, passionate part of us which we call the human being. When you trust a man, do you trust him on account of his merely human qualities, or do you trust him because there is that within him which you know and can see and have tested to be lofty and true? Which is the nobler part? The latter surely.

The god within him has answered the call of the companion-god within the other. The god in one sees the working of the god in

the other. Knowing it is there, he can trust his brother; and this essential divinity is in all of us.

So I have unscrambled the two souls of Plato. He speaks in one place of the spiritual soul: the source of all inspiration, and of noble love, and of high, impersonal ambitions of selflessness, of purity, of light, of compassion, of peace, and of happiness, that none can understand who have not experienced them.

And, on the other hand, he likewise speaks of the human soul in which the excess of self-love so blinds the eyes of its unfortunate victim, the victim of itself, that alas! this victim cannot even see or understand truth when it is before his vision. Excess of self-love is the root of all evil, the cause and source of selfishness, of mean and ignoble ambitions, of mean and ignoble objectives and aims. It is as Plato says: excess love of self, the lower self, is in reality the source to each man of all offenses, not merely to himself but to his fellows: the source of all crime, of all misery, of all poverty, of all wretchedness.

Now I turn to the question of habits. We all have habits, and there seems to be abroad among men a general idea that because a man has a habit, he is to be excused. I wonder why. I don't see any reason for excusing a bad habit. I can understand it, and condone it, and perhaps pardon it, if the habitue is such a weakling that he has to be fed like a baby; but I fail to see anything lovable or high or noble in an ignoble habit, and am I going to give that man, my brother, another shove on the downward path? Nay. Here is the question:

"If a man has habits which he cannot control and which make himself or others trouble, what can he do about it? How can he cure them?"

A man *can* control himself, he *can* control his habits, he *can*



change them if necessary. The strong man *can* and *will* root them out. And the weakling? Even he can change them if he will. The secret is in the will, and in the love of something loftier than the habit. Set your gaze on the heights and forget the mud in which you stand. Don't remember your past failures, don't brood over them; forget them!

Rise and be! Use your will and intelligence! Lift your soul! Read good books; aspire! These are simple things that are taught to every child. But they are so true, so true; and anything can be done by following this pathway to the gods.

Nothing, friends, can withstand the working of the indomitable will of an illuminated mind. It will conquer anything, the indomitable will! If you cannot conquer your habits, your bad habits, shall I tell you why you cannot? It is because you don't want to conquer them. Forgive me: I don't mean to be harsh; but ask yourselves if it is not true. Is the habit then in the lack of strength? No, you have the strength. Is the habit then rather in the appetite for the habit itself? I think so. But you can conquer that also; you can learn to will to be what you yourselves inwardly are.

"How can you cure bad habits?"

I have told you simple, beautiful old truths, and there are none others of value. I sometimes think that a lesson I saw once given to a little child might be taken to heart by grownups. This child was raising a howl fit to lift the roof, and it was an ugly thing with a great big open mouth and the tears pouring down its cheeks; and its shouting and yelling were frightful. The mother simply took it in front of a mirror and said: "Just look!" The child looked and immediately stopped crying: it did not even peep again. A clever mother! A good psychologist! I warrant you that that child learned a lesson that it will never forget. It was a girl! But I think

boys in other ways are just as susceptible.

"I have heard that Madame Tingley regarded all bad habits and faults and the tendency to crime as diseases. How simple and charitable this. But what is its basis? How can this be true?"

I ask you: How can it be false? Disease is something which leaves you ill at ease; you are not in peace, your body is not harmonious with itself. Is not that disease? Are not all bad habits productive of misery and unhappiness and ultimately of pain and disease? And are not all bad habits the offspring of false and evil thinking? There is the basis.

The next question is just like it:

"I have heard that Madame Tingley spoke of criticism, pessimism, and the habit of making complaints and fault-finding, as diseases of the mind. What do you think about it? What do they spring from? My observation is that people who have these habits often seem to regard them as an act or a sign of superiority."

So they often do. I think that they are mental diseases. They leave the victim of these faults dis-eased, for if you can see anything in pessimism that makes you happy, or in picking faults with your fellows that leaves you contented, or in making complaints about others or fault-finding or criticism that leaves you in a happy and harmonious state of mind, in other words — in a mood that strengthens the fiber of your moral being — I would like to know it. They are diseases of the mind in very truth.

And really, all physical maladies as well have their ultimate origin in a faulty outlook on life, in a faulty direction taken by the individual will. All diseases therefore ultimately, not as they exist when once they exist in the physical body and wreak their work

of suffering and pain, but as they exist in their origin, have this origin in the mind — in this or another life. Weakness of will, the giving way to bad habits breeding seeds of thought which leave thought deposits in the mind, enfeeble the character. You see how it works. An evil or false thought manifests in a body and ultimately ruins it by bad habits. Think it over and I know that you will agree with me.

We theosophists are not Christian Scientists, nor are we mental healers. We are not deniers of any kind. Nevertheless, a truth is a truth wherever it exists, and long before the Christian Scientists, and mental healers, and faith-curers, knew anything about these things, knowledge of it all existed ages and ages ago in the past: and with respect to our present thought every sage and seer has taught the same thing: Cleanse the Temple of the holy Spirit, drive out the demons of the lower nature.

What are these demons? One's own thoughts. The word demon belongs to the Christian phraseology, but I employ it here because it is a word which is known to you and therefore will make an appeal to you. It is a word used by the Christian church along lines of the thoughts that I am trying to give you to think about, in order that you may accept them if you find them true, and to reject them if you think I speak falsely. But please think.

Of course the real sign of inferiority is shown by the man or the woman who thinks that he or she is superior. On the contrary, it is greatness only that recognizes greatness, because only greatness has the capacity, the largeness, the understanding, to recognize greatness in others; and the truly great man never willfully condemns. He understands and forgives. It does not mean that he condones or that he has any wish to avoid helping, but he does not condemn.

"The theosophical ideals are certainly lofty and sublime, but

how can a man make them work? Are they abstract ethics, a sort of pulpit oratory, or concrete facts in human life? If they are facts, how can we realize them? Are they workable?"

I leave it with you. Are the things that I have told you workable? Have I told you falsehoods? Have I told you something impossible to do? Have I suggested a pathway which none may follow and which none has ever followed, or have I simply told you the same old principles of the wisdom-religion taught by the seers and sages of all the ages? They *are* workable, and the sign of the great man, and of the noble-hearted woman, is in the measure that he or she follows the pathway leading to the god, the inner god, within each one of you. Oh! that I might bring this truth to the understanding of men and women today — that wonderful truth, holy, sublime, inspiring as none other is — that within each one of you there is an unspeakable fount of strength, of wisdom, of love, of compassion, of forgiveness, of purity. Ally yourselves with this fountain of strength; it is in you, none can ever take it from you. Its value is more excellent than all the treasures of the universe, for knowing it, being it, you are all.

Now I come to this seven-in-one question. I am going to answer these included questions item by item.

"How far is the human brain involved in memory?"

According to our theosophical teachings, the brain is not involved at all, and yet is involved — a lovely contradiction apparently, but it is not, because it is a paradox. The physical brain is merely the organ, a thing of pure matter, a temporary phase of material stuff used by the energies — or forces, a word I prefer — which flow through it; forces coming from that center I have spoken of as being within, and which center can manifest itself through this physical organ only in degree as this physical organ has been trained and brought up to some at least mediocre possibility of

manifesting the sublimity within. The physical brain registers the vibrations that pass through it, and therefore receives, as it were, a record on its own substance, somewhat as the phonographic record is made.

Therefore we have the mere physical automatism of memory such as are sometimes seen in dreams, felt in dreams, where the brain automatically registers, works as it were like an automaton, and repeats parrot-like what the vibrations of the preceding hours had impressed on its substance. In that sense the brain registers memory, but only in that sense.

Memory is an inner and nonphysical faculty and it is one of the faculties of this inner self of which I have spoken.

"Where are the impressions of past events registered?"

I have just told you: in this inner self, in this inner organ, in the self, an entity composite of spirit and of spiritual substance, as the physical body is composite of material substance and of energy. Nature works below as it works above: as above, so below. As the English poet Spenser says:

For Soul is form and doth the body make.

And this inner entity is in that high sense form and doth the body make: the brain among the other organs of the physical body.

"What is the difference between remote and recent events in regard to memory?"

I don't quite understand this question. I suppose it means as regards the faculty of reminiscence, remembering. Well, the only difference is one of freshness. What is the difference between an old pain and a new one? There is the same idea. A man takes a hammer and tries to drive a nail and strikes his thumb. He has done the same thing before. What is the difference between the

former pain that he felt and the present pain? The one remains in the memory, in this inner organ, and the more recent one is freshly impressed on the brain substance. That is the only difference.

"How is it that as people pass fifty years of age they remember early impressions more vividly than recent ones?"

This part of our complex question I am not able to answer in full, because the full answer pertains to esoteric matters which we do not give out in public, for the simple reason that training is required in order to understand — not that we are selfish and keep something hid that we don't want the whole world to know of, for the whole world could come to us seeking knowledge and we are waiting and ready to give the answer to the proper applicants. Until people come and are ready to accept some modicum of training, there are certain teachings which we cannot give out publicly. These teachings would not be understood; they would be misunderstood. Is not this position a fair one?

I can say this: that not all people who pass fifty years of age have a more vivid reminiscence of early years than of recent ones. Usually I think that such is the case; and the reason is that after fifty years there is more introspection than extraspection, more looking within than gazing without, as the child does who has not yet understood himself or herself. As a man grows older, the noble, the beautiful, qualities of his own nature come likewise more fully into manifestation: they become more clear and grow manifest to his own consciousness, and he is infallibly, inevitably drawn to these more beautiful things, the things of his own heart and soul, the things which he himself is. That is all there is to it. Age brings these in the riper years when memory has stored full its treasure house and when above everything else the

spiritual soul, this inner self, has reached a larger degree of power of self-expression and manifests itself more splendidly within.

We all love beauty; we all love those things which inspire us. There is the secret. Consequently the impressions from outside do not affect the individual over fifty as readily and as deeply as they affect the plastic minds and thinking apparatus of a child. A child in many ways is an unblown bud, psychologically speaking. It has not yet unfolded itself.

"What is the organ of will?"

Now, I do not understand this question. I think the question implies that will is something which works through an organ. What is this organ? But I protest against this view. Will is a force, not an energy. It works as an energy, and working through the intermediate nature of man it becomes energetic; but in its essence it is a force, to use the language of the ancients. It is one of the forces flowing forth from the core, from the heart, of this inner god of which I have spoken. Its physical organ — if that is the meaning of this question — is what? Shall I tell you? It is the pituitary body in the brain.

The next question is:

"How is it there is no part of the brain devoted to it?"

Well, the reason that this has not been detected is simply because our psychologists know nothing of what will is really. They ascribe it to some automatic or clerical action of the brain itself; but the will is a force flowing through that part of the brain, the pituitary body, and now our physiologists and scientists are beginning to see that when the pituitary body is abnormal in function you have cases of acromegaly, of gigantism, and other similar things; and when it is subnormal, you have cretinism and

dwarfs. Growth of the body itself is largely dependent on the automatic action of the willpower flowing steadily through life through the astral or model-body and thence into the physical.

Will, therefore, is of two kinds: the conscious, directed willpower; and the automatic will which governs growth and the functioning of the organs such as the heartbeat. Think of the wonderful engine that the heart is — for it works steadily day and night through many years without ever stopping. That fact suggests what I mean when I speak of the automatic action of the will.

"How many kinds of will are there?"

There is but one will, one kind, but it works in divers ways. Generally speaking we can say that the will takes various forms: we can speak of the spiritual will and of the emotional will and of the human will and of the animal will and of the physical will — which last two are this automatic will which functions through the physical organs. But there is but one will, and these various other things are merely its various typical actions through the organs in which it is working.

Now, the last question that I have before me today is a beautiful one:

"In aspiring to the stars beyond the Milky Way is there not the temptation to consider lightly the tiny wild flower under our feet, when that flower may contain within itself all the potentialities (in miniature) of the most powerful, most distant, suns and constellations?"

The man who asked this question is a true mystic. His question contains a divine truth and what he says is verily so, as I have already pointed out in the beginning of our study this afternoon. One bright intelligence pervades all things; and what is in the star is in the flower under our feet; and it is the instinctive recognition



of this thing of beauty which has led the poet to speak of the flower as a star of beauty. The same life-force pours through it as through the star; the same bright flame of intelligence gives to it its exquisite form, shape, color; and this is the same bright flame of intelligence that controls the passing of the stars along their cosmic ways. There is beauty in understanding, and understanding springs only from an understanding heart, paradoxical as that may sound at first hearing. It is the understanding heart that has vision. Oh, these brain-minds of ours with their doubting, skeptical tendencies and ideas, fascinated by their transitory thoughts of the hour, so that men who live thus feed on husks — these poor, mean, aspiring fellow creatures of ours — and pass unwitting by the feast at the master's table!

Carlyle's beautiful words exemplify what theosophists speak of as the divine light of the tathagatas, the Christ-light in the heart of us all: that bright and splendid luminary within us which lighteth the feet of us all on the pathways of life. Carlyle's words are as follows:

Poor, wandering, wayward man! Art thou not tried and beaten with stripes even as I am? Ever, whether thou bear the royal mantle or the beggar's gabardine, art thou so weary, so heavy-laden: and thy bed of rest is but a grave. Oh, my brother, my brother, why cannot I shelter thee in my bosom, and wipe away all tears from thy eyes!

That is the spirit of a true theosophist.

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**No. 10 (December 3, 1929)**

**QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK**

(Lecture delivered August 18, 1929)

You have listened in the last musical number to a severely classic piece beautifully rendered in the best style of European musicians. We have been in a melomaniac heaven for a short time, but now I am going to bring you down to earth, so to say, by trying to answer a number of questions on philosophical and other points that have been sent in to me with requests for answers.

Some of these questions are a bit humorous; some of them extremely interesting; and some of them are also profound. For instance, some good friend who evidently has been here in this our Temple of Peace listening to others of my lectures wrote to me as follows — this is an indirect question and occupies an entire page of handwriting. It is headed: "Questions we all ask."

"Many theosophist [I am glad he does not call us by the name theosophite] speakers warn against things psychic asserting that they are dangerous.

"Admitting that it is, what of it? The great oceans have always been dangerous, particularly so a century or so ago when they were uncharted and innocent of lighthouses and other modern aids to navigation. Yet there was never a lack of intrepid mariners who sailed its trackless, treacherous, wind-swept wastes in their crude vessels. The result of their pioneering: an ocean-voyage is now comparatively safe. That same intrepid spirit working through man is now exploring the depths.

"The air is dangerous, but we find intrepid men and women solving the problem of aerial navigation, notwithstanding many unselfish sacrifices of life and limb.

"Life itself has proved a tossing stormy sea to the great majority — but parents do not say it is 'too dangerous. We will not let our offspring live to be buffeted by its hurricanes and tempests.'

"Many of our industries are extremely dangerous. Men and women engaged in them come and go, but the work goes on. Polar exploration is dangerous, but Commander Byrd was besieged by thousands of applicants for the present expedition.

"It is even dangerous to cross the street. Is there any phase of life where danger does not lurk? Is there any phase of danger that man does not challenge?

"It may even be dangerous to send you questions of this nature."

Well, I feel that it is I myself who may be walking into the danger. In answering this question, I may remark that the dangers above enumerated are true. No theosophist would presume to deny a word of this indirect question. The theosophist is not a fool, whatever other faults he may have; but nevertheless I must point out that the analogy drawn in this indirect question between dangers of psychic and dangers of the material world is a false analogy. Here in this world we are grownup individuals more or less, acquainted more or less with the world around us, brought into this environment by nature and fitted for its environment. Nature directs us in many ways. Here is where our present center of consciousness lies. But psychic matters — what do you know about them? Practically nothing. It is true that psychic forces are

a part of us; but our central consciousness in the present stage of evolution is not located wholly on the psychic plane, for our psychic senses of report on that plane are practically undeveloped; which is quite different from the case which exists on this physical plane where we are at home so to speak. Do you now begin to see the difference that I am attempting to draw?

Let me try to make this a little more clear. Exploring the secrets of matter is a dangerous thing of course. For instance, some of the chemical experiments that have been made by the army of chemists during the last two or three centuries have taken valuable human lives, but men have not hesitated before this danger and have gone ahead and have gained knowledge of great value in chemistry. But would you ask a little child to go into a laboratory and mix all kinds of dangerous chemicals in order to find out what the effect of such mixtures might be when subjected to experiment? No, because the child knows nothing about chemistry: and in an exactly similar fashion the average man and woman knows practically nothing about psychic matters, or the psychic world or psychical energies, practically nothing at all, although on the other hand it is quite true that his whole intermediate nature is psychical. This sounds very paradoxical, and so it is, but it is nevertheless true.

There is in the Occident a real Cimmerian darkness, an absolute darkness, mentally speaking, with regard to psychological mysteries. In the Occident men know no more about these psychological laws than they do about spiritual things and much less than they know about the physical and physiological characteristics of their fellows. In fact the average Occidental does not know anything of the strange mysteries locked up in his intermediate nature.

Every normal man and woman must have periods of thinking,

periods of experience, in which he has been amazed to find what is in himself or in herself — horrified perhaps by the self-revelations that have ensued to him or to her: and, on the other hand, inspired perhaps sometimes at hearing the still, small voice, the spiritual nature within whispering inspiration which at the time seems almost divine.

Now, while I have made these remarks they do not mean that the theosophist considers that knowledge regarding psychical matters is a wrong thing to have. Our view is just the contrary. Knowledge of psychic matters is indeed needed; but such knowledge must be gained by the methods of esoteric training in order to safeguard the student and experimenter from peril and possible disaster, of which insanity and disease are the least. Men going into these not merely uncharted psychical seas, but into regions of human nature which are virtually unknown to the Occidental, because the average man of today has not studied them, find them to be almost non-understandable regions of thought. The uninitiated experimenter is in far worse shape and condition in foolishly venturing into these unknown realms than was the mariner sailing the uncharted sea in the frail barks of a few hundred years ago, or than is the chemist working with some hitherto unknown but obviously dangerous physical elements that he may have just discovered. There is nothing to guide the psychical experimenter or would-be student if he is not guided by some initiate. He is utterly alone and wholly ignorant of what he may find. Furthermore, in the things of merely physical matter, a man risks loss of or damage to his physical body alone; whereas in psychic matters (and this is the most important element of the argument) he risks loss not merely of his sanity but the possible "loss" of his soul.

Do you know where temptations come from? They come from within of course. But that is not saying very much to the point,

because everything, you know, comes from within. Temptations not only come from within, of course, but they also come from the psychical realms. Examine yourself and you will see that this is true. There are no kinds of inflowing, tempting, powers or energies proceeding from the higher or spiritual nature on the one hand; and on the other hand temptation never comes from that which is brutal or ugly or revolting or repulsive. These latter things repel and do not tempt. Temptation catches you in the weak places of yourself — in this intermediate nature called the psychical or human soul — and how little do Occidentals know about this part of our nature; all those Occidentals, that is, who have not studied the ancient wisdom-religion of the ages today called theosophy.

It is indeed a very dangerous thing to explore, without proper guardians, these things of the psychical realms. If a man cannot withstand — or a woman either for the matter of that, for I am not going to except them — even the normal temptations of the very simplest and easiest kind as is so frequently the case, how is he able to meet all the things that lie secret and latent in his own psychological apparatus and of which he knows little or perhaps almost nothing? Please think it over.

The name of these psychological energies or powers, to use a Christian New Testament word, is legion; and these various psychical energies and powers — these various substance-energies and substance-powers of man's intermediate nature — in the Christian New Testament, following the phraseology of that time, were called devils, demons. Not that they are devils or demons in the medieval Christian sense, for they are not personalized evil forces of that type: they are simply energies of nature, colorless in this, like electricity, like gravitation, like chemical cohesion, or whatnot. It is the use that the consciousness of the man makes of these psychical powers or energies that we

call holy or evil; and as none of these psychical powers or energies are of a high character, the tendency therefore is towards evildoing, and towards the lower realms and spheres of nature.

I would like to deal with this question at greater length, but I have other questions here to take care of. I now turn to another question of quite a different type.

"Why should a turtle live two hundred years, and a man only seventy?"

I suppose you may think that I am going to say that I don't know why, but as it happens, I do know. What taught me? Theosophy. A man at the present period of human evolution does not necessarily live to the age of three score years and ten, according to the Jewish Bible, but in view of the involved conditions prevailing at this period of physical evolution, that lifespan is quite near the period allotted to man by nature before the physical body begins actually to break up. Of course here I speak of the general rule. In former ages mankind lived for a span of life far longer than now. The human body was then much more ethereal than it is at present: stronger, cleaner, purer, more harmonious within its own parts; and, on the other hand, in aeons to come, mankind will live far longer than men and women do at the present time, and for precisely the same reasons that governed the greater lifespan of the far distant past.

A turtle lives two hundred years because that period of time is, as we theosophists say, a turtle's karmic lifespan; just as something between fifty and ninety is the human average lifespan. Perhaps "average" here is the wrong word. I suppose that if we took the actual statistical average of the span of human life today, including the high mortality among little children, also all accidents, all suicides, all deaths occurring in epidemics and in

war, then probably the average lifespan would be reduced to fifteen or sixteen or seventeen years.

But that period of time is not the average lifespan that I am speaking of. I mean that a man of normal vital strength, reacting against the normal life currents working in his constitution, probably lives about three score years and ten before his body definitely begins to break up. Why? Because it is worn out. That simply means that its atoms, or more accurately the electrons of the atoms, have become set or crystallized in a certain way or path of conduct, so to say, and being so crystallized they cannot easily change to accord with the changing conditions, and the result therefore is disease and death.

It is habit: I repeat it, it is habit which kills, yes, and it is habit which raises us also. Make for yourselves good habits of clean thinking, habits of aspiration, habits of high and noble thought, and they will react inwardly on your body as inevitably as do all forces which impinge upon the body towards which they are attracted.

"Who fixed the life cycle of man at 'three score years and ten'?" Nobody. That intangible entity, or rather non-entity, that intangible aggregate of forces that men call nature. It is the nature of things to be as they are at the present time; and by the same rule, formerly nature worked differently. In the future, nature will work differently again. What causes these different workings? Evolution, change, growth — one of the fundamental laws of the universe, which is progress, advancement.

"Who or what is Nature?"

How many times have I answered that question here! Now I find an echo of my many former statements coming from a learned American scientist who describes nature in the words of a



theosophist, and using almost my own terms. In the August *Review of Reviews*, in the course of an article entitled "How long will you live?", Eugene Lyman Fisk, MD, Medical Director, Life Extension Institute, says:

"Who is Nature? What is her address? How often doest this female Mussolini issue decrees stating that this or that must be so? No, Nature is likewise an abstraction, a mere term to cover all forces in action in the universe — all incidents, happenings, phenomena."

True; but this does not mean that nature, in the theosophical sense, is a soulless mechanism. On the contrary, as I have so often pointed out on this platform, nature, to the theosophist, means invisible universes within the visible universe, invisible spheres within the visible, and invisible spheres enshrouding and enclosing this visible. Why is this particular one visible to us? Because our sense apparatus has been evolved by nature — nature, this abstraction of forces and matters — to cognise and sense and report to our consciousness this particular sphere in which we find ourselves. Other entities in other worlds living on and in spheres invisible to us, have a senseapparatus appropriate to those other spheres or worlds; and to them their spheres are as physical, as dense, and as solid (although in actuality they may be far more ethereal) as ours is to us.

Nature is the vast aggregate of all the hierarchies of consciousnesses in the boundless spaces of space, of which we sense but one small cross section, so to say, which evolution has given us the power to cognize and to sense by giving us the appropriate sense apparatus because of being there. And even this physical universe that we know somewhat of, so seeming solid, is mostly holes or so-called vacuity, as I have so often explained; and even with our imperfect senses — *because* of that

imperfection of our sense apparatus — we know very little even about this physical, visible, so-called tangible universe in which our physical bodies move and live and have their being.

As our physical bodies are native to this universe, to this sphere, to this realm, so our intermediate or psychical nature lives in its own realm, on its own plane, in its own sphere; and our spiritual nature again does precisely the same thing in the spiritual worlds. So, do you see, man, considered thus, is an entity as it were rooted in the Divine and extending like a pillar of light, to use a figure of speech, a metaphor, through all the various stages or steps or degrees or hierarchies of cosmic being, from the Divine to ourselves.

Nature, then, being an abstraction means nothing at all considered as an entity. It is like the word chance. When we cannot explain something that happens, we say that it happened, we say that it is chance. But don't you see that we are saying nothing at all by using these phrases? We are simply stating that something came about. Do you explain a thing merely by saying that it came about? The word 'chance' explains nothing and therefore means nothing, and is a word disguising our own ignorance. Let us recognize this fact, for the first step to knowledge is recognizing that we do not know. Isn't that true?

Here is another question:

"Is not the materialistic psychology of the average university a detriment to the youth of our land in their realization of the simple and wonderful truths that may be found in theosophy?"

Well, I know just how this question ought to be answered, but I don't want to be thought to be hypercritical or offend any good friends. I would say this: I do think that the mental and psychical

atmosphere of the average university, or indeed of any school whatsoever, with the exception of our own Raja-Yoga institutions, is not a particularly good training ground for human souls. The reason is that they are all materialistic in outlook and usually in system of training. Many of our educational institutions are run on educational fads and sometimes by educational faddists, and I say this with all respect to the noble men and noble women who often work night and day, and for a lifetime, in doing their best to fulfill their duty. But can you deny the fact?

For instance, in practically all universities the world over, the changing explanations of new discoveries in nature are at the time taught as natural truths, as rules of natural being, until the next ringing of the changes comes.

Now some of you may say: That is all right: people learn in that way; it is recognized to be a temporary step or stage to greater knowledge. Certainly, this is just what we theosophists say, but unfortunately the great majority of the teachers in the university do not either believe or say that. They rather say: "These are the truths of nature"; and yet in five or ten or fifty years those particular truths of nature are discarded relics of what is then called our fathers' time. For this reason I speak of this attitude as a materialistic one.

The spiritualistic — and please, I do not mean spookist: I am using this word in the proper sense as meaning the opposite of materialistic — the spiritualistic view says: Suspend judgment; know; study; examine; learn; keep your mind fluid; don't let it crystallize! And this spiritualistic view is one which is very rarely found in our largest educational institutions and in very few of our smaller schools. Therefore, with all the respect that I have for the very excellent work done along certain lines by practically all our universities, I am compelled in sheer truth to say that the

questioner's point is well taken in my judgment: that the atmosphere and the teachings in the average university are detrimental to spiritual advancement, and particularly to the open-minded reception, as the child-heart receives it, of the truths of theosophy.

We have in our theosophical ranks, and have had, and will have more as time goes on, many university men — graduates, instructors, professors — but they are the splendid men and women they are despite the materialism of their training; their native impulses (high, aspiring, stirring, and rising towards the spiritual sun of their inner nature), could not be kept down by the materialistic instruction and training that they received. They sought truth because they were anhungered for it, and found it not, but found it here. This is a fact.

Here is an interesting question, very.

"Your Organization declares that brotherhood is a fact in nature. Yet when I take a walk in the country I see the lizards catching flies, the hawks catching smaller birds, and dogs chasing rabbits. Is this brotherhood? I know this has been a difficulty to many."

No, it is not brotherhood. And so far as these facts go, why doesn't the questioner also mention the humans who kill each other and who, as a rule, in the Occident not only prey upon the unfortunate beings beneath us for food and for sport — oh, my gods! sport! — but kill each other in the tens of thousands, yea, by millions, and do it in the name of law, do it in the holy name of peace! Is that Brotherhood? No, no!

How then, can the Theosophist say that "brotherhood is a fact in nature?" Now I have already told you what nature is. I have told you in other lectures that it is one vast, cohering organism

comprising the root of things in the spiritual world, where all is harmony, peace, unspeakable bliss; and the worlds or the realms of matter in which we now find ourselves, where contrarities, enmities, strife, discord, hatred, and other similar things exist. Nevertheless the root of things is celestial peace, and that root of things is the heart of the universe; and the day is coming, in the far distant aeons of the future, when the force flowing forth from the heart of things shall regulate and bring into harmonious adjustment through evolutionary progression the outlying frontiers in which we live at present and where now is spiritual obscurity.

Universal brotherhood is at the heart of things and is the expression of the law of the spiritual world, which underlies even strife. But what causes the strife, the discord, the disharmony, the inharmony, the lack of accord? Why, it is as obvious as can be, it seems to me. What causes men and nations to differ and quarrel among themselves? Selfishness, self-seeking — the deliberate (albeit sometimes half-conscious) using of the forces of nature for personal and selfish ends. And this is done by our free will, which is in itself, nevertheless, a divine power or quality.

We have wills; they are free. We are part of the energies of the universe, for we are inseparable from it; and we use our wills sometimes aright and sometimes awry. And when we use them aright we see the wondrous mysteries in the hearts and faces of our fellows and recognize greatness in their innermost being; for greatness is also in us, and greatness always recognizes greatness. And when we use these forces wrongly, unrightly, or awry, we employ the colorless forces of the universe, but do it evilly, seeking profit for self. Having free wills we use these energies; and we do it in ignorance of the law — the law of nature.

How true was the saying of the great Syrian mystic, Jesus, when

calumniated and persecuted. He said of his enemies, addressing his own inner god: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Ignorance also is a bane to us men. If we knew what we were doing; if we knew that we were throwing into disarray the forces of the universe, arousing evil passions in ourselves and in other men, could we only realize this fundamental truth of nature, that all things have a common root in ceaseless peace and harmony, no same man would then tolerate discord and evil in himself but would work to enlighten and aid his brothers. Ignorance is the greatest foe of men.

Universal brotherhood — that is to say, the fundamental spiritual unity of everything that is in the vast universe — is the basic law of being. But all entities have free will in varying degree: those beneath men who prey upon each other; men who prey upon them and upon each other; beings somewhat greater than men who prey less upon each other but whose natures are not yet perfectly concordant and assimilated to the universal forces, the universal laws; and then still higher and therefore less discordant beings; and so forth throughout the hierarchies, until the discordance and ignorance finally vanish as we rise on the scale of the ladder of life; and when we reach the spiritual realms, there, as I said, is celestial peace.

"Some years ago I studied Buddhism and was impressed by the first of the Four Noble Truths, namely that life in a physical body was a painful experience from birth to death. I understand that Katherine Tingley was never tired of declaring: "Life is Joy." Are you able to harmonize these two apparently conflicting points of view?"

I have just done it in answering the preceding question. The root of being is celestial peace and unspeakable bliss, for it is the fundamental harmony of the universe which keeps things in

order. Reflect! If that fundamental harmony existed not, there could be no laws, no law; there would be naught but chaos and cosmic anarchy. There is where life is joy — the essence of life is inexhaustible bliss. It is only the free wills of entities who exist in the bosom of our Mighty Mother — nature, so called — it is the misuse of this divine quality of free will by the hosts of beings which brings about the discord and the lack of harmony that are evident all around us.

Life is joy, in the heart and at the heart of things, as Katherine Tingley says: but as we at the present time are passing through that particular phase of our long evolutionary journey which keeps us in spheres of matter, in the lowest parts of the ladder of life, where beings and entities are learning, are mere children, and are therefore more or less ignorant, we see disunion, strife, discord, lack of harmony, arising out of the cooperating action of wills and their mutual conflict.

But the slightest penetration of our intelligence behind the veil of the seeming, behind the veil of the appearances, will show you that that which holds the stars in their courses, so that they vary never, which keeps the vital currents throughout nature always running smooth and strong, which colors the flower with its wondrous beauty and gives to it its geometrical form and outline, that which instills love and aspiration and self-sacrifice and purity in the human heart, spring themselves, these things, from the heart of things, where abide celestial peace and unspeakable bliss and frontierless knowledge.

"Christianity teaches the duty of giving thanks to the Creator for his tender mercies and loving kindness displayed towards his children."

I have never seen it, in truth. I know that such is the teaching of Christianity, but I have never seen where all these tender mercies

and loving kindness exist. I have never seen a sign of it all. During the course of my answer to a preceding question I mentioned the hosts of beings who prey on each other, the men who kill each other by the millions, cold-bloodedly sometimes in the very streets of our cities, the heartbreaking, heartless actions of man towards man, and man towards woman, and of woman towards man: if we were created according to this old-fashioned theory to do these things, or rather, as it is said, not to do them, for which purpose we were given a will to struggle against doing them, then oh, how beautifully everything was laid in order to entrap our souls! I do not care to discuss this question any further because it will readily lead me into making statements seemingly unkind although not meant unkindly and I don't wish these lectures to contain any attack upon any person's belief. I leave the matter here and proceed to the next point.

"Theosophy postulates an impersonal, causeless cause. Do you believe it to be possible to feel personal gratitude to a benefactor so remote and inconceivable?"

I most certainly do not. I do not feel any gratitude to an impersonal, causeless cause. I am not an idiot. Do I feel gratitude to the wood because it is wood, and because it is hard: or to the stone because it is cold, and because it is hard? No. I feel gratitude when I see the Christ-light shining in the faces of my fellows, when I see the buddhic splendor enlighten their souls, so that they do noble actions, give themselves up to the service of others, and manifest the laws of the universal spirit. I am grateful then that good men and noble women live. More, I have gratitude in my soul which passeth all understanding of those of you who have not felt it, to those great sages and seers, who for many lives in the past and at the present time also have given up everything for us, for the salvation of us, their fellows. These great seers and sages are and were living Buddhas, living Christs.



You may say: Oh, but what splendor and what joy are theirs, on account of the high state of evolution and power and wisdom and knowledge and love which they have reached! Yes, it is so, and in greater degree even than I choose to tell you. But does that change my gratitude? Is my gratitude to be purchased or to be quenched because I know that a noble, an unspeakably noble, action receives its merited dues?

I am grateful to the immortal gods who once were men in far past aeons and who now as spiritual beings oversee the destiny of this earth and of mankind, and indeed of our solar system: who guide, who enlighten, the spirits of men, who stimulate all noble inspiration and all intellectual vision in us, so that instead of the long, long, long drawn-out pathway of merely material evolution, there is, as it were, a short cut to perfection through their care of and attention to us. They are the Law because they embody the Law: and the Law in its essence is infinite mercy, for it is infinitely just, and its very nature is cosmic harmony. To all these I am grateful. I am also grateful to my fellowmen today for noble actions done impersonally, for in these also I sense or can feel something noble and sublime. I am grateful, I repeat, to all these, but to no impersonal causeless cause, which words are merely other ways of saying the boundless All.

For if on the one hand I am not grateful to an abstraction, I am not ungrateful to high spiritual realities. I am simply not grateful to an abstraction because it would be idiotic. I myself am a child of the boundless All even as you are, for all of us are sparks of the central spiritual Fire; and are ye so egoistic that you should be grateful to yourselves? But when men recognize spiritual beauty and harmony of the spirit in others, all men bow their heads in reverence. Then we are grateful.

The question that I am now going to read to you comes from one

of our younger students here. I did not expect to receive from this young lady the questions that I am going to read to you. Listen:

"What is heredity? Is it true that children inherit qualities from their parents? Does this not go against the karmic law?"

"Why do children often have an antipathy towards the water, dogs, lizards, etc., when other children delight in these same things?"

"Is there such an art as Astrology? Do you believe in it, or is it similar to clairvoyance? For instance, 'they' say persons born in a certain month have common traits, characteristics of that month. Is this so?"

Heredity first. "Is it true that children inherit qualities from their parents?"

It all depends upon what you mean by the word "inherit." If you mean that a child is born, so to say, a *tabula rasa*, a blank page upon which at birth nature begins to write the legend of its character to be — then I say that children inherit or take over everything from their parents. But that idea of a *tabula rasa* is not true. Children, and therefore men and women, don't come into the world by chance and without a past because they never have been here before. They come into the world precisely because they have been here before and are attracted back by natural attraction, by the psychomagnetic attraction which cannot be stayed nor denied, and this produces reincarnation in the fields of earth-life where in former lives we sowed the seeds that we now return to reap as flowering plants.

Therefore, when children are born of parents, as of course they are, theosophists use the word inherit in another sense. The reincarnating egos bring their own character with them from the other lives: this do these children coming again to birth. And from

their parents they receive a hereditary impress which is strictly accordant with the characteristics of the souls thus reincarnating. Do you see what I mean? If a reincarnating soul has a character which, let us say, is represented by characteristics A, B, C, D, E, F, but not G, it is drawn to a father and mother who can give it a body nearest to, or the most akin to, characteristics A, B, C, D, E, F, but not G. Another mother and father to another reincarnating soul, will give a body which is the nearest to A, B, C, D, E, F, G, and perhaps something more.

So heredity is merely the attraction — and I am giving the idea in full now — of the reincarnating ego to the home, to the parents, which and who can give it a body and conditions most like its own character, and therefore fit for that character to express itself through. It is an old doctrine of the moribund, in fact of the actually dead, materialism of a bygone era, that children come from nowhere, out of nothing, or perhaps are made by God — forgetting what a responsibility is thus put on God — that children I say come into bodies haphazard more or less, and then that their character begins to come into being only from the moment of birth.

I make this explanation very brief, but giving you some fundamental ideas nevertheless, and you will find the entire doctrine all explained in our theosophical books. Thus you see that heredity properly understood does not run against the karmic law, stating that as ye sow in this life ye shall reap in the next and succeeding lives, and that what we are now we have made ourselves to be in past lives. That is the law of karma, or rather the doctrine of consequences. And is it not just? Here there is no room for chance, or fortuity, or for caprice, for these exist nowhere in the boundless universe. Therefore what I have just explained heredity to be is, as you see, merely the working out of karma, the law of consequences in nature.

As regards children who in some cases like water and dogs and lizards, and others who do not like them: these tendencies like all others are merely karmic characteristics, and depend upon perhaps a thousand, perhaps a million, tiny traits of character that have been built into the fabric of being in many past lives. Those associated with dogs for a long time, for instance, grow to love them, and that is why such people will be attracted to dogs in the next life, or even in the latter part of this life perhaps, and instinctively love them.

Others, perhaps, in this life may have received in childhood a psychic shock by being frightened by some dog, and therefore whenever such people see a dog they are frightened. Hence they don't like dogs.

Now as regards astrology: Yes, there is a noble science of true astrology which is not, however, known in the Occident; and the pseudo-art that is practiced under that name in Occidental countries today I call tell you is more looked down upon by theosophists, although in a kindly way, than it is by the most hard-headed, pragmatical, matter-of-fact, materialistic scientists. Why? Because theosophists know that there is a divine science of astrology, a true science of cosmic life, of which present pseudo-astrology is but a tattered and worn remnant derived to us from misunderstood teachings of the ancients. This true astrology was known to the seers and sages of the ancient days, and then properly called astrology; and I may add that this astrological knowledge still remains under the careful guardianship of the seers, the Masters of Wisdom, who founded the Theosophical Society.

In this spiritual astrology I believe. Indeed, I have studied it somewhat and know whereof I speak: it is not like clairvoyance, in that clairvoyance is an astral faculty, a faculty of no particular

moral value, and one which is often disastrous to possess and often leading its possessor into trouble. Therefore clairvoyance, so called, is utterly different from the true knowledge and wisdom derived from the working of the spiritual eye. By this spiritual eye you can see and know instantly, *instantly*. This spiritual vision passes through matter as if the latter existed not. The thickest of stone walls cannot contain it, nor bar it, nor are there any barriers that stand in its way.

I close my lecture this afternoon by asking you: "What is love?" This is my last question. Is it something outside of a human being, or is it innate and inherent in the one who loves? Well, what kind of love do you mean? Love in the general sense of attraction, whether high or low? Or, to define it more particularly, human love or animal love or the love of planet for planet or of planet for sun, and of sun for sun, which is popularly called gravitation?

Let us take human love, and I can give you the clue to what I mean in Tennyson's words:

Flower in the crannied wall  
I pluck you out of the crannies,  
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,  
Little flower — but *if* I could understand  
What you are, root and all, and all in all,  
I should know what God and Man is.

Yes, love is the cement of the universe: that which holds all things in place and in eternal keeping; whose very nature is celestial peace, whose very characteristic is cosmic harmony, permeating all things, boundless, deathless, infinite, eternal. It is everywhere, and is the very heart of the heart of all that is.

Love is the most beautiful, the holiest, thing known to human beings. It gives to man hope; it holds his heart in aspiration; it

stimulates the noblest qualities of the human being, such as the sacrifice of self for others; it brings about self-forgetfulness; it brings also peace and joy that know no bounds. It is the noblest thing in the universe. "Love ye one another" is a beautiful saying, for it is an appeal to the very core of your nature, to the divine within you, to the inner god, whose essence is a celestial splendor.

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[Vol 1, No 11](#)

[Contents](#)

**No. 11 (December 10, 1929)**

**QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK**

(Lecture delivered August 25, 1929)

I have quite a bunch of questions before me this afternoon. Some of these questions are very difficult to answer; some of them are easy. Sixteen, I think, is the number that I have before me today.

It is to me an interesting thing to feel that, when I stand on this platform and look into the faces of the audiences who gather here in this our Temple of Peace, I am conscious of a friendliness of feeling, of a kinship of thought with you all: because indeed, I do not think that anyone would come so far from San Diego to the Theosophical Temple of Peace if not attracted by something more than would draw the average audience into an ordinary gathering, whether for philosophical or religious or scientific thought. To travel eight miles from San Diego to our Temple of Peace and then to undertake the return journey of eight miles homewards, takes time even in these days of speedy automobiles, so that I say: my audience must be composed of really intelligent people, otherwise I cannot readily conceive that they would come here.

You see, I appreciate intelligence when I see it in the faces of others, because I am intelligent myself! As I have often said, it takes greatness to recognize greatness in others. Being inwardly great myself, I recognize also that you are great in your inward parts; and this statement I sincerely mean, because in the heart of every human being there is a living god which, when manifesting through a human soul, we call a Christ or a living Buddha. The only thing which prevents us, each and all, from recognizing the splendid divinity in the hearts and in the minds, and showing

through the faces, of others, is the veils of selfhood, of selfishness, which becloud our vision.

I think that the answering of questions, or the attempt to answer them, is one of the very best ways of treating with simplicity and directness thoughts that spring ultimately from the divine center within each one of us of which I have just spoken. If I succeed in answering these questions well, or at least aright, I shall give you something of real worth to think about; and the worth that I speak of is of value to you not because it comes from me, but because you yourselves are asking the questions, a fact which shows that you are ready and eager to receive light.

No man or woman ever finds anything of permanent value in thoughts that are merely put into his or into her mind; because permanency of values resides only in the things that well up from the fountains of inspiration within the self: ideas of beauty, of high purpose, of aspiration, of inward splendor, of moral grandeur. You could have no comprehension of these things, I tell you, unless you had them in yourselves.

Therefore, the noblest study of man is himself; for this super-spiritual Self, whom I have just called the living god within, is man's link, unbreakable and eternally enduring, with the realms of the spiritual universe.

The first question is as follows:

"What is the difference between intuition and impulse? Is impulse always wrong?"

No; all men know perfectly well that impulse is not always wrong. We have impulses to do deeds of unselfishness, of mercy, of pity, of kindness, of helpfulness to others: and such impulses are right. But impulses are always wrong when they are impulses for selfish gain of any kind: not merely gain of money, not merely



gain in property, not merely gain in the things of earth, but personal gain of any kind — even gain in personal love, and this is a far greater temptation than are things of material type.

Now then, what is the difference between intuition and impulse? Intuition is the working of the inner eye; it is instant and direct vision of truth, and no one knows this better than the so-called hard-headed scientists themselves. Practically every great discovery, certainly every epoch-making discovery, in science, has been the result of an intuition of truth, a vision seen and followed.

Impulse, on the other hand, is the working of the will, conscious or unconscious; and as I told you on last Sunday, the will has two fields of action, or rather perhaps better said, works after two ways: the direct will of choice and consciousness; and the indirect or vegetative will, which is largely the result of habit, of habits of thinking, of habits of consciousness; and it is this latter will which also governs the automatic movements and functions of the physical body, such as the heartbeat, the digestion, growth, and whatnot.

Impulse is of this latter kind of will. If it were a direct movement of the conscious will, it would not be impulse. It would be choice. So then, impulses may be good, and they may be evil if they are for the self — and they are almost always evil in this sense, at least not good. These latter impulses will not ever bring you lasting happiness. But intuition is a divine thing. It is vision, instant vision of reality, of truth. It is therefore quite a different thing from impulse.

Here is another question:

"Katherine Tingley has said that a timid thought can mar a life. How shall we overcome timidity and still be natural?"

I should think that the way to overcome timidity is to picture to yourselves visions of courageous action. See courage, visualize it. Then follows the next step in consciousness: suddenly you will find yourself courageous. We are timid because it is a habit; we are fearsome because it is a habit. We have allowed timidity and fear to grow upon us, and in us, and therefore do we see things in a timid and fearsome way.

Cultivate the habit, not of bravery which is another thing entirely, but of courage. You doubtless know the difference between these two words. Courage was originally an importation from the French, and the root of the word was the French *coeur*: therefore courage is "heart-age." Heart-age is courage. The man or woman who acts out of his or her heart is courageous. Courage, heart-age. Whereas bravery: you know what bravery is. A dog can be brave, but never courageous. Courage is a moral quality, a spiritual thing. Bravery is often the result of stupidity and is not so far, in its extreme form, from rashness and foolhardiness. Some men are even too stupid to recognize danger, yet they pride themselves upon their bravery. But the courageous man sees the danger, whatever it may be, and nevertheless goes ahead and does his duty. That is courage.

Therefore, the overcoming of timidity is achieved by thinking thoughts of courage, visualizing pictures of courageous actions as done, also of the beauty of courage; visualizing these and similar things so that they picture themselves in your mind as thoughts and leave mental deposits, and in time thereafter instinctively you will act courageously from habit. Courage will become habitual with you, and timidity you will cast off as you might a sordid garment. Indeed, timidity will of itself fall away from you, and you won't know when it falls. It is easy, indeed. It is far easier than being timid and fearsome, and undergoing the suffering and shame that result from timidity. Think about it. Is not what I have

said true?

Another question:

"What is sin? Milton says that all sin is weakness. So few know about the dual nature of man. How can they be judged for sin?"

Well, I am inclined to think that Milton, on the whole, is right. Sin is weakness. I go even farther and I am inclined to say, because I so believe, that no man or woman ever sins from deliberate choice. Sin or evil is so ugly, so repulsive, in some aspects so horrifying, that if you could visualize it clearly and thus see it and also see its consequences, it would repel you, and you would run from association with it.

But the trouble is that we don't visualize. We lack the creative spiritual imagination. We allow ourselves to be timid; and it is just as easy to be strong as it is to be weak and, as it matter of fact, a good deal easier. I do not believe that there is any "judgment" for sin. Who would do the judging? You are not fit to judge your fellows with quasi-infinitely correct vision, nor am I fit to do it. In one sense, the highest god in highest heaven is not fit for such a duty. There is no judgment in that sense of the word; and, strictly speaking, as a theosophist, I do not believe that there is any sin *per se*. There is simply warped judgment, ignorance, lack of vision, ethical ugliness, or moral obliquity; but I tell you frankly that in my opinion these things are easily enough overcome.

On the other hand, there is high aspiration, high thinking, moral beauty, inward splendor, the aspiration of the heart: in fact all the noble qualities. Is not this also true? Which of the two paths, therefore, do you choose? No wonder that it has been said that the one who chooses the right-hand path is the heaven-goer, and the one who chooses the left-hand path the hell-goer; and I for

one am for "heaven" every time.

On the other hand, of course all evildoing, or what is popularly called sin, we must remember actually is a violation of the fundamental law of nature which is harmony, a rupture of the coordinated relations of the universe; and the whole pressure of the universal forces instantly tends towards the reestablishing of that harmony; and consequently, while there is no judgment for sin or evildoing, there is all nature's power and weight against its continuance; and the restoring of harmony certainly brings suffering and pain to the one who has ruptured nature's harmony; and this is what is meant, I suppose, when people speak of "judgment for sin." On the other hand, and for exactly the same reasons, he who works in harmony with nature or, as we Theosophists say, works with her, has a guerdon or reward or recompense in the increased power and vision that come to him, for he is working with Nature and for her, and all natural harmony is with him. These are very profound lessons to learn, and the sooner they are learned the better for all human beings.

Here is another question:

"How can one gain the insight that enables one to perceive one's own weaknesses and shows one infallibly the best way to help others?"

Now, this question sounds like a very complex question, but I do not believe that it is. Do you know what my answer will be? Here it is: The one way by which to gain insight, enabling you to help your fellows and to overcome your own weaknesses is sympathy, love. It is the easiest thing in the world to follow the path of sympathy and love; it is also the least troublesome; and, finally, it is also the path which leads you to the finest, the best, the most heart-satisfying rewards.

In this connection I want to draw your attention to a beautiful rule of action of the Orient followed by eastern sages and which is expressed by Lao-tse, the great teacher of Taoism in China, as follows: Do not struggle; do not, for heaven's sake, fight. Do not be strenuous. Be calm. Be easy. Be collected. Be courageous. Love, forgive, have sympathy. This method or mode of action will bring to you understanding. Having understanding, you will see. You will then know how to help. Love is clairvoyant, and a part of love is sympathy. Hence sympathy is clairvoyant. Think it over and tell me if it is not true. This rule is infallible, and love shows the way and lights the path.

But be sure that it is not personal love. In the latter case the "old man Adam" jumps to the fore at once, and the veils of personality begin to thicken before the inner eye, because personal desire collects and thickens into one's aura, as we theosophists say, the surrounding psychic atmosphere, and condenses it, and this it is which causes the thickening of the psychic veils, obscuring the inner vision and understanding. Everything that has as its motivating cause the desire for personal benefits is not true love. The essence of true love is self-forgetfulness, and to this rule there are no exceptions. Any one of you who has truly loved knows that what I tell you is true. Love forgives all things — as is said of charity, which is an aspect of love — and the reason that it does this is because it sympathizes, it understands. Understanding brings the insight. Thus you see how simple, how easy, this noble rule is.

Here is another question:

"The advice in the New Testament is 'to turn the other cheek' when a blow is received. How does this teaching apply (a) to countries that are invaded; (b) to persons who are the victims of slander? Is the teaching that both are to abstain from self-

defense?"

No; here let me tell you something. The Christian New Testament is what theosophists call an esoteric book, a secret book: in other words it is a manual, or collection of manuals, of instruction written for students of the ancient wisdom, of the inner schools, who lived at that time — in other words, for those who followed a certain pathway of spiritual progress and illumination — who gave up much in order to gain more, but of a higher type of gain. The Christian New Testament, I repeat, is an esoteric work, a secret work.

You know, I presume, what the word "esoteric" means? It means something belonging to the inner teachings, teachings, in other words, for the few. This does not mean that these few are selected by some selfish teacher who chooses them, but because these few give themselves to benefit the world: they also give up all, that they may gain all. In other words, they give up all personal matters in order that they may live for the universe. To put the matter in another way, these few give themselves; and more it is possible for no one to give. This is the path of the Buddhas and of the Christs.

The Christian New Testament, therefore, was the manual composed for the esoteric students living at the time when these great writings were first formed; and it was never supposed to be a code of ethics for mankind in general in those very early periods of primitive Christianity. Such instructions as that referring to the turning of the other cheek, or the giving of one's shirt also when the cloak is asked, were never supposed to be the rule of conduct for the average life, for the everyday man who knows nothing about esoteric mysteries; but were, as I have already told you, for the use of the students of the esoteric wisdom who existed in the countries of Hither Asia in the days of

primitive Christianity.

I should say that a country which is invaded should certainly defend itself. I think it to be right and proper. A man should defend his home; he should defend those dependent upon him; he should defend the weak, the down-trodden, the misunderstood. He should help. There is another side to this matter also: no man, no true man, will ever allow evil a free path nor permit it to go unchecked. There is a moral responsibility lying upon him to prevent this; and this rule applies not only to every good man but to every woman also for that matter. We are under an inherent moral responsibility to check evil everywhere possible and to do it kindly, but to do it forcibly if the necessity of the case obliges us so to act.

So far as slander is concerned, would you allow evil tongues willfully and freely to spout their venom over the world? I should not. I feel that it is not right so to do. Evil should be checked. But why were such things said in the New Testament as this questioner speaks of? Why did Jesus, called the Christ, give utterance to these and to other teachings setting forth an apparent non-resistance to evil? I have already told you the reason: he spoke to the esotericists. The esotericists who follow the highest laws of the secret life of initiation are never supposed to lift a hand in self-defense, but to give up everything for the world, and to live the life that we theosophists call the chela life, the Christ life, the Buddha life.

Do you therefore see what I mean? Do you see the difference between the two aspects of this question that I have attempted to delineate for you? The rule of non-resistance is for the few, the esoterics; and the path of love and justice is for them also, but for the average man and woman in particular.

I have one or two other questions before me which are along the

same line of thought, and I hope to develop the thoughts on which I have just been dwelling more fully a little later this afternoon.

Here is a question of quite a different type:

"Will you please explain why evolution proceeds in cycles instead of going straight ahead all the time? You once used the word 'orbital' instead of 'cyclic,' and that word opened up a very interesting view of the origin of cycles. Perhaps you will explain further."

In the first place, then, did you ever see anything that always went straight ahead, straight ahead all the time, and never stopped? I never did. Everything has its phases, growth as well as anything else. Everything has its events, its progressions, and frequently its retrogressions — apparent retrogressions at least. The cause of all this is what is known as the law of action and reaction. Action and reaction prevail throughout the universe, and this fundamental operation of nature is the foundation or cause of the law of cycles, signifying a forward movement and a succeeding return movement: in other words, action and reaction, the pendulous movement of all the forces and energies of the universe.

You see the same law operative also in the double action of the electrical fluid which is often spoken of as bipolarity. A thing cannot advance unless it also recoils, but recoils only in order to advance farther at the next forward stage. This fundamental operation of the universe is also the foundation of the law of opposites, which is another way of saying that extremes meet: hot and cold, night and day, summer and winter, good and bad, long and short, high and low. Many more illustrations of this law of opposites will occur to you.

All these various operations of nature are in a sense the workings



of cycles in nature — springing from the same fundamental operation of nature. Nothing runs steadily along forever without stopping. There is always action and reaction. If you ask me why this is so, I can only refer you to nature herself. I may, perhaps, also ask you a question: Why should a square have four equal sides? The only possible answer to this is that if it had four unequal sides or five equal or unequal or other number of sides, it would not be a square. Four equal sides joined at their ends make what we call a square; and on the same line of thinking I can only tell you, in answer to your question, that nature works in that way.

Why should hot be hot and cold be cold and light be light? Why should not light be darkness or something else? Because it is in the nature of these things to be what they are. Nature in these respects works in that way. It is the natural characteristic of these operations of nature to act just as they do; and thus also action and reaction exist in nature because they are nature's fundamental law of being.

But while this is so, yet all the time there is progressive movement forward and evolutionary advancement. This evolutionary progress is often likened to a spiral movement, backwards and forwards, on its progressive path, yet at each turn of the spiral rising a little higher; and I may add in passing that there are spirals within spirals. The planets in their orbits, the suns in their orbits, and the comets in their orbits, and the universes in their orbits, are all examples of cyclic progressions.

What are life and death? What are they? They are exemplifications or examples of action and reaction: of progressions, of forward movement, and of retrogression or return to rest, and of forward movement again, and so forth.

Here is another question:

"I have heard members of your Society express the greatest admiration for the rules of conduct laid down in the Sermon on the Mount. If somebody tried to take away your property, would you hand it over or would you have recourse to the ordinary process of law which Christ expressly forbade? What do you think of the principle of non-resistance anyway?"

Well, I have already today told you what I think, the explanation is. The true theosophist most decidedly has a profound admiration for the Sermon on the Mount. We look upon Jesus called the Christ as one of us, that is to say, as one of our own teachers who lived in that time, and we know that he tried to found a Theosophical Society in accordance with the habits and ideals of that period — and failed. The times were against him.

If somebody tried to take away your property, would you tamely submit and allow evil to triumph? Would you cooperate with the theft? Would you allow theft to exist without trying to stop it? Would you see murder take place before your eyes without raising a hand in order to prevent it? Certainly not. It is the duty of every good man and good woman to resist evil, *but it all depends on how it is done*. If the motive be impersonal and pure and high, the action of resistance is right. If your motive be just as selfish as the one whom you are trying to cause to cease his evil doing, then I will simply ask you whether two devils are worse than one?

Another question along the same line:

"What do you think of the principle of non-resistance?"

I think it a very beautiful belief and a very holy one; but here again circumstances alter cases. It all depends. If you want to allow evil to go unchecked, if you carry your idea of non-resistance to such extremes, then I don't approve of the principle

of non-resistance, because I believe in checking evil, in holding it in check. I believe it to be a duty.

But there are exceptions. For those whom we theosophists call the chelas, the disciples of the esoteric life, living the chela life: they who have sworn never to strike back, they who have pledged themselves to give up self for the world, to have no personal property of their own: to give up life and all that there is to the holiest cause they know, never to lift a hand in self-defense if the attack be on the chela alone, never to protect one's personal self against libel or slander, that is to say if it be only for the protection of the individual's personality — for those, non-resistance is right. They are pledged to it. But even these chelas are pledged to check wrong, to stay the pathway of evildoing, to stop it if possible, when the evildoing is directed against another; because an esotericist, an esoteric, will do for another what he may never do for himself.

So the question is not so easy to answer. It is not one of those questions that can be answered offhand: yes or no. And, by the way, this reminds me of a story that a friend of mine once told me. I wonder if I can remember it correctly. I have never succeeded in telling a good story well in my life, but I am going to try to tell this one as an illustration of how difficult it is sometimes to answer a question truthfully and satisfactorily. Two friends were discussing the proper way of answering a lawyer's questions in court, and one said: "You can always give an answer, and it can always be either Yes, or No." The other friend said: "I don't believe it. Let me ask you a question. 'When was the last time you beat your wife?'" You see, you cannot answer some questions by a simple yes or no, or very easily. Some questions absolutely require an explanation.

I can only say, so far as the rule for the average man is concerned,

don't encourage evil-doing by exhibiting moral weakness.

Here is another question:

"What do you mean by a 'clean life'? Do you consider that the father of a family who is living a life of normal self-control, is living a clean life, or do theosophists insist on strict celibacy?"

Why on earth this querent, this questioner, should think that a clean life has to do with marriage alone puzzles me. Why, for my part, I think that marriage is a very decent institution. I think celibacy is, too, for certain folk like me. But there are many more things which are viler even than lack of self-control in this one particular phase of our present humanity. I mean that indeed. Bad as irregular sexual life is, and bringing suffering and disease as it often does, nevertheless there are worse things than it, and morally more vile.

I think that hatred, treachery, falsity, are worse; they are more vile; they are more unclean. I can respect a man or a woman who tries to live a decent married life, and I see nothing wrong about it. Theosophists do believe in marriage; and why some people should always think that the phrase a clean life refers to the poor, unfortunate married folk, I don't know. I have the highest respect for married people — of course, for some more than for others.

But I think that a clean life means a clean mind, a high mind, a good mind, a friendly mind. Just think over the matter. These words that you read in the Christian New Testament are symbolic in a sense. I have met men whose minds seem to me — and women too, pardon me: I am going to talk plain English — not much cleaner than a moral pigsty: full of mean, horrible, revengeful thoughts, hateful, nasty thoughts. I have met men and women, on the other hand, who have been like a blessing to me to talk to: fine, simple folk, but oh! how clean and decent, and some

of them were married!

I have not any prejudice against the marriage state, not it all. As an unmarried man I pride myself on my ability to see happiness and fine things in a state that personally I have avoided.

Here is another question:

"I have been told that when assailed by evil thoughts there are three ways of dealing with them: firstly by steadily ignoring their suggestions; secondly by strenuous opposition; thirdly by calling up thoughts of an opposite character. Which of these methods do you consider the most helpful?"

Well, I can think of other ways. I do not see why the querent should limit our chances of escaping from temptation to only three methods. I know how I have crawled out of temptation, time and time and time again, and it has been in other ways than by these three methods only, though these three are good enough. Of these three only the first and last are psychologically the best, because the easiest and most natural: that is to say, by steadily avoiding the suggestive influence of evil thoughts; and finest of all in my opinion, by calling up thoughts of an opposite character. That I believe is the best way. Just think over the matter.

Why do you dignify something that you know is horrid by fighting it in the particular sense suggested in this question? Why give to it any attention at all? Let it go. Let it fall away from you. It is in you, it is not in someone else. Nobody can really hurt you except you yourself. Therefore forget the evil thoughts and don't give them an artificial life by visualizing them and then fighting them. Don't waste your energies in fighting bogies, the phantoms and ghosts of your imagination. These are only the phantasms of your own imagination, and have no reality outside of yourself. Yet these phantoms and ghosts can at times overcome you and

become a temporary reality because you have given them the framework and power of thought. You incarnate these things in thoughts, and thoughts will govern your body.

Visualize the other thing. Make pictures of beauty and strength in your mind. If you are obsessed by these uglinesses, picture to yourself scenes of beauty. It is far more fascinating. It is a delightful pastime, and it always works. See things of a high and noble character and visualize them forcefully. It is even the way of attaining material success in life. If you want to know how to make money — ah! but I am not going to tell you that! I will tell you something else. Visualize to yourself a success in fine things. Visualize things of beauty, of inward splendor.

If you find yourself gloomy, if you are ashamed of thoughts that are in your mind, don't struggle with them, don't fight them, forget them. They are only ghosts rising out of your own past. But turn your head to the East and watch the rising sun. Paint the visions in glory. Watch the mountain-tops of your nature where rosy-fingered Aurora of the inner dawn weaves the web of her splendorous magic before your eyes. There you have the secret of conquest. This is the best way, the easiest way, and you can do it because you are the creator of your own destiny through your imagination and willpower. By doing this, the creative faculty within you comes into operation. This is so simple a rule and yet it is the message of the sages of the ages.

You know doubtless what the great Tao of Lao-tse of China, the great Chinaman, taught? It is the same principle that the Japanese use in their wrestling which they call *ju-jitsu*. Don't struggle and waste your force. Give, bend, and before you know it the other man will have thrown himself. That is the principle. Picture to yourself the thing opposite to those you hate. Picture the things that you really inwardly love, really love in your heart, and which

you know are helpful. The secret is inner visualization: therefore, visualize.

Here is another question of quite a different type, a purely theosophical question.

"Dear Sir: I should be glad to avail myself of your invitation to send questions to be answered on Sundays to clear up a point which has long perplexed me and others. I refer to the interval between reincarnations. It is stated on high authority to be not less than fifteen hundred years, a lapse of time which would seem to destroy continuity of effort by relegating the scene of one's activity to a dim and forgotten historical perspective. Accordingly one finds that in talking or writing about reincarnation this long interval is tacitly and by implication ignored."

It is. And why? I will answer that question by asking you a question. You go to bed perhaps tired out, simply worn out, and you have a lovely sleep: peaceful, quiet, disturbed by no dreams, except perhaps visions that conduce to the blessed state of utter rest. When you wake up, it seems that you laid yourself down on your bed only a minute ago; and yet you may have slept for twelve or fourteen hours. Where then is the realization of this wonderful lapse of time spoken of? You have no consciousness of any lapse of time and in fact don't know anything about it. As I have told you on other occasions when talking on questions of high philosophy, time is an illusion. It is only an illusion of the mind to those who happen to experience it at a time, at the particular time. So in sleeping we are not conscious of the passage of time between night and morning.

So this period between birth and rebirth, the period of fifteen hundred years, which is said to be the average length of time between death and the reincarnation of the same soul, is passed

in just such utter bliss and peace as I have spoken of as accruing to one in deep sleep. It seems no longer than an instant; and the next event that arises in your consciousness, however imperfectly, is when you have taken on a new body and as a little child are beginning to feel the developing powers within you which eventuate in manhood and maturity.

Therefore instinctively, writers when treating of reincarnation, or in talking of it, tacitly ignore this time period, because there is in the functioning consciousness no dim and forgotten historical perspective. The interval of time has passed so quickly that it seems to be nothing: an instant, a fugitive moment.

I suppose that you would like to know why the actual length of time between death and rebirth in the present evolutionary state of human beings, that is to say, the present evolutionary condition, should be said to be approximately fifteen hundred years. Well, as a matter of fact, this length of time varies with the individual. A highly spiritual man will remain much longer in Devachan, as we say, that is in the heaven world, in the rest world; while a strongly materialistic man will reincarnate much sooner. The reason for the law is that the attractions matterwards of his character are so strong that they bring him back to reincarnation at an earlier period.

Now, here is something for you to think about: reincarnation is not a blessing so far as the soul is concerned. I mean that it is not a period of bliss. It is quite the contrary. To the soul and the percipient consciousness it means trouble and more trouble and still more trouble, and also a certain modicum of relative happiness that all human beings have. Actually, reincarnation is something — I won't say to be dreaded, because it is a law of nature for humans to reincarnate, it is natural — that is infinitely less preferable than is life in the spiritual realms.



Let me tell you something. The actual period between death and rebirth averages fifteen hundred years more or less at the present time. In former ages, millions of years ago, the post-mortem period between the death of one body and the reincarnation of the soul into a new body was much longer; and in the far distant future the post-mortem period will again be much longer than it is now. According to a law of nature, which it would take me too long to explain this afternoon, the period between death and rebirth, for the ordinary man and woman, averages one hundred times the length of the thinking, conscious life he has lived while last on earth.

Do you understand my meaning here? The period is said to be fifteen hundred years between death and rebirth because the average span of human life today, for human beings, is about fifteen years. But individuals — and these individuals collectively or aggregatively number millions and millions — of the population of the earth may live to be forty, fifty, sixty, seventy, eighty, ninety, one hundred years, or even more in cases of extreme longevity; but because the rule that I have spoken of holds, therefore the average excarnate life between death and reincarnation is fifteen hundred years because the average lifespan on earth has been found to be fifteen years. Now do you understand my meaning?

But individuals: that is to say, a man who lives forty years by the rule of one hundred above spoken of, may pass four thousand years in the post-mortem period. It is true that there are other factors entering into the equation which would take me too long to go into this afternoon, but I have given you the general scheme and outline of the matter, and I may say in passing that our doctrines are based on philosophical principles. I have lectured on these principles on other occasions in which I have made them the theme of my talks.

This afternoon I will shortly answer one more question, and then leave you to think over what I have already told you.

"Do you accept the statement appearing in a recently published article in the *Manchester (England) Guardian* that: 'surely a child that can know, love, and choose the good is of more value than the stellar galaxy?' On what grounds do you base your answer, whether affirmative or negative?"

To this question I answer, No. By what possible exercise of human egoism should it be supposed that an inhabitant, a child according to the question, of this little mud-speck of space, called our Earth, should be considered of more value than the countless decillions of living beings in the stellar galaxies? I think that the question arose in the mind of the querent because, perhaps unconsciously to himself, he held a notion that this our Mother Earth is the only inhabited planet or celestial body in the entire spaces of space; and therefore to him it was natural to suppose that a child is worth more than all these galaxies around us, which in his vision are nothing but brute matter with no living things on them.

What an idea! The idea that this our Earth, our planet Terra, should be the only bearer of intelligent creatures, intelligent beings, in all the spaces of boundless infinitude! Why should this be so? Echo answers: Why? It is pure supposition. There is nothing to back such a fantastic idea. On the contrary, the very fact that we humans are here on this earth proves, if it proves anything, the fact that beings having equivalent faculties of intelligence and life must exist elsewhere. Otherwise how would you explain the fact that we are such wonderful exceptions to this supposed universal rule? The idea is like the old theory that we are the center of the boundless universe, and that the sun revolves around the earth. On these and on similar grounds do I

therefore base my answer to this question in a forcible negative.

I now ask your attention to one noble thought, in expressing which I close my lecture this afternoon. Every human being is an incarnate god not able yet fully to express its faculties in human life. But all the movements of the thought and life of this inner divinity working within us are the causes of the manifestations of consciousness in our ordinary human existence. This inner divinity when expressing itself fully and completely through a human vehicle, through a human being, through a human soul, produces what the world has known and has variously called a Christ, a Buddha, or one of the great sages and seers.

Remember that every one of you in his inmost parts is such an essential divinity, which is your own inner god. Oh! the peace and happiness that come from allying yourselves with this inner splendor! This alliance of life and consciousness with this inner divinity brings everything of worth into your life, and in so allying yourself you become one with the energies and forces that control the universe, of which this inner god of you is a spark of the Central Fire; and when this inner union is achieved in fullness, you are on the pathway to human divinity. Christhood, Buddhahood, lie ahead of you.

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[Vol 1, No 12](#)  
[Contents](#)

**No. 12 (December 17, 1929)**

**QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK**

(Lecture delivered September 1, 1929)

I am a man with a message — a very sacred and holy message, a message of the everlasting truth lying at the heart of the universe. I realize how deep, how profound, this wonderful message is and also how utterly inadequate any human soul is to express it with even a modicum of approach to the reality.

I am going to do my best this afternoon, in continuation of the series of studies that we have had together, in our Temple of Peace, to answer a number of very interesting questions that have been sent in to me. Some of these questions are deep; all of them interesting; some of them are quite theosophical, and some of them I have not brought to you at all, because there are certain matters, and I tell you this frankly, which I do not like to bring into the thought-atmosphere of this Temple of Peace and spiritual aspiration.

However, any question that touches upon matters of deep moment, I am always glad to receive: all questions on philosophy or religion or science, I am delighted to receive; but, I don't like to receive questions about politics or about how to make money quickly, or concerning what kind of a wife somebody should have, or it may be a husband, because these things do not seem to me to belong to this holy place.

I am going to read the questions that I have received, not in the order that possibly they might take, logically speaking, but in the order in which I have received them.

"What is understood by 'the deeper teachings of theosophy?'

What line of research do they follow? If the highest state of consciousness and usefulness is the natural result of a self-sacrificing life of brotherly love and unceasing work for the spiritual benefit of others, what more is there to attain by intellectual 'study'?"

This is supposed to be one question, but I can count three, and possibly four in these lines. The deeper teachings of theosophy are simply the formulation in human language of the deeper mysteries of the universe — a formulation achieved by the great seers and sages of the ages: those men whose inner nature has been so evolved, who have by purity of life and striving after spiritual things so opened the inner eye of the mind and of the heart that they have been able, so to say, to send their spirit behind the veil of the outer seeming and to return thence, having seen, and thus bringing revelations from the after, the beyond, the underneath, the above (call it what you like) sides of life.

Theosophy, therefore, is a formulation, both in its exoteric or popular teachings and in its esoteric or deeply mystical teachings, of the operations and structure of the universe. This does not mean something cold, something abstract, something out of the way and apart from us. It means, on the contrary, the things which are closest to us. Are you different from the universe? On the contrary, you are a part of it, every one of you, an inseparable part. Every one of us is its child. Therefore, if we understand the universe, we understand ourselves and what wondrous mysteries lie within us.

And, on the other hand, as the great sages and seers have always taught us, if a man knows himself, he knows the universe; for the same forces which are the universe (not which are merely in it), the same forces and substances which compose the universe, also compose every part of the whole; and therefore compose you.

And, as I have often pointed out to you, what does this also mean, following another line of thought? It means that if you can go into yourself, go behind veil after veil of selfhood, deeper and deeper into yourself, you go deeper and deeper into the wonderful mysteries of universal Nature.

You see the meaning now of the ancient admonition of the Greek Oracle of the God Apollo at Delphi: "Man, know thyself." In yourself lie all the mysteries of the universe.

These are the deeper teachings of theosophy. Theosophy teaches a human being to know himself. Knowing himself, thereby he progresses more quickly than the average running of the evolutionary course; and when this pace is quickened to the utmost, we have what we call initiation, short cuts in fact, but only for those who are fit and ready to take these difficult, very difficult, short cuts.

Growth proceeds step by step. Some men are more evolved than other men, as men are more evolved than the beasts, and as the gods are more evolved than men; but those men who are more evolved than other men are they whose inner natures have been more developed, whose inner facilities and powers have come more into actual operation and into conscious functioning; and these higher men, as they grow from childhood towards manhood, in any one life, are the fit, the neophytes, whose natures are opening, and who have the ears to hear and the eyes to see what is put before them.

There is no favoritism in nature. Nature has no favorites. The old, old rule is a true one. Man takes what he himself can get, and you know what that means: *what he himself is*. Isn't it obvious that if you have not belief in your own inner parts you know nothing about them? If you don't understand your own inner nature, if you don't believe you have an inner nature, you close the doors,

you turn your back on the Light; but those who have the intuition of something greater within, of something splendid and grand, of something which is growing within the heart and within the mind, like the budding flower: these are the ones who shall finally see more, and these are the initiates developing into the great seers and sages.

But can this high estate be achieved merely by living a life of brotherly love and unceasing work for the spiritual benefit of others, without any intellectual comprehension of the process and of what is in doing? No, friends, every faculty of man's nature must be brought into activity in this high and sublime work. No imperfect entity can climb the heights of Parnassus; no human can ascend the peaks of Olympus unless he himself be a near-god developing into godhood from manhood.

Therefore the intellectual faculty, being one of the noblest in the human inner constitution, also must be developed. There must be understanding as well as inner feeling. Both are necessary. Is it not obvious? But, if you wish to make a contrast between what are popularly called intellect and heart — on the one hand the man whose whole heart beats in sympathy for the sufferings and trials of others, who has felt the divine light of pity and compassion, and the man of acute mind but insensible heart — the former indeed stands far higher than the man who has no heart-sense, no instinctual feeling for high and sublime traits of character, and who is therefore a mere brain-mind egoist, although his brain-mind understanding may be large.

But why go to these two extremes of contrast? Why not understand that all of man must climb? You cannot reach the heights leaving part of yourself below in the valleys. You must go up — all of you. Therefore the intellectual part as well as the tenderer side of the human being must be developed. There must

be understanding as well as feeling. When you have these two conjoined and sympathetically cooperating, you have the sage, the seer.

Here is another question:

"The law of karma is sometimes represented as 'giving to every man according to his works,' with all the accuracy of a calculating machine, and with no more emotion than is displayed by that infallible piece of mechanism when presenting its final statement.

"And yet I remember hearing one of your speakers refer to 'the mercy of the Higher Law.' Can these two opposing points of view be reconciled?"

I don't see any opposition. Seeing no opposition I find nothing to reconcile. It is true that karma is as impersonal as a machine. It is truly emotionless. It is not capricious. It is not swayed by what produces favoritism in human hearts. Its lines of action are eminently and infinitely just: therefore it moves with the stately majesty that nature herself manifests everywhere. The rain falls on the just and the unjust; and were this Higher Law moved by caprice, given to favoritism, swayed by choice, choosing victims for sacrifice and choosing favorites for heaven — in the name of holy truth, what kind of "mercy" is that? The "mercy of the Higher Law" consists in its utter steady, majestic, and unvarying movement. There are for it and in it no favorites. It is justice, infinite justice, which is one with infinite love. That is the mercy of the Higher Law. Think it over.

We Occidentals are so used to being taught of and to think of a supposed god existing somewhere in the spaces, to whom it is necessary only to pray in order to sway the almighty workings of nature; also in order that, after having eaten our cake we may



have it again: or in order that, after having violated perhaps every law of justice, we may escape scot-free and leave the victims of our evildoing unrequited for their helpless pain and misery.

No. Theosophy teaches no such thing. It teaches that as ye sow ye shall reap. Sow good seeds, seeds of kindness, of mercy, of pity, of compassion, and you will reap fruits of character and of circumstance of the same kind. Sow seeds of selfishness and evildoing and you will reap suffering, sorrow, pain. If you violate a law of physical nature what then happens? Is your recompense peace and health, or is it suffering and disease?

The mercy of the Higher Law consists in the fact that every human being is rooted in the Divine, is himself one of the operations of the universal Divinity, and also one of the operators in universal nature. He has, so to say, the divine faculty of free will and choice, and if he throws into confusion and disharmony his portion of the universe, it is his divine privilege to readjust that harmony; and thus he learns, so delicately and beautifully is nature balanced. He learns by both processes; and our greatest teachers, our most effective teachers, are suffering and pain.

Ask yourselves if this be not so. These two are the sweet friends who with healing hands pour the balm into our wounded hearts. They teach us to lacerate the hearts of others no more. They teach us what nature is; they teach us to have pity, to have compassion, to have sympathy with the sufferings and sorrow of others. In this fact lies the secret appeal of the Christ story to Occidentals.

No, friends, the mercy of the Higher Law lies in the fact that it cannot be turned aside or stayed. It moves with majestic march onwards in evolutionary course, ever carrying along in the wonderful stream of nature all beings that are. For all beings and entities are learning, all are growing, all are developing, all are

evolving; and how? They pass from imperfection to perfection. They pass from darkness to Light, and they pass from splendor to a greater and sublimer life.

These are deep questions of philosophy, and the theosophist is never satisfied with an answer which appeals merely to the emotions. He must satisfy both mind and heart. So it comes to this: Which do you prefer, a capricious deity whom we find nowhere, and who is repellent to both mind and heart, and who is swayed by capricious favoritisms; or the majestic operations of universal nature which vary never one iota, and of which you all are, so to say, extensions of the power. A living god is in the inmost of the inmost of each one of you, and you are not merely cooperators in this universal nature, extensions, so to say, of the inner divinity, instruments of the Divine, but are, in your inmost essence, that Divine itself.

Another question, two of them:

"Is real honest-to-goodness universal brotherhood possible under the competitive system now in vogue? Is universal brotherhood with the region of lofty ideals that naturally follow in its train attainable under the cooperative system that will some day envelop the earth, embracing it as the long lost, long sought, prodigal brother planet?"

The only two objections I have to these two questions are, first: universal brotherhood in this question is limited to merely human brotherhood; whereas in theosophy universal brotherhood means the spiritual oneness of all that is — everywhere, in all the spaces of space, in the worlds visible and invisible, in the worlds spiritual and material; and not merely some system, developed in spiritual ignorance, of a mere political fraternity which custom has dubbed universal brotherhood. I do not care a rap for so-called brotherhood of that type. It is nature

which is the last court of appeal, not men's imaginings about political fads and fancies.

So when I am asked whether universal brotherhood is possible under the so-called competitive or so-called cooperative systems, all I have to say is: universal brotherhood not only is possible, but *is*. It is here all the time. You cannot bring it into being; it always was and it always will be; and it is only human egoisms, human imaginations, which turn our hearts away from the vision of spiritual reality, and give instead these blinding fads and fancies to our brain-minds, fads which take various and different forms, social or political or religious or quasi-philosophical or what not kinds of fads. Those who want them may follow them. To me they are perfectly indifferent. The things that I look for in my life are the things which are deathless and eternal and are superhuman and divine.

Universal brotherhood, as the theosophists teach it and mean it, is the fundamental identity of everything that is on earth, in the solar system, in the entire spaces of space — in the worlds spiritual and the worlds physical — absolutely everything that is. We are all bound together with unbreakable bonds, and these words, this phrase, "universal brotherhood," is merely our theosophical way of expressing the divine harmony at and of and in the heart of the universe: that which keeps all things steady, true, in correct and never varying movements; which adjusts all failures in equilibrium brought about by weak minds; which is the driving force behind the evolutionary power; and which is not only the source of all that is, but likewise the end. Its working, its essence, is universal harmony which, when it expresses itself in human hearts, we call spiritual brotherhood.

So you see, when one speaks of the competitive system or of the cooperative system: these may or may not be interesting things

for you to study: but for my part I care very little about them. They are perfectly indifferent to me. I look to the heart of things, and I could be as happy under the reign of a despot, providing I had freedom of soul and freedom of mind, as I could be under that of an enlightened sage, because personally I care nothing at all for politics. I love the great things of life; my heart yearns for truth. My very soul expands when I send it forth on its voyages of discovery, for these compose the great adventure of the inner worlds.

Oh, how small and petty do merely human things of earth then appear! No wonder it is that religion has been called the greatest force swaying men's minds and hearts. Let us have the true religion of nature lest we be misled by some man-made religions.

Universal brotherhood can exist under any system, political or social, philosophical or religious, because it eternally IS — and when men realize this and understand it, then all the varying political or social or philosophical or religious systems will vanish like mists before the morning sun, and there will then be a true universal brotherhood of mankind on earth. When every man recognizes his fellow, not merely as a competitor; which he then will no longer be, but as a brother, as a fellow cooperator and adventurer in nature's beautiful secrets, then he will feel brotherly not merely towards all other men but towards all beings existent everywhere. There in this thought is the vision of the Beautiful.

Here is another question, or rather it is a question and a commentary both:

"Is your God big enough? This was the heading of the report published of a sermon recently given in one of the big Chicago churches. The preacher acknowledged that for some time a process had been going on by which men's faith in old forms

and creeds and doctrines had broken down; but he said that he 'was not at all worried that this condition of religious indifference exists,' and added 'I believe it is but the darkness before the dawn.' What answer would you give from the standpoint of theosophy?"

The first thing that strikes me about this is the following: Like all good Christians, and bad Christians too, because there are such as the latter in the world, there seems to be a most lamentable confusion in the mind of this questioner as concerns men's idea of God, and of the nature of creeds and doctrines. The very question: "Is your God big enough?" shows that the questioner had in mind some kind of God whom he had either imagined or whom someone else had imagined, and whom he had adopted, or had heard that the Christians had adopted. I don't know of any God of that kind which can be big enough to suit me. In fact, I don't believe in a God of that kind. I don't want to limit my God. I am not going to limit it at all. I am not going to define it. What can I know about infinitude and eternity? I consider any such limitation of the idea of the eternally infinite mind divine as simply blasphemous, and I much prefer to say I do not believe in any god, rather than to say: My God is so and so.

Instead, the theosophist will tell you of That. Now let me ask you: Which is the more reverent, your delimited, defined, outlined deity, who is a caricature of man's own faculties and qualities, or the aspiration of the heart of the true theosophist towards that sublime and truly inexpressible mystery which he expresses by the one word That? But while such is the position of the reverent-hearted theosophist, we say likewise that the universe is filled full with gods, with spiritual beings, with divinities who are the agents and instruments of a spiritual Universe which reflects as best it can this inexpressible mystery we call That. You men and women belong to the same category of intelligent and self-

conscious entities as the gods of whom I have spoken. In you all is a spark of the Divine. You are all rooted in That.

Do you think that human beings are the only conscious and intelligent creatures in the vast spaces of boundless space, in all the fields of infinitude? Just put the question in that crude fashion to yourselves, and the answer will come to you immediately: No. This being so, where will you draw the line and say consciousness and intelligence go thus far, no higher, or go down thus far, no lower? Drawing any such imaginary lines means that you want to limit consciousness and intelligence, just as some people desire to limit their God, if they have one. I hope you haven't such a God.

No, friends, consciousness and intelligence are infinite, as frontierless as is infinitude. And consciousness and intelligence express themselves everywhere through entities, through beings, who exist in numberless hierarchies filling full the spaces of space, and of whom the human race is but one small hierarchy among endless hosts of others. Vast legions, hosts, multitudes of hierarchies of consciousnesses fill space full, and it is this multitude of divers wills and intelligences and consciousnesses — now think hard for a moment, pray — which produce the infinite variety of universal nature. Great gods, less gods, inferior gods, others still lower, spiritual beings, men, beasts. May we end the ladder of life there? Why? Think it over and you will see that there is working of intelligence and consciousness, after their kinds, according to their families, in all the creatures whom we call the vegetable and the mineral kingdoms; and our wonderful philosophy tells us that even beneath these kingdoms there are hosts of hierarchies of other intelligences and consciousnesses existing in their own realms, appropriate to their own realms; and the only reason why we don't sense more consciousness and more intelligence in the vegetable and mineral kingdoms is because the entities comprising these kingdoms have entered this

physical sphere as beginners on the ladder of life, much like a little child which enters this physical human life as a beginner. But as the child grows to maturity, its inner faculties and powers begin to manifest themselves; and just in the same way as these vegetable and mineral entities grow to beasthood and from beasthood to manhood: in other words, as they grow to intellectual and spiritual maturity, they attain within this sphere in which we presently are living a more expanded consciousness and a brighter intelligence.

These are very great questions which I have briefly outlined for you; but I want you to get a view of the general philosophy of theosophy. Then you will be enabled to fill in the details yourself by reading our theosophical books. For the above reasons, I don't think that the present disinclination of the average man or woman to accept the theology of the now bygone age can rightly be called the darkness before the dawn. I think it is rather the dawn of light after the preceding darkness. I think that people have grown since the days of our great- great- great- great-grandfathers. I hope so, at least.

Here is another question:

"You said last Sunday that a man might spend as much as ten thousand years in rest and preparation for the next life on earth, in a subjective condition called devachan. Is there any method by which this interval can be shortened, in the case of one who is desirous of helping humanity and hastening the progress of his self-directed evolution?"

There most certainly is, and this very desire is the best method of doing it. Matters of the soul and of human destiny are not governed by chance. A man does not stay after death in the heaven world, or what we theosophists call devachan, on account of some God's caprice. He stays there for a long period because he

longs — or in other words the bent and impulse of his being make him long — to stay there for a long period. All his life he has been heart-hungry for spiritual things, and his hunger is satisfied by a long period in the heaven world when his physical body dies. During his past life he has built this hunger into the fabric of his being, so that it has become a real part of his inner constitution; and consequently after physical death, after the dissolution of the physical body, this heart-hunger for things of the spirit, for spiritual joy, for peace, for high happiness and for noble love and for the evolving of the flower of aspiration — all this then takes place or occurs naturally in the post-mortem state and it is obvious that the time period is much longer in such a case than in the case of one of purely materialistic bias or bent.

But in the case of a man still greater of soul and more evolved than the preceding man — one who is still grander of soul and sublimer in aspiration — such a man with his altruistic impulses and yearning to help others is impelled by these sublime tendencies of his being to forgo even the short period of one thousand years in the heaven world, or devachan, because he feels that he leaves behind him misery and unhappiness on earth: if, in other words, the Christ-light, the buddhic light, is burning in his heart, so that he feels that he must return to earth and help his fellows as best he may, this brings him back before the otherwise natural instincts of the soul for joy and peace are satisfied; and he reincarnates as a savior, in his own small way, of his fellows, as a great and good man, whose very presence is a benediction and a blessing.

Furthermore, as he follows this self-forgetful course of living, of life in the next life, through the succeeding life and through the life after this succeeding life, and into the third or fourth succeeding life, perhaps, growing all the time, he finally becomes one of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion, one of the great



souls, one of the great seers and sages of the ages: in other words, he becomes a Christ, a Buddha. These are the impulses or heart-hunger of the spirit which will bring you back after a short period of rest and utter bliss in the heaven world.

In ordinary human affairs the case may be likened to a man who is worn out after many long days of nursing, let us say, some dear friend on a sick bed — he has given night after night and day after day to nursing his beloved friend; and the time comes finally when he feels that physically he can endure no more, and he lies him down to sleep for a while. He merits this rest; he has deserved it. He has been good and noble-hearted and pitiful. But as his head reaches the pillow, the thought comes to him: Immortal gods! can I lie here and sleep and leave my brother to die? And then he arises and takes his post again at the side of the sickbed of his friend.

This illustration gives an instance of the working of the spirit of the Buddha, of the buddhic light which is the same as the spirit of the Christos; it is the spirit of the Masters of Compassion and Wisdom; and it is the same spiritual yearning, if it is working in your heart when you leave this physical body, that will shorten for you the period of bliss and rest and peace in the heaven-world. Please remember in this connection that in the heaven world, in devachan, you will get precisely what you have built into your own character, which is equivalent to saying what you longed for in the way of spiritual recuperation and peace and bliss.

In these few sentences lies the secret meaning of the heaven world and the nature of its functioning and of what happens to the resting ego. It is, therefore, perfectly obvious that a man, on the one hand, whose whole nature is of materialistic bent or bias, whose thoughts are of the earth earthy, and whose instincts impel

him to things of matter, will remain but a short time in the heaven world, for he has built little into his character which will keep him in the heaven-world for a long period of time; whereas a man, on the other hand, whose whole nature is of a spiritual type, who has received but little spiritual joy and peace and rest in the busy turmoil of physical existence and whose nature therefore is entirely unsatisfied along these lines, will pass a long time in the heaven world, for the entire impulses of the heart-hunger of his being cling to what the resting ego there undergoes and receives.

And third and last: a man of the latter type who nevertheless is so greatly evolved that he cannot bear to receive joy while his fellows are suffering and in misery in the web of earth-life, such a man who by nature would remain a very long time in the devachan or heaven world, is nevertheless so directed or swayed or impelled by this compassion for others that he is attracted back to earth to do what he can to help raise the heavy karmic burden from the hearts and lives of his fellows.

I have many more questions before me this afternoon. But as the time for closing this lecture is drawing near, I shall be obliged to omit some of these questions. Here however, is a question that I desire to answer today.

"I have read in your literature that a tiger which springs on its prey 'robs nature' by wasting and scattering energy, and will be held accountable. Is there anything in the animal kingdom that corresponds to moral delinquency among men? In other words: can an animal commit sin?"

No, an animal cannot commit sin. There is nothing in the animal kingdom, in the beast kingdom I mean, that corresponds to moral delinquency among men, and the reason is that in men there is the inner spiritual light which shows him the difference between

right and wrong and which enables him to distinguish the personal from the impersonal. It is this spiritual quality of vision and feeling which when violated constitutes what is called sin. But this moral faculty, which is the working of the spiritual nature through the discriminating intellect in man, has not yet been evolved in the beasts. In them it is latent and not yet evolved, that is to say, brought out or unfolded, as it has been in man.

Nevertheless, will you tell me that the tiger which pounces upon its prey, or the hawk which seizes the chick, does so unnaturally, that is to say that it is a "chance" happening and that it is outside of the laws of nature? Do you believe that a tiger which springs on its prey and kills it and rends it and eats it, depriving that creature of its normal course of life, does so accidentally, by chance; or do you believe, as we theosophists do, that there is no such thing as chance, that every smallest movement in nature is a natural movement, regulated by the law of consequences, that is to say, of cause and effect? Here then is what theosophists mean when we say that even the tiger, though morally irresponsible for the killing of the other beast, is nevertheless held accountable in nature's balances because it has disturbed nature's harmonious courses.

To take another illustration: in a chemical laboratory you may put two elements together and find that they combine. Do you think that this act is done outside of nature's province or outside of its laws? There was a state or condition in nature's being which you have disturbed by your act and the natural balance or equilibrium thus disturbed by your act has to be restored.

There is the fundamental idea. Yes, even the morally irresponsible tiger or hawk who strikes and rends and eats its prey, just as well as the man who slays his fellows, is held

responsible; but when the man does this he is held *morally* responsible for his act, because he commits this heinous crime knowing that it is a crime, and knowing that it is wrong. Nature therefore holds man to a strict accounting, not only in his physical being but much more so in his ethical being, in his soul, and recompense for this criminal disturbing of nature's equilibrium will be exacted from the man to the last iota of responsibility. Can you not therefore see and understand how utterly just this is?

The "infinite mercy of the Higher Law," as my great-hearted predecessor continually used to love to say, straightens out the tangle of will and of circumstance that such a morally criminal act has caused, and it does so in order that the harmony of universal being shall finally be restored. Harmony, as I have so often told you, is the very heart of nature. This is the meaning of the beautiful old saying that the tears at last shall be wiped away from the eyes of those who weep.

"Theosophy teaches that after death the soul lives in a body of a more ethereal kind; but the body is substantial and must occupy space. Can it be said to travel *up* to devachan (or the heaven world) to take its interval of rest before another life on earth? Is there any actual *descent* when it enters another physical body to carry on its evolution in the world of physical substance?"

I would prefer to answer this question in an off-hand manner and to answer it by simply saying Yes or No. But I cannot do this because my answer would be totally inadequate and should leave a wrong impression on your minds. Strictly speaking, the heaven world, devachan, is not a place or locality, but is a state of consciousness. For instance, happiness is a state of consciousness and is not a place. There is no particular place or locality called

hate, nor is there any particular place or locality called happiness; but for all that, there actually are places where one is more comfortable, so to say, than in other places — in other words there are places where it is easier to attain and retain a state called happiness, where circumstances and the surrounding environment are more naturally appropriate for certain kinds of living; and the material realms, following the same line of thought, are obviously not very appropriate places for spiritual living and therefore for spiritual happiness and peace. I mean in this instance for the life of the spirit after death. The consequence is that not the ethereal body enlivening the physical frame, but the soul entity, actually does *ascend*, so far as this our earth-globe is concerned — I mean ascend away from it as a focus of material existence.

Remember that our earth is a globe. Consequently, no matter on what part of this globe an entity may be, at the dissolution of that entity's physical body the inner constitution in its higher parts is repelled from that material globe, because this globe is of another nature than the spiritual part of the constitution, in other words, of another polarity; and this difference in polarity it is which accounts for the repulsion of the spiritual from the material or vice versa. Hold this illustration in mind. It is readily seen that in a certain sense there is an actual *ascension* of the higher parts of a man's constitution from the gross matter of this physical globe. I hope that this illustration, although a bit involved and complex, will clarify the matter in your minds, because the fundamental idea is very simple.

We human beings here in California, as is obvious, stand on the earth with our heads up and our feet down: but on the opposite side of the earth men are standing with what are to us their feet up and their heads down; and to these men of the antipodes, we human beings in California are doing the same thing.

So consequently, the polar repulsion that I have spoken of sends the higher psychic entity away, upwards, from the physical globe; and to beings living in the same spot, it is an apparent 'ascent'; and thus also, for the entity which reincarnates in the same spot, there is an apparent descent. But I tell you very frankly that I do not like to emphasize this minor fact because it will distract your attention away from the true teaching that these ascents and descents are purely local. I don't dare leave the fact unmentioned because I want the explanation of this detail of the teaching to be as complete, although brief, as I can make it.

Nevertheless remember that the heaven world or devachan, strictly speaking, is a state or condition of consciousness of the higher psychic entity. Nor, on the other hand, is the condition of unhappiness and misery that a man of evil heart and mind undergoes, which condition in exoteric religions is called hell, a locality or place, because this so-called hell is a condition or state of consciousness of the psychic entity also.

Another question:

"If I were to loosen the bricks in the wall above the cradle of a sleeping child, so that they fell and caused the child's death, I should be regarded with horror and detestation by every normal man and woman. How would my action differ from the action of God when he sends an earthquake which causes the destruction of human life? Does theosophy teach that earthquakes are sent by God? If not, who is responsible?"

Most certainly theosophy does not teach that earthquakes are "sent by God." I have just explained to you what the theosophist thinks of God, or rather does not think about God. That theosophical explanation is certainly nearer the truth because it is consistent both with reason and with nature as we know her,

than are the various theological and philosophical imaginings of uninitiated men. The theosophist is determined that he will not attempt to place any mental limits or frontiers on That — an inexpressible Mystery — by any definition or attempt at delineation.

"Who is responsible for earthquakes?" In this question you can see the effect in the Occidental mind of centuries of theological training — the theological wish to make Somebody responsible for what happens. On the other hand, the theosophist points with unerring finger to universal nature, and the universal laws. The universe is filled full, as I have already said, with these bright intelligences, with these gods, with these spiritual beings, in all-various ranges of power, of development, and of activity. They are the instruments of the karmic law; they are the channels for the expression of the cosmic consciousness; they are the guides of destiny; they are the beings through whom work the various forces, the various energies, of universal nature, which, when they manifest, cause ignorant men to say: "What a terrible earthquake; how angry God must be!" No. The theosophist does not think or reason or argue in that way.

Here is my last question for today:

"From a lecture on Theosophy which I once heard delivered, I gathered that theosophists believed in the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man; but in reading your literature I once came across the expression 'the Great Orphan Humanity.' Does theosophy teach the existence of 'Our Father which art in Heaven,' or not?"

In answer to the last question, the theosophist answers with all the emphasis at his command: *It does not!* Is that definite enough? With all due respect to the many good men, noble men and women often, in the Christian Church, I am not going to stand

here and tell you a falsehood with regard to our beliefs merely in order to save a passing pain, perhaps, to some kindly heart. The theosophist does not accept "Our Father which art in Heaven." We positively and definitely refuse to place any limitations on frontierless consciousness, which is neither a father nor is it in heaven. Such words are human terms, which belittle an utterly inexpressible, non-understandable Mystery which the theosophist, in agreement with the old seers of the Veda, simply speaks of as That. Tribal deities or national gods are and have been many; but the great wisdom-religion of the ages will have none of them. To those whom these limited religious ideas satisfy, the theosophist has nothing to say either in disrespect or in commendation. He respects the religion of any man, the religions of all men, if these be sincerely held; but even as he respects them, he expects respect for his own views.

As regards the brotherhood of man, this is most certainly a theosophical teaching, one of our most beautiful and fundamental teachings. As regards the so-called great orphan humanity, this is but an expression, a figurative expression, a metaphor, a trope, a symbolic theosophical phrase. Instead of looking outwards from yourself to a limited God of any kind, the great sages and seers of the ages have told us: "Look within. Man, know thyself!" Divinity is at the heart of you. It is the root of you. It is the core of the core of your being; and you can ascend along the pathway of the spiritual self, passing veil after veil of obscuring selfhood, until you attain unity with that inner divinity. There is the most sublime adventure known to man — the study of the self of man.

Thus you will climb the mountains not merely of Parnassus and of Olympus, but you will in time, by following this inner pathway of self-knowledge, grow so greatly in understanding and in inner vision that your eyes will take in ranges and sweeps of inner light,



unveiling to you the most awful, because the holiest and the most beautiful, mysteries of the boundless universe. Every one of you is a living and incarnate god. Be it.

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[Vol 1, No 13](#)

[Contents](#)

**No. 13 (December 24, 1929)**

**QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK**

(Lecture delivered September 8, 1929)

It is a very interesting thing to note that the questions which I receive for answering in these our afternoon lectures in our Temple of Peace here at our International Theosophical Headquarters, have, as a rule, a very wide range, passing from the highest and noblest and into the most difficult points of philosophy and religion, down to questions of quite another type, of very matter-of-fact and pragmatical affairs. As for instance, one of the questions that I shall try to answer this afternoon concerning the English biologist Darwin: whether he was a sage and seer who incarnated for the benefit of humanity, or whether this is not the case. It is rather curious what ideas people get of other men and women who have achieved a certain fame or notoriety in the world. This in itself by no means signifies that a man is great. Some of the greatest men who have ever lived have lived obscure and almost unknown to their fellows, and their greatness has come out only in later years and therefore after their death. These questions also show another interesting thing: the psychological trend of the minds of men of our present age, as well as the bends or biases of their mentalities.

Doubtless many of the questions that are asked, are asked from the standpoint of curiosity; but many of the questions that are asked are not framed merely from the itch of curiosity to know what I might say, but from a sincere desire to get a prominent theosophist's viewpoint on problems that vex or perplex or disturb the mind of the questioner. The difficulty that I have in answering these questions is not in knowing what to say, for that

is easy enough; but to frame my answers in such language and with such verbal coloring as will make them easily understandable in the first place, and appealing to the understanding in the second place.

I now take up the list of questions that have been kindly sent in to me and I begin with the first one that I have before me, not that it is the most important or that it is the most interesting, but simply because it is the first one that came in to me.

"Am I mistaken in believing that the average person in our western world has cheated himself by leaving all thought of art to the professional artist and by thinking of art only under the classification of the fine arts?"

"Has this not prevented a fuller realization of the relation of art to life?"

"If it be true that a ray of the great Artist of the universe animates and illuminates each of us, are we not all artists potentially?"

Yes, I think that we are all artists potentially, just as it may also be said that each of us is a statesman, a philosopher, a religious mystic, an inventor, a genius potentially. In fact I am sure of it. But I do not altogether like the phrase: "the Great Artist of the Universe." This phrase reminds me a little of the "Great Big Man up there," that is so familiar to us from reading about undeveloped peoples, although it is a thought very common likewise among highly civilized Occidentals. I don't believe in the existence of any such kind of cosmic being.

However, I know what this kind friend and questioner means; I simply call his attention to the fact that this part of the question is not couched in the words in which I would have put it: I would have said universal life, universal spirit, instead of great Artist of

the universe. The essence of creative art of course is part of this universal life or universal spirit, because the latter is harmony itself; is beauty itself; and harmony and beauty — what are they but the life of art?

Yes, I do think that the average person in our Western world has cheated himself by leaving all thoughts of art to the professional artist. But I suppose that the average person thinks that it is his pleasure or business merely to enjoy what the professional artist produces; and of course that idea is all right as far as it goes. But there is something else that the average person forgets: there is the creative artistic spirit latent in the heart of every human being. Each one of us in his own little way tries to give expression in his daily life to this sense of beauty, to his sense of the artistic, to his inner sense of harmony and of that inner loveliness in the spirit of him, of each one of us, which flows from the harmony and beauty of the universe.

Every theosophist must be more or less of an artist, for he has the instinct of the beautiful and of the harmonious. As a student of life he is beginning to see and to feel the harmony and beauty in his own spiritual soul; and these qualities are productive of harmonious and beautiful thoughts; and they, in turn, manifest in the individual's life. In fact, I think that the most excellent artist among men is the one who lives a beautiful and harmonious life.

Here is a rather curious question:

"Can children understand the laws of reincarnation and of karma?"

An extraordinary note accompanied this question, saying that a certain child, a boy, had a notion, and expressed it to the writer of the question, that he would like some day to be able to wear bobbed hair and short skirts and high-heeled boots. When the

questioner asked him just what he meant by that, he said: "I don't know; perhaps I was a woman in my last life, and these are memories that have come back to me."

Now, of course children can understand the essential meaning of reincarnation, and also of karma, the law of consequences, of cause and effect; but as soon as this question takes the form: Can they *understand the laws* of these two operations of nature? then I am inclined to say that they cannot, because it requires a very high sage, a very lofty seer indeed, to understand laws of nature so deep as these; but the mere fact of the existence of reincarnation and of karma as operations of universal activity: certainly a child can understand these ideas and very easily. Any child can understand that if it puts its finger into the fire, or into a pail of hot water, it is apt to be burned or scalded. A child learns those things by daily experience.

I suppose that you might want to hear something more about this little boy, but I cannot tell you anything more about him because I don't know anything more about him. Children have odd notions sometimes; I have known of girls who wanted to be boys: they wanted to wear trousers and so forth, and play boyish games, and give up their dolls. I don't think there is anything very unnatural or abnormal about this. Children get notions. Don't we grownups get notions sometimes? In what way then are children altogether different from us? Nevertheless please think of the high responsibility involved in training a child's mind. The responsibility of a true teacher is a very heavy one indeed. Personally I am glad I have not the charge of that boy.

Now, here is another question, and this is possibly a hit — humorous or otherwise — at us theosophists:

"There is a strong tendency, on the part of theosophical writers, to disparage the men of our own times, and to exalt

the ancients as their superiors.

"Believing, as I do, in reincarnation, this seems rather strange. If the moderns are simply ancient egos in new bodies, they ought to be superior, because, to their past experience, must be added what they have gained in the life now being lived. Will you kindly explain?"

Well, to tell you the truth, I have not noticed such a tendency. We theosophists do not say that because men have lived and are now dead, they are therefore superior to what we are who are not dead but are living. We recognize as well as anybody else that the men now living are the same egos that were in the bodies of men of olden times. But what we claim — and this doubtless is the reason for the asking of this question — is that the men of ancient times had souls as great incarnated among them as have ever incarnated since those olden times, and that the ancients were as great as are the men in physical earth-life today. Yes, and perhaps a little more than that.

I will tell you why: in olden times the ancient wisdom-religion, the mystic System explaining the secrets of the universe which today is called theosophy, was more or less in universal vogue in those older religions. The ancients therefore were nearer to this archaic system of truth, today called theosophy, than have been the men following the religion popular in Occidental countries for the last fifteen hundred or eighteen hundred years. That is all there is to it.

As you may know, it has been customary in the last two hundred years or so in the West to disparage the ancients; to claim that all scientific knowledge originated with Galileo and Newton, and a few others living in or about the same period of time; and that there never has been any real knowledge with regard to nature previous to the scientific knowledge which took rise, more or less,

in their day: the knowledge which began with Copernicus and Tycho Brahe, and their successors, and which has eventuated in the splendidly built and outwardly gorgeous temple of modern science. Now, to us theosophists, that is a very foolish view; we claim that the knowledge of the ancients with regard to nature both inner and outer was great as well as mystical, or intuitive if the expression be preferred, and therefore far greater than anything that has taken place in the way of knowledge of nature in the Occidental world since the downfall of the Roman Empire. You perhaps may doubt that statement, because the modern idea of knowledge is comprised solely in our scientific discoveries and the theories flowing forth from them which are theories formulated after the patterns of the minds of the formulators, running along one particular line and based on physical nature alone.

But these theories and formulated hypotheses have changed with every lustrum, as everyone knows; and indeed, this is the boast of modern science: that its very being is change or progress, and that change is synonymous with increasing knowledge. It is a proud boast, and in one sense it is a true one; but where will you find everlasting truth in a series of changing theories and hypotheses? In something which is founded in change? Do you realize that all the systems of scientific thought regarding physical nature existent in the Occident today are the belated product of the formulated theories of the men of two thousand years and more ago? Do you not know that all the great philosophies of the Occident today are founded in principle and sometimes in detail upon the great religious and scientific philosophies of the men who lived two thousand and more years ago? Do you realize that the explanations of the universe accepted today by our ultra-modern scientists are verging more and more and more, as each lustrum of five years passes, back to

the theories of the ancient Greek and Hindu philosophers?

Having these considerations in mind, we see why the theosophical position is that the light of knowledge did not dawn two hundred or three hundred years ago, and that the human race has not always lived in Cimmerian darkness of soul and intellect.

Here is a difficult question, difficult because it involves so many fascinating, interesting, side-lines of thought:

"What is the origin of the observance of Sunday as a day set apart — is it from the Bible teaching that 'In six days the Lord made Heaven and Earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh day?' How does theosophy interpret this religious teaching?"

I don't know why the emphasis placed on the number seven in ancient philosophy and religion should be called religious teaching solely. In theosophy it is said to be a natural teaching: a philosophic and therefore a scientific teaching. The holding of the seventh day as a day of rest or for other purposes was a foundation idea in many of the archaic religions and philosophies. So far as the Christian observance of Sunday is concerned as a day set apart, this is a purely sectarian religious idea inherited from the Jews of Palestine who, however, observed what we now call Saturday as the seventh day or Sabbath, and the Christians some few centuries after the alleged date of the death of Jesus abandoned the Jewish Sabbath and chose the next day, the day of the sun or Sunday as their seventh day, and set it apart for religious worship and meditation. This particular form the rest of the world does not recognize nor observe, and we may probably say with perfect truth that it is Christian only.

Furthermore, it is only from the Bible teachings of the Jews that



we learn that in six days Jehovah made the world and all that in it is, and grew so tired on the seventh day that he had to sit down and rest. I hope that I am not offensive in speaking thus; I don't mean to offend anybody, but the quaintly human ideas expressed in these passages of the Jewish Bible are so thoroughly anthropomorphic that they are ludicrous to me. I am lecturing as a Theosophist and trying to tell you the truth, or what I believe to be the truth — in other words, what I have learned to be the truth. I may frankly state that such an anthropomorphic man-made god as the biblical Jehovah I don't accept.

But I would like to add something more to what I have already said, if you please. This septenary division of nature's functions and stages of being — in other words, the heptamerous division, the division into sevens — is a natural division; and one day scientists will discover it as a fact in nature. The septenary structure and procedure in nature are likewise taught in theosophy, which, as you will remember is a majestic system formulated by the greatest sages and seers of the world, the mightiest intellects, the most titanic spiritual perceivers. The meaning of the Jewish biblical passage quoted above is fundamentally astrological, in which the heptamerous or sevenfold division of time is fundamental.

Other methods of dividing the structure and functions of nature, in other parts of the world, were by tens, or by twelves, or by scores, or by hundreds, or by thousands; the favorite division in Greece, for instance, was by tens. It is necessary to point out here, however, that these various numerical divisions of nature's hierarchical structure and of its functions and activities were all closely connected together, as is readily seen in the Babylonian division, by twelves or perhaps more radically by sixes; thus we have the six, the twelve, the sixty, and the three hundred and sixty, or six times sixty, and the ten is obviously likewise included

in this, as is also the five.

All these various methods of division have a profound esoteric meaning and were simply various manners of viewing nature based upon nature's own cyclic progressions. For this reason the Babylonians divided the circle into three hundred and sixty degrees of which each degree consists of sixty minutes, and each minute in its turn consists of sixty seconds. This division of the circle prevails in mathematics even in our own day.

Whatever the modern scientist, philosophical or otherwise, may have to say about these numerical fundamentals in nature, it is the teaching of theosophy that there actually are such fundamentals, and the time is coming when our Occidental scientists will recognize the fact fully. The Hindus are not Jews, and yet the Hindus had the septenary or heptamerous division in their astrological science, and also in some of their religious philosophies; nor did they limit their methods of dividing up nature's structure and functions into sevenfold progressions only, for they also use the five, the six, the ten, the twelve, the score, the sixty, and the three hundred and sixty, as well as other numbers somewhat less important than these last. Theosophy explains all these things to the student who is earnest enough and devoted enough to give the necessary time and attention to it; and therefore I am going to tangle you all up now, I fear, in a little bit of technical Theosophical philosophy.

Theosophy teaches that the universal laws of evolution prevail everywhere and act in periodic functions; that the course of evolution advances and recedes cyclically, and that each such progression, each such march forward, before the recession or retrogression ensues, is done in cyclical periods of seven, or in seven steps or notions: seven stages, or seven degrees; and that the seventh is the highest, if you count the first as the beginning,

the seventh leading on to the first of the next similar hierarchical division of the evolutionary course.

So the meaning of the observance of Sunday, the day of the Sun — the day of rest or the Sabbath as the Jews called it — was simply a memorizing in human, everyday life and affairs of the fact that the laws of Nature move in sevenfold type or fashion or stages. All the life of the ancients was builded around an archaic and esoteric body of teaching. Their systems of weights and material measures, their systems of computing and measuring time, their systems of political forms, in some ways so different in all respects from modern Occidental ideas of these things — in other words, the entire course of their daily life — was based on esoteric teachings which were drawn from the structure and courses and operations of nature.

Do you follow my meaning? I tell you frankly that unless you have studied theosophy this is a somewhat difficult thing to explain, and yet theosophy has the explanation, if you can get it. You know of course that the Jews had their day of rest, which was what they called the last day, Saturn's day or the Sabbath; and the planet Saturn, by the way, astrologically speaking the principle overruling the planet Saturn, was the Jewish tribal deity; and therefore they naturally and logically placed the end of the evolutionary course, the culmination of the evolutionary progress, in their divinity Saturn; and in accordance with the facts above sketched they reproduced this system in the affairs of daily life and called the last day of their week the Sabbath or day of rest or repose.

But when these Jewish ideas and statements were taken over by the Greek and Roman Christians, filled as the latter's minds were with Greek and Roman ideas and statements, they transferred, arbitrarily, the seventh or rest day of the week to honor a

particular celestial body held in great honor among their own people, to wit, the Sun; and, like the northern nations of Europe who had these same astrological ideas and customs in a large degree, they chose the day of the sun, later called Sunday, as being their last or highest day of the week, thus signifying the culmination of the evolutionary progress which meant the gathering together of all evolving stocks into the bosom of the highest deity known to them, to wit, the Sun.

I will tell you something more about this very interesting item of Occidental religious history at another time. I can speak upon it no further at present, as I have before me other questions that require answers.

"I have heard theosophists speak of themselves as being very tolerant of the beliefs of others. Is this a particularly noble virtue on the one hand; and, on the other, is it something belonging distinctively to theosophists? I believe people of other beliefs also declare that they are tolerant of beliefs not their own. Please state your views."

Why, of course, everybody is tolerant — or boasts of being tolerant. The average man thinks that he is nobly virtuous if he says: "Oh, I am tolerant; of course I am." All the modern Occidental churches, without one exception, boast of their tolerance. But with the questioner, I don't think that it is a particularly noble virtue. In fact — excuse me for saying so plainly — I think it is a damnably bad vice; and I am going to tell you why I think so.

When a man says that he is tolerant of the beliefs of other men, do you realize that it is an insult to the other men? It means: "Oh yes, I have heard what you say. I will tolerate you." Do you like that? I do not. I am not tolerant, because I am not intolerant. I am neither one nor the other. It is the man or the organization that is

intolerant at heart that claims what is called the virtue of tolerance, when he or it cannot act otherwise. Such a man tolerates others because he cannot do something else to them; and the same remark may be made with regard to so-called tolerant organizations.

The theosophist is neither tolerant nor intolerant. He has *respect* for the beliefs of others, if they be honest, no matter how much they may differ from his own. Furthermore, it is one of the purposes of our Theosophical Society to study with sympathetic understanding the religions and philosophical beliefs of others.

Which do you like the better: do you want me to tolerate you, or do you want to feel that in a theosophist you have a sympathetic friend? No, we are not "tolerant" (and let us proclaim it from the housetops) because we are not intolerant. Just remember the next time that you hear somebody say or some organization claim "We are tolerant," that you can shrug your shoulders and say: "He (it) tolerates me." Just put it in that way; and if you like to be tolerated, you are more of an angel than I am.

I have before me a number of questions that came in a week or two ago, and I simply have not had time to answer them before today. I apologize to the kind friends who sent them in, and I am going to answer them today — or at least I shall answer one, two, three, four, perhaps five questions more.

First question:

"However earnestly one desires to ignore things that pertain to the psychic plane, is it possible to do so if the subtle psychic energies marvelously intermingled and delicately interlaced with other forces, are a part of us and we of them? Can we shut the door of the soul?

"Do not psychic energies permeate every cell and atom of

matter, and do they not contain much that is good, as well as much that is otherwise?"

Well, this dear friend writes as if he knew all about the psychic forces. He puts the proper adjective before the noun; he says that they are marvelously intermingled and delicately interlaced with other forces; that they are a part of us and we of them; and he also asks if we can shut the door on our soul, with the meaning of course that we cannot. He knows a good deal about it. I sincerely mean this last remark. I am not at all ironical.

But I suppose that this question was asked in order to find out if I knew anything more than the questioner does. Well, in the first place, I think that a mistake is commonly made in reference to this matter of psychic forces so called, by the tacit supposition or notion that they are good in part and bad in part. I wonder how that notion came to have currency. Can you say, for instance, that the forces of nature are good forces and bad forces? Nice forces, naughty forces? The forces of nature are, ethically speaking, colorless: they are neither good nor bad. It is the use that individuals possessing free will or choice, and consciousness, make of nature's forces, which stamps these individuals as being on the right-hand path or on the left-hand path, as workers for good or for evil.

Can you say that gravitation and cohesion, for instance, and electricity, and other forces like these are, let us say, half good and half bad? I tell you that they are in themselves, ethically, colorless; they have no moral qualities in the human sense of the word. I never knew of a naughty part of gravitation as contrasted with a good part.

Of course psychic entities and forces permeate every cell and atom of matter; and these forces in themselves do not contain what humans call good, because if they did, we should have to say

that they contain much that humans call bad. The situation is as follows: What are called psychic energies are the forces resident in and forming the vitality or life-energies of the ethereal plane superior to this physical plane.

Now, as the human race is plainly advancing, evolving, it is becoming etherealized; and consequently, as the aeons pass, it comes slowly more and more into touch with these energies and forces and entities of the more ethereal plane immediately superior to our present gross physical plane, forces and entities which we have not yet learned to control in any large degree at all. The consequence is that as we bathe in this psychic atmosphere, the forces of that atmosphere often play havoc with us, because we do not understand them fully, and therefore we do not know how to control them. I am here speaking of the average person. As time goes on, we shall learn to control these psychical forces for our own good and for the good of others. Let us remember also that even the forces of our own physical plane we can scarcely control as yet, and hardly understand, if we understand at all, what the physical forces are. Think over this idea, if you please.

So, really, these forces are neither good physical forces nor bad physical forces, nor good psychic forces nor bad psychic forces. These human attributes as applied to these forces depend only upon the use that is made of them by human beings. Dynamite and other explosives can be used as helpful instruments of progress, and they can be used also as instruments of evil by perverted minds. Many other things will likewise illustrate this point — chemical compounds, machinery, electricity, whatnot.

But I will go a little further and say a little more: I will say that the higher one goes along the hierarchical ladder of life — in other words, the more deeply one penetrates into the structure of

nature — the more *dangerous* these forces of nature are, because more powerful than are the lower forces; and there is where the danger lies so far as we humans in our present state of evolution are concerned, when we ignorantly meddle with these things. But we are destined in the future through evolution to know vastly more about them than we now do; and it is our duty also to study them, but to study them with great and thoughtful care, and above all not to misuse them for private or personal advantage or gain.

But that is one side of the matter which pertains to esoteric study and to our future development. Let us learn something about these subtle forces first before we attempt to use them. We are like infants in our ignorance of these things. I beg you to think the matter over and you will see that what I tell you is true.

Here is another question along the same line of thought:

"Where is the elusive line of demarcation (if any) between the psychic and the physical? *Is there a definite line of demarcation, any more than between the night and the dawn or the day and late evening?*"

No, they simply blend into each other. The forces in our physical world are simply the lees, the dregs, the reflection, to change the figure of speech, of the forces in the astral world, which are the psychic forces; and these psychic forces range all the way from the most ethereal, which means verging more and more towards the spiritual, down to the lowest of the astral dregs of the astral world, where they merge into the forces energizing the physical world. There is no distinct and abrupt line of demarcation. And let this statement be very positively understood. Taking an example from physics which may help to illustrate the point, I cannot see any difference ultimately between cohesion on the one hand, and gravitation on the other hand. This same energy of



attraction, when it manifests in the cosmic spaces, is given a name: gravity, or gravitation; and when it manifests in what we call physical matter in our world, in the world which the chemist investigates, it is called the force of cohesion; but fundamentally both are the same thing.

Next question:

"Is it possible to ignore the air that we breathe? May not that air be supercharged with psychic energy?"

How would you answer that question? You are as capable of answering it as I am. I think the idea is that as the air that we breathe is so filled with the psychic forces, it is something that we can conquer and use for our purposes. Well, that is true. "May not that air be supercharged with psychic energy?" Well, I would not say that it is supercharged. It can possibly be, under certain conditions. I have heard meteorologists speak about the air being supercharged with electricity before a thunderstorm. Whether that be the exact way of describing the electrical conditions then prevailing, I would not like to say offhand. But it is quite possible to supercharge a limited space of the physical world with the energies flowing from the psychic realms, from the astral realms. It can be done, and in fact often is done.

As a matter of fact, every time that you think, you do it. And the more intensely you think, the more your brain is supercharged with psychic forces.

Next question:

"Why is the word psychology so much heard today from the leaders of abstract thought, down to, well — say the boy that shines one's shoes [that is a new kind of leader of thought!], the manager of a pugilist, or the psychoanalysis experts offering their high-priced wares to the unwary? Are the

people of this age more susceptible to psychic influence than those of the preceding age? If so, why?"

Well, I think the word "psychology" is so much heard today because it has become popular, and like all popular words it is used as a sort of counter: when people don't quite know what else to say, then they talk about psychology. It is a popular word. The comment that I have just made about the use of this word as a counter is true, and I challenge any man or woman here to give me a short, clear-cut definition of psychology which will include all the varying views of the different so-called psychology experts. I would not undertake to do it.

I think that people of this age are indeed more susceptible to psychic influences than those of the preceding age; but just what is meant by the preceding age: one hundred years ago, or five hundred years ago, or one thousand, or the brilliant civilizations of the Greek or Roman eras? I often have to guess at the questioner's meaning when I answer these questions; so I ask you to forgive me if I fail perhaps invariably to get the real meaning in the mind of the querent. If the answer is not satisfactory, it is the querent's fault — not mine! Nevertheless I think that people today are more susceptible to psychic influences than those living at any time since the downfall of the Roman Empire; and the reason is that nature moves in cycles, as I have already pointed out, and we are entering a more ethereal psychological atmosphere, so to speak, than the more grossly physical one which has prevailed for the last eighteen or nineteen hundred years.

If you will carefully examine the annals of history, you will find that civilization advances not in a straight course, but as it were by a movement forwards and backwards; in other words, civilization pursues a cyclical path: we see an era of religious

activity, then a recoil to scientific investigation, followed perhaps by another era of philosophical activity, then another recoil to religion or something else of a somewhat different kind.

I think that we are now moving into an age in which religious matters are beginning to interest the men and women of our time more than they have interested the men and women of the immediate preceding two or three hundred years; and I think that this is all there is to say about it. At the present time in the Occident — because in the Occident there is no great new religion, no great new religious illumination at all — the thought of our period has taken the form of what today is popularly called psychology: the investigation of the operations of the laws of mind, which means thought and resultant conduct, popularly called Behaviorism; but really, European psychology is not psychology at all. European and American psychology is a sort of sublimated physiology. I don't know how else adequately to describe it. It has its basis of study in the functions and activities of the physical body; and people reason about it nevertheless as if psychology were a system of thought dealing with the functions of the human mentality. The cause of all this is the crass materialism in both religious and scientific matters of our fathers and grandfathers and great-grandfathers.

It is quite true, however, that our theosophical teachings are that the human race as a whole, in aeons far distant, will be much more spiritual — but not psychical, for we shall have advanced far beyond that phase of evolutionary development — the human race of the far distant future will be much more spiritual than we are at the present time, and with a command over powers and faculties pertaining to a plane of nature far above our astral plane. But this high stage of development will not be reached before many tens of millions of years shall have flowed into the ocean of the past.

"How does the Raja-Yoga system of education set about developing the balance of a well-ordered mind?"

This is a profound question. I might answer it inclusively in one word: coordination, coordination of every faculty in the human being, bringing them, through this coordinative training of every part of the human constitution into functional activity: not merely the physical, not merely the psychical, not merely the mental — and there our modern Occidental educational systems stop — but the coordinating or training of the minds of the little children and of the youths confided to our care, so that the ethical instinct and the spiritual vision also become active and therefore function in the constitution. The spiritual faculties we attempt to arouse, and that is why Katherine Tingley has so beautifully called her Raja-Yoga system of education "the balance of all the faculties, physical, mental, and spiritual."

We admit that we cannot work miracles, that we cannot work marvels, that we cannot do the impossible, but we do our best. We have the system in operation, and we know that it succeeds. The secret of it is the coordination of every part of the human being so that these parts function easily and in sympathetic cooperation.

"What do you understand to be the difference between soul and spirit?"

This is a profound question — very; much more profound than I can undertake to explain in a few moments in a short afternoon lecture. The spirit is the immortal part of the human constitution — the monad, the monadic essence, that which tastes never of death, which lasts from the beginning of what we call the manvantara or the universal manifestation of the universe, to the end of that majestic period of cosmic manifestation; that which

passes over the cosmic pralaya or cosmic period of rest to begin its spiritual and other activities again when the new cosmic manvantara or cosmic period of manifestation begins.

And so on in cyclical periods constantly recurring forever, the spirit or monad is constantly growing: it is evolving, on its way to become the superspiritual, finally to become the Divine, then the Superdivine. Is that the end of its evolutionary possibilities? No, it advances ever, constantly and endlessly evolving, growing. But words fail us here to describe this sublime conception. We cannot describe it in faltering human language. Our imagination falls palsied in any such attempt, and we can merely point to the evolutionary path vanishing in both directions into infinity and into eternity, as beginningless as it is unending.

That is the spirit or the monadic essence. It is the god within us; it is the bright intelligence which stirs and moves the inmost articulations of the higher parts of our constitution, which movements, in their turn, are reflected in our brain-minds, in our human mentalities. It is the source of everything that is great and noble and high, pure, good, aspiring, and clean, in the human being. It is the source of immortal love, the source of self-sacrifice, the source of all harmony and beauty in the human being. That is the spirit, the immortal monad, the undying, the stainless, the eternal inner god.

The human soul is a ray of it, and you humans are all souls. The soul is what you recognize as the human being, the feeling that "I am I." And the soul, even as is the spirit, is a growing, advancing, progressing, evolving, thing — growing ever greater; and in the far distant aeons of the future, the soul will in its turn have so evolved forth its own innate and latent capacities, powers, and faculties — the splendor within itself — that from soul it shall have become spirit *because the root or seed of the soul is a*

*spiritual ray*. When this shall be in its culmination then man shall have evolved from manhood into human godhood, from a human being into an incarnate god. Then will the god within you manifest itself with its transcendent faculties and powers and you will have become a living Buddha showing forth the Christ immanent within you.

"How can one overcome fear?"

I spoke upon that question on a previous Sunday. You can overcome fear by visualizing to yourself actions and thoughts of high and noble courage. Think of yourself as doing courageous actions. Study and admire courageous actions in others. Study and admire courageous thought in others. Grow to love courage, so that you follow it. Then you become it and fear will vanish away like the mists of the night before the rising sun. There lies the secret of overcoming fear: it is to use the creative imagination.

Here is another question:

"An admirer of Charles Darwin has suggested that he may have been a man of high spiritual attainment in some former life, who deliberately took upon himself the contracted mentality of the scientific men of his time, the better to come into touch with those he was trying to help. Is such a sacrifice possible?"

Such a sacrifice is possible; and every great sage and seer, every world savior, every Buddha, every Christ, every incarnate god manifesting in a human body, has done it: entered human flesh for the teaching of his fellows, giving up divinity for men, for the sake of helping wandering, erring men. But was that the case with Charles Darwin? No. A hundred thousand times, No. Darwin was a great man of a brain-mind type, with a mighty brain-mind; but nothing more. He was purblind spiritually, as most men of his

type are.

"I have heard that Madame Blavatsky said that a dog which had been vivisected received its compensation as follows: The sufferings it has endured have so accelerated its progress that it has no need for any more animal incarnations. It remains in a condition of perfect bliss until the time comes when all the other animals are ready to enter the human stage."

I don't believe that H. P. Blavatsky, the founder of the Theosophical Society, ever made any such statement. Not only is it untrue in general that such a thing could take place, not only is the general idea untrue, but it is untrue because it is unnatural. The sufferings that the poor beasts endure they will receive their natural just compensation for; but only the supremely bright intelligence flowing throughout nature, which makes nature's harmony and its beauty, could be capable of understanding in every detail just what particular compensations any unfortunate beast shall receive for its suffering. It is abstractly true that the sufferings of a vivisected beast do help its progress. It is also true that the sufferings of human beings do greatly help their progress.

But these facts are beside the point. Would you, in order to help the progress of your fellow, go out and torture him? How about the torturer? Do you think that you will escape scot-free for violating nature's fundamental law of compassion and of harmony? No. The truth of the matter is: out of evil grows good; but woe unto the evildoer. That is nature's law. You violate a law of nature in your physical body, and what then happens? Disease, suffering, and death. Cruelty, and unnatural action even if it be not cruel, are opposed to the harmony at the heart of being. The mere hope or belief, if such actually exist, that by doing unnatural or cruel actions with a good motive, benefits may flow forth, is a

totally distorted and indeed evil way of looking at things, and opens the doors to all kinds of unethical and distorted moral actions.

He who does unnatural things, or evil things, shall suffer for them. That is nature's law. Nature — karma, the law of consequences — will attend to that. But no dog, merely because it has been vivisected, is ready to enter the human kingdom in its next incarnation. The idea is ludicrous, and H. P. Blavatsky never taught it. Whatever she may have said along somewhat the same lines, has another meaning entirely; and I merely make this reservation because her mind was so great, her knowledge was so sublime, that she often touched upon things, and made statements concerning them, which have not been understood. It is well to say this, friends, because there are other Theosophical societies so called, in the world, who have misunderstood in many ways the great teacher of men and the messenger of the Masters of Wisdom, H. P. Blavatsky.

Now I come to my last question for this afternoon:

"How can we awaken the spirit of Christ in our hearts?"

Well, were we living in the Orient, in a Buddhist country, for instance, the question there would probably have been, with precisely the same fundamental thoughts: "How can I awaken the living Buddha in me, the divinity within?" I will tell you: it is by love. Learn to love. It is the secret of evolution. Evolution brings forth the inner or immanent Christ, as the modern Christians say; it brings forth the sublime Buddha, the great initiate, the sage and seer, as the ancients and the Orientals say and said.

Forgive — which is one of the steps to love — forgive and love, and you thereby place your feet on the pathway which will lead you direct to the spiritual Sun which rises eternally with healing



in its wings. Forgive and love; and before you know it, you will feel the sweet influence of the Christ-spirit stealing all through your being. You will not merely become beloved by others, but you will understand all things, because love is truly clairvoyant and is a mighty power.

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[Vol 1, No 14](#)

[Contents](#)

**No. 14 (December 31, 1929)**

**QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK**

(Lecture delivered September 15, 1929)

I was told the other day that every time I came before you, I should come with a smile. I have been trying to do so. I don't know why I should have received this request, but as I shall have to read to you this afternoon something that might be called a criticism — and an unfair criticism also — it might be better to preface it with a smile in order to show the humorous aspect of the matter that I see. This criticism is addressed to "The Theosophical Society, Point Loma." It is an anonymous communication.

As a rule I pay no attention to anonymous communications; but as this one was evidently intended to be a criticism of us, no matter how wrong and mistaken, I thought I would let you have a share in it. Here it is:

"You are like millionaires — got comfort and all you want without a thought for others. Whenever and wherever I have seen you, it has been on a pedestal to make an exhibition of yourselves."

The last word is in the plural — yourselves, please understand — therefore I let you, my kindly audience, take part in this amusing communication.

I wonder how this atrabilious hearer or friend (because it is those who criticize us who are really our friends) got the idea that we theosophists at our Headquarters are like millionaires. Immortal gods! I wish we were millionaires! Practically every penny we get goes into the humanitarian activities of the Theosophical Society.

I suppose that I and my devoted officers and comrades here do not spend on ourselves at our Headquarters, even for our necessities, one-hundredth part of what we spend on others.

As an instance of our theosophical work in its humanitarian aspect, under the theosophical administration of my great predecessor, Katherine Tingley (and please note that this is just one example), we have supported free of charge in our Raja-Yoga School and Academy, for more than a quarter of a century last past, about thirty-five percent of all the pupils who have come to us — fed them, clothed them, doctored them, given them dentist's attention, cared for them in all respects, paid all their bills, and have sent them out into the world intellectually and morally equipped to fight life's battles. That is just one example of our humanitarian work; and every dollar that we can get (and we are constantly trying to lay our hands on more dollars in order to carry out a larger measure of our theosophical activities) will go into the theosophical work.

So far as the City of San Diego alone is concerned, our Society spends about \$150,000 a year there in the purchasing of various kinds of supplies.

I could continue and recite a number of instances of our humanitarian work similar in character, for the number of children we have provided and cared for — all of which shows how like we are to the popular conception of millionaires!

If we "stand on a pedestal," it is in order to show you a great light. We are people with a message for humanity. We are doing the noblest work that it is possible for human beings to do. We are trying to lift the spiritual and intellectual level of humanity; and if you can picture to yourselves a nobler work than that, I wish you would tell me about it.

We have no dogmas; we are entirely unsectarian; we are wholly non-political; we gain nothing for ourselves; we give up our lives to this holy cause; we give all and take nothing — except all the dollars that we can honestly get in order to carry on our work; and we are proud of it, because we direct these funds into channels of noble activity. We may truthfully say that we spend all we get for the benefit of others. We most certainly don't put it into our bank account. Hence I say that I am glad to stand on a pedestal of that type.

So far as "making an exhibition of ourselves" goes, well, that may be perhaps; but what kind of an exhibition? Let me tell you (and this will serve as a preface to another question that I am going to answer) that such work as the Salvation Army does is a noble, good, and beautiful work; but I believe that while it is a high and noble thing to bring physical comfort to humanity, it is a far nobler and higher thing to bring comfort and solace to their souls, to give them light, to give them hope, to show them the true pathway of life, to elevate the soul and spirit of our fellow men. Thereby we teach them nobly to live, high to strive; and doing this, we set their feet upon the solid earth of fact and show them the dazzling panorama of a spiritual future; and understanding this, thereafter they can walk alone. Is not that a noble thing to do?

The only prerequisite to membership in The Theosophical Society is a belief, an earnest and sincere belief, in universal brotherhood; and as you have heard in the announcement read to you this afternoon, we are a nucleus of an actual brotherhood of mankind.

I hope that the kind friend who has criticized us is here this afternoon so that he may hear me tell him or her, how glad I am to receive honest criticisms of any kind. Honest criticisms are

helpful.

Here is the next question:

"We frequently hear of Oriental swamis coming to California [and other places] to teach Vedanta and alleged philosophies derived from East Indian Sages. Some of them seem to be quite theosophical in their ideas. Does the Theosophical Society approve or sympathize with their efforts?"

The Theosophical Society is not a person, not an individual, and therefore can hardly be said to sympathize as a person would in anything. I suppose the questioner meant: Do theosophists sympathize with, or approve of, the work of these Oriental swamis? I cannot answer for others. Answering for myself, I will tell you what I think. I think that some of these Oriental swamis coming to Occidental countries have a message to bring to the Occident which unfortunately they deliver for a price, as a rule, but nevertheless deliver; and this message on the whole is a good one. It is the introducing of some of the noble Oriental philosophical and religious thought to the Occident.

But I cannot say that I approve it. I have the same sympathy with it that I have with any effort that teaches men to think and to look up: to look upwards, away from earth. But I would like it much better if they came and went as the Buddha did, or as the Christ came and went. No true spiritual teaching is ever sold for a price. The theosophist is horrified at the idea of charging a price for passing on the light. He comes whole-handedly and gives freely: and what he gives is as free as the air that we breathe.

The Theosophical Society is an organization. It requires money to keep it going, and it is something well worth being kept going. It is the medium by which our noble philosophy is communicated to men. Union is strength; therefore theosophists unite in a Society,

and they propagate their wonderful teachings all over the world; but this takes money to accomplish. We have, however, no lecturers at all going over the world and teaching for a price, charging admission to their lectures and then going home with a fat bank account.

Therefore I wish that these Oriental swamis, some of them good men I doubt not, would do as the Buddha did or as Jesus called the Christ did. I think that you understand me. I might add this: that The Theosophical Society teaches all that these Oriental swamis of whatever religion or philosophy can possibly bring to the Occidental world, and indeed that it teaches vastly more. The Oriental religions and philosophies are indeed majestic, sublime in their inner reaches; but these inner reaches are secret, are esoteric, and there is modernly no key to this esotericism in India, just as there is in the Occident no key to esoteric Christianity, which nevertheless at one time existed; and it is this esoteric side, this inner doctrine, this mystery-thought, which The Theosophical Society was founded to give to men.

Here is another question:

"One sometimes hears a statement like the following: 'He knows French so well that he thinks in French.' Does one think in language, or are the mental processes carried on in thought, and only reduced to words for the purpose of communication with others?"

The latter, I think. I cannot imagine thought to be the offspring of words. To me words are the children of thought; words are but a means of communicating thought; and if you examine your own mental processes, if you look into the recesses of your mind, if you examine your own thinking, in other words, you will find that your thoughts take similar form. It is rather a picturization, a visualization; and many of these visualizations are inexpressible

in words, because they are too high, too lofty, too deep, too holy, to put into words.

I have been a linguist by profession, and therefore I can speak with some degree of knowledge; and I think it is true, that while thought *per se* is wordless, the lower mental processes are verbal. I mean that when I, for instance, think in my mere brain-mind, that is to say when the thought takes verbal expression, the brain-mind consciously seeks the proper words to express the thoughts of which that brain-mind is the vehicle, and often consciously chooses the proper and best words. In this sense it is quite true to say that one may think in this or that or another language.

Nevertheless this verbal picturization belongs to the brain-mind alone, whereas it is the higher mind in which resides thought *per se*, which is far above merely verbal forms and which deals alone with ideas, images, pictures. Of these images, pictures, and ideas, the brain-mind, in other words the lower part of the mentality, has but slight idea and receives these images or pictures as mental impulses, if I may so express myself.

On many an occasion when I speak French or German or Italian, or some other tongue, I pause an instant and try to find the best words in order to express the thoughts which I have. This in itself is a proof that thought comes first, then comes the word.

Therefore, if a man 'thinks in French,' I am inclined to say that he does not know French very well. The man who knows a language does not have to put it consciously into chosen words before he speaks, for that would show a mental labor in itself, signifying lack of facility. One who is perfectly conversant with a tongue never stops to think what words he may use, unless to make a deliberate attempt to choose the best among a number that occur to him; and this latter fact occurs to everybody even in his mother-tongue.

"It is said: No great soldier ever really conquered anything. His victories are all illusions. Soldiers' empires, if they rest on nothing more substantial than the sword, swiftly fall to pieces. In the end they must repudiate force and resort to justice and reason or their empires crumble. The beast of prey, whether he is brute or human, is solitary, hopeless, and helpless, irrevocably doomed, for gentleness is the real strength. [That is true.] It is the lion with all of the lion's attributes *except the taste for blood*; and slowly all life is coming beneath its all-conquering rule. Does theosophy endorse this dynamic fragment of philosophy?"

Absolutely yes. Generally speaking, wholly so. But I don't like the metaphor of the lion at all. I am not fond of cats. That is the reason, perhaps, why I have this instinctive prejudice against considering the lion as an exemplar of gentleness and bravery. I know that the lion in English literature is often used as a symbol of bravery and magnanimity, and so forth, and I have at times searched in my mind to find out why it is so, and I have not found a satisfactory reason yet; but I am inclined to think it rather a national English notion than a fact of nature. I have never noticed anything particularly gentle or magnanimous about a lion, or a lioness either, and it is the lioness who usually is the killer. But it is certainly true that gentleness, kindness, compassion, are the great and controlling forces in human life.

Show me an empire built on force that has ever long endured. Why, the very nature of its constitution will cause it ultimately to crumble to pieces! It is the influence of gentleness: it is the nature of love which is the cement of the universe, that attract sympathy, that make one sympathetic. Love, gentleness, affection, are mighty powers and faculties and these are the foundation stones upon which anything enduring and lasting is builded. Impersonal love, as I have said, is a mighty power, for it is, so to speak, the



cement of the universe, and in it lies the secret harmony of things.

Here is another question:

"Has not the Salvation Army rather the best of it? While we spend much time and mental energy inquiring into abstruse philosophical questions as to the whyness or the thusness of this, that, and the other, the Salvation Army are scouring the highways and the byways of the world, seeking the lame, the halt, the blind, widows and orphans, the outcast, the hungry, and the unfortunate; and finding them, take them by the hand and like ministering angels encourage them to carry on."

Eloquent and true, in large degree true. I find this note at the bottom of the page which contained the question that I have just read:

"We would not have you think for one moment that we do not realize that it is far easier to ask a question than to answer it satisfactorily to many and varied minds."

Very true. I am now going to tell you something. In these lectures I do not try to answer questions merely to satisfy my audience — no indeed! I am answering these questions in such fashion as may at least in some degree satisfy myself. When I am satisfied or fairly satisfied, then I know that the chances are that you also will be satisfied, or fairly satisfied. A man who comes before an audience and attempts to satisfy a hundred different minds, or a thousand different minds, with the same set of words, is to be pitied. But if he goes before an audience with a message in his heart, and gives utterance to that message with sincerity and all the simplicity that he can command, then every heart that hears him will catch fire from the sincerity of the speaker and will itself find an answer to the questions.

That is a bit of real theosophical occultism. Be yourself sincere,

and you will evoke sincerity in others. You yourself love, and love will come leaping towards you from others' hearts. Have a message to give to others, and the very winds will carry it to the hearts of men.

Yes indeed, the Salvation Army does a noble work, a good work, a necessary work; but I will tell you frankly, friends, that even higher and nobler than helping men's bodies is the feeding of their hungry souls. Give them comfort; give them light; give them vision; teach men to think; teach them to feel heartfully; teach them how to love, how to forgive. Then the defects of character of the unfortunates which make them what they are — such that the Salvation Army, that good instrument of pity, feels a need to reach out and help them — will be corrected by these unfortunates themselves, and the Salvation Army will then no longer be needed, nor the great and good work done by other humanitarian institutions, be they whatsoever they may be.

Great and noble is the helping of men and the feeding of their bodies, but far nobler, far greater, is the feeding of their hungry minds and hearts. That is our Theosophical work; but the other, the humanitarian and charitable work, we do also. But our great labor is teaching men to think, helping men to love, showing men the vision sublime; for we know that when men gain this all the rest will be added unto them.

This course of lectures is delivered with real humanitarian impulses in my heart which drive me to find the best answers to questions which are kindly sent in to me. And when I say best answers I mean those which will most easily and quickly appeal to your minds and hearts. I certainly don't labor a moment in the mistaken illusion that I am here to tell you what you ought to think; but I am here to tell you what representative theosophists have to say in answer to the questions that puzzle and perplex

thoughtful and earnest hearts. That is what I am here for.

I will go somewhat farther than this: I will tell you that I am a Fisher of Men. That is my high and noble duty, and it is my hope that until the day comes when I shall lie down for the last time in this life in my bed, I shall be a Fisher for the Souls of Men. You will have some understanding of my meaning if you will regard certain similar passages in the Christian New Testament which I doubt not all of you know.

Here is another question:

"It has been said that the Mysteries of antiquity were annually celebrated in Greece in September for seven days, beginning about the middle of the month. As we are now in the middle of September the question seems opportune to ask: First: Just what were these Mysteries, *i.e.*, how did they originate? Second: What form did the seven days' celebration take?"

What confidence this questioner has in supposing that any lecturer would be able to answer two such questions in the few short moments that I am enabled to give to them! I would have to write two large encyclopedias full of articles in order to answer these two questions properly. I can give but a brief outline here. In the first place, the Mysteries of antiquity in Greece were not celebrated in September alone, in the month of Boedromion, but also in the month of Anthesterion, in the spring-time when the trees began to burgeon, when the paths and roadways were lined with blossoming flowers. The Mysteries celebrated in the spring, were called the Smaller Mysteries, and the Mysteries celebrated in the autumn were called the Greater Mysteries. Furthermore, the Greater, celebrated in the autumn, did not last for seven days, but for ten.

I have already told my audiences on several other occasions just

what the Mysteries of antiquity were, and how they came into being, and I will repeat briefly here what I have before said. The Mysteries were originally the secret schools founded by the great seers and sages of the human race. The national sages and seers, one or more in each country, founded each his own school in which he taught not merely esoteric law, and discipline, and many of the arts and sciences, but also taught men how to live, and how to receive the vision sublime. That was the origin of the Mysteries; and the teachings of theosophy today are the doctrines expressed in modern formulation, in modern language, of the tenets then taught and lived. The fundamental teachings of all these Mystery Schools all over the world were the same: that great doctrine which we call the wisdom-religion of antiquity, the ancient wisdom today called theosophy.

These Mysteries, even in their original form, which was indeed kept to the very end of their existence, were taught in two ways — by dramatic expression, by symbolic expression in the form of ritual and ceremony, or symbolism in the form of ritual and ceremony of certain natural secrets; and by mouth-to-ear communication of holy truths. Both the Small and the Great Mysteries of antiquity as they were about the time of the fall of the Roman Empire, had preserved even to that day more or less all of the inferior part of the teachings, those given in dramatic form; and somewhat of the same idea of ritualism and ceremonial observances still prevails in Occidental countries in certain secret organizations, — secret and fraternal if you wish; but at the time of the fall of the Roman Empire, that is to say at the time when Christianity began to extend widely, the deeper teachings, the mouth-to-ear communication of high truths, were withdrawn.

As to the form that the ten days' celebration of the Greater Mysteries took each year, I have just told you somewhat. These

rituals and ceremonies were dramatic or symbolic in form. I might make a brief picture of them in words without going too far in speech, because I will tell you frankly that these same Mysteries are celebrated today, but in their fullness, and with all the ancient possibilities of achievement in initiation among us theosophists today.

I will give you a picture. It is a picture in the form of dramatic symbology. The seed must die before the offspring, which is of itself, comes into being; and the raising of the new out of the old is symbolic of the birth of the inner god in the neophyte. You may read, and it is very interesting reading too, in some of the rather mystical treatises of the Christian literary cycle, of the Christ-sun, of the sun-Christ, alluding not to the man Jesus but to the Christ-light in the core of the core of every human being; and when the Christ in the heart of a man, or as a Buddhist would say, the Buddha in the heart of a human being, is enabled to express himself fully through the outer man, you there have the birth of the Christ-sun, following the Christian symbological phraseology, or the birth of the buddhic splendor, following the phrasing of the Buddhist. The spiritual sun-god is born. Then indeed, in the mystical wording of the early Christians, can the witnesses of this sublime rite chant: "All Hail to the risen Christ" out of the gloom of matter and the bondage of the lower selfhood.

Think over these beautiful symbolical things; for although expressed in symbolical form, they are facts in initiation. I assure you they contain wondrous truths of life: they contain wondrous truths of science in the modern understanding of that word as classified knowledge, as well as of religion and of philosophy.

"Those who have ears to hear, let them hear." I, the present Leader of the Theosophical Movement, am a Fisher for the Souls of Men, and a more sublime duty I cannot conceive: to bring to

men light, to bring to men hope, to bring to men joy, to bring to men wisdom, and knowledge, and peace, is the work of the Masters of Wisdom and of their messengers, as these latter appear at stated periods through history.

I have quite a number of questions remaining on the list before me, and although the time for my speaking this afternoon is almost at an end, I will endeavor to answer a few questions more. Here is the first question.

"I have read in your literature about an E.S. Society. What is this E.S. Society? Is it the same as The Theosophical Society?"

It is not. It has no official connection with The Theosophical Society. The E.S., as we call it, may be explained either as the Eastern School or the Esoteric School, or the Esoteric Section; but it has no official connection with The Theosophical Society. You can belong to The Theosophical Society and believe in any creed that you may choose to believe in, if you accept the one prerequisite to membership in The Theosophical Society, which is a sincere belief in the natural principle of universal brotherhood; but the E.S. is a voluntary association of theosophists who have united to study the deeper mysteries of the Theosophical philosophy which is the same as saying the mysteries of nature, and who have undertaken to try to live a life sincerely in accordance with the high ethics taught in the E.S. The inner head of the E.S. is a teacher, one of the Masters of Wisdom whom I have spoken about; and the present outer head or representative of this teacher is the present Leader of The Theosophical Society.

Here is the next question:

"Is the Leader of The Theosophical Society a theosophical pope?"

How would you answer this curious question — very evidently

asked by one who knows nothing of our Theosophical Society? All I can say is that from all points of view the Leader of The Theosophical Society most emphatically is not a theosophical pope. I have less power officially or otherwise (and if I had more I would not exercise it) than most men who are the heads of successful commercial organizations — less actual official power; and I am proud of that fact because it shows that the members of The Theosophical Society follow the policies and accept the leadership of the theosophical head on grounds of love and impersonal devotion and not on any other grounds.

Let me tell you that in the Theosophical Society, which is fundamentally a spiritual association of human hearts, the Leader does not need much official power because his administration is based upon the appeal, spiritually, intellectually and morally, that he makes to the members of The Theosophical Society. His leadership and standing in the Society are based upon love, confidence, truth, and all the other high and noble qualities which attach men to other men and bind them firmly together in the bonds of everlasting friendship.

It would be folly for the Leader of The Theosophical Society to try to wield any merely political power, when the greatest power that a man can wield is that arising out of the love and trust reposed in him by others. I am not a pope, and I would not be one. If my members ever tried to make me a pope I would run so fast away from the suggestion that they would never be able to catch up with me.

Here is the last question that I will deal with this afternoon:

"Do you worship the sun as a god?"

When I received and read this question, for a moment or two I felt a little astonished. I don't know whether the questioner

directed his question to me personally or whether he had theosophists in general in his mind in framing this question. I think, however, that he meant the members of The Theosophical Society in general. Speaking for myself, I may say that personally I have no objection to anybody worshiping the sun as a god if he so wishes, but I do not do so. I don't worship any god — imaginary or idol — whether that idol be a mental or a physical-natural one. A god myself in my inmost parts, being in both mind and flesh the reflection of a divinity which is my inmost being, or the god within me, which is the same as the inner Christ or the inner Buddha, why should I worship something exterior and extraneous to the cosmic Divinity of which I am the offspring in my inmost parts as a spiritual ray thereof? What I do is to try so to live in this outer expression of the splendor within, which outer expression is my manhood, that the divine beauty of my inner parts, of the inner sun of me, my inner god, may shed its radiance through and into my life, and thus help and stimulate and inspire those whom I meet and know.

Nevertheless, the sun is an expression of the Divinity at the core of myself, just as a man, for instance, is the outer expression of the divinity in the heart of the heart of himself. Pause a moment in thought over this. Even as each individual of you is a spark of the Divine, an offspring of the universal spirit; even as every little flower growing in the cranny of a wall is expressing as best it can and may the inner urge of the divinity at the heart of things, and is on its upward way, as we human beings are; so likewise is every speck, every spot, every atom in the boundless universe the vehicle for the expression of the Divinity at the heart of things; for each such atom is the manifestation of a ray of this Cosmic Divinity; and therefore the sun is such an expression, just as is everything else. But should I worship the sun, I should worship the physical expression of this inner spiritual fire instead of



turning my reverence and thought to the inner Divinity at the heart of things.

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[Vol 1, No 15](#)

[Contents](#)

No. 15 (January 7, 1930)

## QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK

(Lecture delivered September 22, 1929)

As I have said to you on many other occasions, I have a message to give to you, a Message which has brought peace and consolation and happiness to many millions of human beings in the ages of the past and in the present and will do so in the ages of the future. This message is a message from the soul of one to the soul of others; and the soul of one has given it as an inestimable treasure beyond all measurement of price. This Message is freighted with a burden of wisdom and consciousness that produces in the minds of its hearers tranquility and gives to them a heart at ease. There is nothing that can bring such peace and solace to men as a mind which is at ease and is not disturbed and shaken and troubled by doubt; for the heart hungers for truth, which hunger all human beings have and which, alas, so few can satisfy because they don't know where to find the food wherewith to feed their souls.

I now take up this afternoon the series of questions that have been sent in to me, and here is the first one of them:

"Is rigidity of thought, feeling or opinion, a barrier to true spiritual progress? Truly to advance must one cultivate a plastic mind open to new and wider perceptions along all lines of life?"

Yes, I certainly think that rigidity of thought, rigidity of feeling, rigidity of opinions, are barriers to true spiritual progress, because they signify dogmatism, they signify the blinds of self-satisfaction; they actually mean, to change the metaphor, the

closing of the doors of the mind to the entrance of a new truth, because men are never rigid and inelastic, so to say, in their souls: they are never rigid and inelastic in their minds — *unless they are self-satisfied*; and there is nothing that blinds one's inner vision so greatly to truth as does self-satisfaction. Let us remember also that most human beings are self-satisfied for a little while, but not for long.

I don't think, however, that the possession of a merely plastic mind is enough to insure spiritual progress. I can readily conceive how a merely plastic mind may be so molded that it becomes a barrier to spiritual progress, an actual bar against farther spiritual and intellectual advancement. I should say on the contrary, that an open mind, an eager intellect, the desire to have an unveiled spiritual perception, a readiness to receive truth and to give it to others from the full-flowing sympathy of one's own heart, I should say that these, which every normal human being may have if he will, insure true spiritual progress and are thus the answering signs of some advancement along the pathway of spiritual evolution.

Avoid, therefore, rigidity. Let your mind be open; let your intellect be eager to seize any new aspect of truth that may present itself to you. An unveiled spiritual perception is merely the loss of personality in opinions, in views, and of self-satisfaction. Seeing the impersonal — that is having an unveiled spiritual perception. The main thing that closes the doors against the entrance of light is the feeling that may be expressed in the words: "I have all that I need to know." Egoism! This feeling arises out of pure egoism. The opposite of egoism is impersonal vision of spiritual truths working in your soul and thus molding it to receive impersonal universal impressions. It is just as easy to have spiritual truths as it is to allow yourself to fall under the baneful sway of personal egoisms. If you don't believe this, then I

ask you to try it, and to learn for yourselves.

Here is another question:

"How can the Leader and Official Head not like cats? I thought when one reached such a point of evolution, one loved everything that lives."

How would you answer a question like that? In the first place, it is really kind of this good friend to put me on such a pedestal of completed evolution as this question suggests. Personally, I have never made any such claim; but according to the question I think that on one or two occasions here, in this our Temple of Peace, in discussing various matters, I did say that I did not particularly care for the cat tribe. But that is not saying that I hate cats, cats of any kind. It is true that I prefer animals of another kind; but in an abstract way I love cats too. However, my love for cats is not as strong as my love for certain other animals.

I really believe that I love everything that is, and I think that most normal human beings do. We have our prejudices and our likes and our dislikes; but when it comes to a matter of principle, I don't think that any normal human being would injure, wilfully and consciously, any living thing. I am not fond of cats as companions; I would not like to have a cat in my home; but I would not hate a cat if it happened to stray to my door. I think that I should simply shoo it out. But I love cats in an abstract sort of way — at a distance!

There are nobler things to love than cats. I love my fellow man. Oh! I see such beauty in my fellows of the human race: such splendor, such glory, such wisdom, such capacity — such possibilities; and when I look into the eyes of a fellow human being, oh, what treasures do I see there! These things I truly, truly love; and I think that human affection is in large degree wasted

when we place it upon cats when there is so much of a nobler expression of divinity around us, in our own common humanity.

Oh, these hungry human hearts! There is a tragical aspect to this thought. They need consolation; they need help; they need pity, compassion, love; they need recognition. Have your cats; have your dogs; have your white mice; have what you like for pets; but love your fellow men! It will help you very greatly also. Love is not only evocative of love in other hearts, but it is very elevating to yourselves. It brings out not solely the beautiful things in the souls of those whom you love, but it develops your own faculties and powers. It is attractive: for love, true love, impersonal love, universal love, frontierless and without bounds, is clairvoyant in the true sense of the word. It sees, and therefore knows. Love and intuition are the two sides of the character of the developed sage and seer. He sees because he loves. He loves because he sees. Love is attractive; love is stimulating; love is helpful; love is all-forgetful and all-forgiving. Love evokes the manhood sleeping in the deeps of a man's heart, or it evokes equally the womanhood in the hearts of women.

Here is another question:

"In your new theosophical activities you appear to be very enthusiastic over the possibilities of the modern youth, and very encouraging in your appeal to them. May I ask what is the cause of your confidence in the young people of the present day? We hear from all sides about the degeneracy and lack of moral qualities in the young, and that 'young people are not what they used to be.'

"I must say that I think your attitude will bring forth better results!"

My confidence in the young people of the present day is because

of what is in their hearts and souls, seeking expression; but I see no more possibilities in the young people of the present day than I saw in those of twenty years ago or, I am sure, than I should have seen in the young people of fifty thousand years gone by. If we are not mossbacks (and we are not), we can always see good in everything if we look for it; and that very hunting for good in others is not only an appeal to them to bring it forth, but the young people to whom you look thus soon see that you are expecting something high and beautiful from them, and they respond in kind.

Have you ever known sympathy and kindness to evoke in the end anything but sympathy and kindness and trust? That is what I have found in the young people of the present day; that is what I found in the young people of twenty years ago; and I believe that the young people, when we are dead and gone and turned to dust, will be just the same in possibilities as the young people of the present day. I don't think that the latter are worse than other beings; I don't think on the other hand, that they are better than other beings have been.

You may talk about evolution — yes, of course. But evolution does not make such marvelous changes in human character in so short a time. It is true that great changes can take place in the lapse of a period of ten million years; but ten years or even one thousand years is as nothing by comparison. I don't think that the young people of the present day, are worse than the young people of our fathers' day; and I don't think that they are better.

Times change and people change with them; but I believe in the young people of the present day. I trust them, as I have always trusted old people of the present day and for the same reason: I don't trust them because they are young, but because they are incarnate souls. You make an appeal to that, and your response

will be immediate, certain, and satisfying. There are disappointments in individual instances, always; but why should we charge the young people only with disappointing us? How about the older people who disappoint us?

I have here four questions from one querent, all dealing with Christianity. I am going to answer them, indeed, but first I want to say, if you please, that the theosophist never attacks the religion of any other man. I think that is a despicable thing to do. Nevertheless every theosophist reserves his right to criticize the foundations of belief of every religion, of every philosophy, of every system of scientific thought. That is part of the purposes, indeed one of the objects, for which The Theosophical Society was founded.

It is one thing to study sympathetically and with a kindly spirit of understanding, which is what theosophists do, the religions and philosophies of other men; and, on the other hand, to study them with the intent of picking flaws, to hurt trusting hearts, and with a view to mockery. That theosophists never do. If we find a truth, we gladly accept it; nor are we averse from taking beautiful thoughts or suggestions from other religions and systems of thought, because in our Theosophical philosophy we are taught that all the world philosophies and world religions were originally founded by one of our own great sages and seers, a Master of Wisdom in each case; and therefore every such world religion or world philosophy has at its core the same fundamental ancient wisdom that theosophy has. Looking into these world systems and world religions, the intelligent theosophical student can therefore find much that is beautiful in the way of understanding our own majestic theosophy. Therefore, if we find in these other religions and systems of thought some truth which the proponents and upholders of such systems themselves, at the present day, wit not of, we gladly publish the results of our

studies and do we not do well in so doing? Can such work really be called unkindly criticism or an attack on other people's beliefs? No.

The first question therefore of the four questions that I have spoken of, is:

"Can you give us esoteric information *re* the founder of Christianity?"

I can indeed; but here would not be the place to do it. But if the kind friend who asked this question is present, in order not to send him away disappointed I might make some few general observations regarding the great Syrian sage commonly known as Jesus. Nothing is really known about him, or about his origin, lifework, and death, historically or otherwise. All that is supposed to be known about him is found in the so-called Christian scriptures, written no one knows when, no one knows by whom. There is no proof of any kind extant that any such person as Jesus called the Christos ever lived. There is no proof, therefore, as is obvious, that he ever did any of the things that these Christian scriptures relate of him.

Do you ask: Is there any foundation of fact regarding Jesus in these Christian scriptures? My answer is, Yes. The Christian scriptures, that is the Christian New Testament, taken all together, are an esoteric manual: a secret manual of instruction and of edification for the earliest Christians, for the earliest adherents of the primitive Christian Church; and these secrets tell in allegorical, in mythological (if you look into the old Greek sense of the word) form what any great seer or sage, any world savior, any great and noble-hearted man who gave up his life for his fellows, underwent in the schools of mystical training.

In other words, they form that particular manual of initiation in



true but symbolic imagery in the initiatory cycle as it was followed in Palestine, in Syria, and in the countries of the Hither Orient.

The theosophist furthermore says that a man later called Jesus did indeed live; that he was one of the great seers and sages; that all of the earliest data that was written about him is mystically allegorical, which last remark is a proof of his high mission, because he was chosen as the exemplar and type to head this initiatory manual. He was indeed a great sage and seer, a savior of men. The Buddha was another such; Sankaracharya was another. Many such great sages and seers have lived in the past, they and others are living now, and they and others will live in the future.

This same manual of initiation, if you knew how to read it aright, and knowing how to read it, if you knew how rightly to construe it, could apply to any one of these great sages and seers as he passed from mystical infancy through mystical youth to mystical manhood. Do you understand my meaning? All this is esoteric, both in subject matter and in teaching, but I tell you it now because our Society will very soon publish certain matters which hitherto we have kept strictly secret, certain teachings which soon we shall give to the world. A new cycle of instruction has opened for men; and even as the so-called exoteric teachings of The Theosophical Society today were esoteric until they were openly published by the founder of The Theosophical Society in 1875 when a cycle opened, so today at the opening of the present new cycle will the same method be followed by publishing what hitherto have been esoteric doctrines.

"Was Jesus a true avatara?"

Avatara is a Sanskrit word. It means the descent of a divine being, not into human flesh but, as it were, *towards* incarnation in

human flesh. It means the overshadowing or, more correctly speaking, the over-illuminating — of some great and noble man by a divinity, by a god. So that, to use ordinary language, an avatara is an incarnate god because the noble human so chosen expresses through himself some more or less large part of the over-illumination: the faculties and powers of the divine Over-illuminator. The description of the fact that I have just given to you is inaccurate only in the sense that it is incomplete, but sufficiently accurate to give to you some idea of what is meant by an avatara in theosophy.

Jesus was an avatara, a manifestation through the form of a human being, of a god, of a divinity, — one of the spiritual beings controlling our part of the stellar universe.

It is one of the objectives of The Theosophical Society to lead men, the thinking men and women of today, back to the sublime esoteric teachings of the wisdom-religion of antiquity. Here in what I have just said of the nature and characteristics of an avatara, you have one of the clues to that wisdom-religion. The seed put into your minds today will take root, will send its roots into the soil of your souls, and being a psychological energy will grow into a hunger, so to speak, for more truth. Where can you find or receive that larger measure of truth? Come to us, and you will receive it free. Knock, and the doors shall be opened unto you.

"Did Jesus come in cyclical sequence, historical sequence, following other great sages and seers?"

He did, for the annals of history show, if you read them aright, if you know how to read them, that these great sages and seers appear in the world at cyclical periods, at definite points in the history of the human race. They succeed each other one after the other, and they will so succeed each other throughout endless

time. Read your books of history; read about the various founders of the great religions and philosophies of the past. Who founded these last? In each case a great sage and seer appeared among men and taught, founded one of these great religious or philosophical systems, and then, when his work was done, disappeared from among men, to return again when the cycle shall have rounded its course.

And Jesus, called the Christos, was one such.

"How do you account for the fact that the coming of the Christian era was the start of a cycle of decadence?"

May I venture to say that this question presupposes that it was the Christian religion which brought about the cycle of decadence. Now, I am not a Christian, because that religion, as has been the case with most other religions, has degenerated from the sublime maxims, teachings, and examples set before his followers by its founder, that sublime sage known to later ages as Jesus. But nevertheless, while not a Christian, I don't believe that it was Christianity itself and alone which brought about the era of decadence introducing to men in European countries the later so-called Dark Ages. I don't think that such an allegation would be fair; and a true theosophist is fair even to his bitterest foes. I don't think that it would be fair to make any such statement.

Here is the truth about the matter. Events, human events as well as other things, move in cycles — human history, therefore, as much as every other thing. There are cycles, as the great Greek philosopher Plato taught, of spiritual barrenness and cycles of spiritual fructification. These succeed each other in time one after the other and are sections of the wheel of destiny. Men rise and attain an acme of civilization and progress, only to sink as the wheel of life moves forward in its majestic course. Men touch the lowest point only to rise again on the ascending cycle, to attain,

let us hope, and as is usually the case, a nobler pinnacle of achievement, a higher point than was the best of the ascending cycle which preceded.

Such a cycle of spiritual barrenness began to come to pass at about the time of the beginning of the Christian era; and therefore Christianity was not the cause of the ensuing cycle of darkness, but was merely one of the symptoms, so to say, one of the marks, one of the markers, that showed what the coming years were to bring forth — and also showed what had been lost to mankind through the immediately preceding cycle of the wheel of life on its descending arc. Do you understand me?

It may also interest you to know that our theosophical teaching is that we are now, at the present period, entering upon a rising cycle. In fact, we have already entered upon it. Some three or four hundred years ago the lowest point of the rounding wheel of life in that cycle had been touched and from that moment the ascending cycle began. We have, therefore, already ascended some little way along the cycle now in course.

But here is another point of thought which I must allude to in order to round out the idea, although it may be a little complex at first sight. There are wheels within wheels: smaller cycles within greater ones. Every great cycle itself is composed of minor whirls; so that while the greater cycle is ascending, there are in that very movement of ascent minor whirls of smaller cycles, rising and falling, rising and falling, rising and falling, rising and falling. Wheels within wheels. So that evolution is not a steady marching forward in one direction, but a series of ascents and descents which mark the course of the onward rolling wheel of life. This is a fascinating theme for our moments of quiet thought and meditation.

I would like to spend an entire hour talking to you about our

theosophical doctrine of cyclical progression, but if I did I should have no time left to deal with the other questions that I have before me and which are in their own way as interesting as the one of which I am now speaking.

"I have heard some of your members suggest that a pet dog of theirs which had died, might be recognized by them in another body by means of its peculiar traits and habits.

"Is there anything approaching a definite entity which reincarnates — a thread-soul — among the higher animals?"

Yes, but nothing like the definite, entitized, unitary center which the human spiritual soul is. The animal has not evolved forth that unitary center as yet; and evolution as taught in theosophy, please remember, as I have so often said before, means the unfolding, the unwrapping, the outflowing, of that which is infolded, inwrapped, held back, until the environment opens the way; and then out it comes, a pouring flood of life, this outpouring being slow or rapid as the case may be.

We theosophists are evolutionists, but we don't teach transformism, as it is taught in Darwinism, for instance. We teach that the principles and beginnings of all things exist within the entity; and that as these principles are thrown outward, so to say, much as the tree burgeons and throws forth its leaves when the environment is appropriate; so the human evolving entity — or any other evolving entity — unwraps, unfolds, throws forth, through the ages, what it has in principle and in potency in its inmost essence, thus bringing about an ever greater degree of evolutionary perfection, for all the treasures and mysteries of eternity lie within; in the heart of the heart of all evolving creatures.

The kingdom of heaven, to use the Christian phraseology, is

within. All the secret powers, all the secret faculties: indeed, everything in the universe — is within you; for within you, in the core of the core of your being, indeed that very core of the core of your being, is a living divinity, a spark of the Eternal; and evolution is merely the progressive manifestation in ever greater degree of this inner splendor, of this inner light, of this inner life.

Therefore a man has thrown forth, or unwrapped, or unfolded, more than the beast has, more than the dog of this question has, of this inner splendor, and has arrived at the point where he has full egoic individuality, subject however to still greater perfection, subject to still greater growth; whereas the beast has not yet thrown forth or thrown out from the heart of its heart, from the core of the core of its being, these spiritual treasures. Consequently, the beast has no specifically reincarnating ego, as a man has.

But a monad overshadows the beast, even as a monad overshadows the human, otherwise there could be no individualized entities at all. It is so also with the tree. It is so also with the mineral world as expressed in the different chemical elements. Every atom is the outward manifestation or expression of an indwelling, involved monad or spirit.

Nevertheless, some of the higher animals have evolved sufficiently far, have thrown out enough of the inner spiritual individuality, to show certain individualized traits of character, if I may so say; and these are easily recognized. One knows his own pet dog, for instance, or his own pet cat, from other pet dogs or other pet cats. And you know these traits so well that even were that dog soul or cat soul to be in another dog body or cat body these particular traits you would recognize and remember.

So, therefore, it is possible in minor degree that an animal may have evolved sufficiently to show forth certain little traits of

character which are loved and which could therefore be recognized. I realize that this is perhaps a long answer to a rather unimportant question; but I could not make my meaning clear without going into some details.

"What does one have to believe in order to become a sincere member of The Theosophical Society?"

You don't have to believe in anything in the way of dogmas. We have no dogmas, we have no creeds. The only prerequisite to membership in The Theosophical Society is an honest acceptance of the philosophical, religious, and scientific principle of universal brotherhood. That is the only prerequisite; but you don't have to believe anything in the shape of formal creeds or dogmatic teachings.

"Have animals souls?"

Most decidedly they have. What makes the different kinds of animals differ from each other? How is it that there are so many of them? Why, the theosophist says that each beast is the expression of an indwelling entity, a monad in the spiritual realms, and a young, learning beast soul in the lower realms, which works through the poor imperfect beast body. Otherwise the beast could not be there, for there would be no individualizing center around which even the physical body could form. There would not be a central thread of beast essence around which the matter of the physical body could collect. But it is an entity, even the beast, and that is the result of the concreting and individualizing work of the inner soul, the beast soul.

But when we theosophists say that a beast has a soul, we mean souls after their kind. We do not mean that a beast has a human soul. Nature makes no such idiotic mistakes as that idea suggests. A dog has a dog soul, and a cat has a cat soul, and an elephant has

an elephant soul, and a human being has a human soul, and the rose has a rose soul which differentiates it from the soul manifesting in the delicate violet, or the ruddy carnation, or in some other flower.

And there are also vegetable souls. Why not call them souls? They indeed are souls — souls after their kind, after their own families, as the human soul is a soul after its kind. For souls exist in all degrees of evolution in the universe, from what human beings call the lowest, yea, up to the very highest that human imagination can conceive of, and higher, indefinitely along the rising scales of the ladder of life; and also in the inverse direction lower, to what we humans call the realms beneath us.

"Are other planets inhabited?"

Why, yes. Is this planet inhabited? Yes. If other planets are not, why should this planet be? Do you see the point? If you can give an explanation why this our earth should be the only inhabited celestial body in the boundless spaces of the boundless universe, I wish you would tell me it.

One last question:

"Are animals undeveloped men or, in other words, are men developed animals?"

I wish I had two heads like the ancient Roman god Janus. With one mouth I would say Yes, and with the other mouth I would say No. Well, the fact is that this question seems very simple, but to the theosophist it is very complex. If the question implies that men are merely the evolved bodies of beasts, and that there is nothing more to a man than a physical body, then my answer is most emphatically that men are not evolved beasts. Men have not developed from the physical bodies of beasts.



Now in 1928, on this platform, during all the summer time and part of the autumn, I delivered a long series of lectures on the topic of evolution. If anyone of you cares to read those lectures, you may procure them from our publishing company. I cannot go into the matter now. The subject is too long. I have already told you in brief what evolution is from the theosophical standpoint. It is a throwing forth, a throwing out, an unwrapping, an unfolding, of what is within. The greater evolution means the greater manifestation or throwing out of these involved faculties and powers within you, all of which in the last analysis originate in your inner god.

What makes the change in the physical body from a less to a greater degree of perfection, is the reaction upon physical matter of these indwelling and interworking energies and powers, molding matter more perfectly to correspond to and to express what is within, the higher and sublimer energies and power and faculties coming forth into manifestations.

So then, to say that men are evolved beasts is not true. To say that men were much inferior in far bygone days to what they are now is true. Theosophists say, furthermore, that from the original primitive human stock, the original stocks of the present beasts sprang. Thus we take precisely the opposite view to the view that is popular in modern scientific circles today; and while theirs is guesswork, we have proofs of the truth of our position in the very facts brought forward by the scientists themselves. I invite you to read the printed lectures that I spoke of. There you will find the proofs of the teachings of evolution as embodied in the theosophical philosophy. [See *Man in Evolution*]

Now, friends, we part for this afternoon. I want to call your attention, before I leave you, to something that our beloved Katherine Tingley before she passed away asked me to bring to

the attention of the audiences here in our Temple of Peace as often as I could. It is this: Men are incarnate gods. There is in each one of you a spiritual sun, a divine splendor, which while it may and can express itself through the undeveloped human vehicle, nevertheless manifests itself as exemplified in those outstanding figures of human genius whose mark on the annals of human history is like a blazing flame of light.

Every great teacher, every seer and sage, has urged the mankind of his time to try to ally themselves with this inner god; for there lie wisdom and knowledge, power and faculty, love, compassion, pity, sympathy, understanding, and an illuminated intellect such as the ordinary mentality knows little of. When this union is accomplished in relative fullness, you have the great, outstanding spiritual figures of history, the titanic intellects, the majestic spiritual leaders of mankind — the Buddha, the Christ, and all the other hosts of the illuminated ones. You can be the same, if you will.

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[Vol 1, No 16](#)  
[Contents](#)

No. 16 (January 14, 1930)

QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK

(Lecture delivered September 29, 1929)

I have twenty-odd questions before me here, and half an hour in which to answer them, — or a little more than half an hour.

I don't like to be long-winded on the one hand; but, on the other hand, I dislike to make my answers too short, because if the answers are too brief, justice is not done to some of these questions which are both deep and well worth some lengthy consideration.

The first question is as follows:

"History is a pitifully limited record of civilization after civilization developed by laborious effort to a more or less splendid climax. But carrying within itself the seed of its own disintegration, each one has crumbled to the dust, leaving only a few scattered, tragically silent ruins for present man to contemplate and ponder over.

"Will man eventually succeed in evolving a civilization that will withstand the savage ravage of time — *and endure* What unknown (or known) quantity would such a civilization be founded on, or is it the prescribed order of things that every civilization has its rise and fall, and having run its course vanishes into the mysterious river of time?"

Isn't that a beautiful question! The asker of this question has a poet's heart. He senses the melancholy prospect that even we moderns, with all our boasted civilization of paper, shall vanish away, leaving not a wrack behind us. What a loss, we moderns

think! And yet infallibly it will be so.

Now, let me ask a question, in order to answer this question, following the method of the ancient Greek, Socrates. Would you want our civilization, as it now is, to endure forever? Nothing better coming in its wake and after it? Would you have wanted the civilizations of Greece and Rome, of Egypt and Persia, of ancient India and of other countries, to endure forever? Heavens! What a prospect of crystallized immobility!

Let us leave the melancholy aspect of it, and turn and see the beauty of it. Oh! thank the immortal gods that nature is builded on cyclical processes and procedures, so that when anything has run its course, it vanishes away, leaving the ground free for something better and higher. Everything, civilizations included, contains within itself the seeds of disintegration, and what a merciful provision of nature that it is so! Always something better — in the long run, please — succeeds what exists.

How would you like to be yourself as you are now, forever and forever and forever, and forever? Merciful gods! Nature is kinder than human imagination apparently wants it to be.

Here is another question:

"The ancient philosophers regarded the earth as a huge animal. It is difficult to harmonize this view with that of the modern scientists who teach that the earth's interior is molten, though not perhaps fluidic. There is one point at least on which the analogy between the earth and an animal breaks down. The earth does not propagate its kind. The animals produced by the earth are of the nature of parasites, not offspring. Will you kindly elucidate?"

Well, I agree with the ancient philosophers. In the first place, let us understand what they meant by the term "animal." This word

comes to us from the Romans, from the Latin tongue, and signifies any entity which has an *anima*, a living personal soul, a personal center of vitality. For instance, the rocks have not an *anima*; the beasts have. The trees have not yet fully developed an *anima*. Men have an *anima*, as the beasts have likewise. The ancient Hindus made this distinction between animate and inanimate things clear by speaking of all things which had an *anima* or a personal vital soul, a center of personal vitality, or a human soul, or a spiritual soul, as *Jjangama*, "movers," things which move on the face of the earth; and all entities or things which have not an *anima*, a personal vital soul, nor a spiritual soul, nor a human soul, the ancient Sanskrit writers called *sthavara*, a word meaning "fixtures," such as the trees and the rocks.

Now, the earth moves. What is the difference in this respect between the earth and a man for instance, or a beast? Why may we not therefore call it an animal, it being a mover? It moves in marvelously accurate motions. It is composed of the same elements of which our bodies are composed, the same chemical elements in every respect. It is shaped differently, of course; but why should we say that it is not an animal because it does not propagate its offspring in the manner by which we do so?

In theosophy, however, the teaching is very definite that the earth does indeed propagate its offspring, that it propagates its offspring not in fact in the same method and manner that men and beasts use, but nevertheless after its own way. It has its life even as man has his life; and, may I ask in passing, will you tell me what the human life-force is? If you will, then I will tell you what the earth life-force is. You don't know what it is; but that fact is clearly taught in theosophy; and I may tell you that actually there is no fundamental difference between the magneto-electric currents which form the vitality of our earth globe, and the

particular manifestation of vital electricity which men call life. They are the same thing in their elements.

Turning now to another viewpoint of argument: can you tell me what makes the earth an entity, what holds it together as an entity and makes it keep its shape and its courses of movement and its individuality? To say that it is matter acted upon by gravitation, says nothing at all. That is merely describing what we already know, in other words. What is gravitation? What is matter? Explain these truly to me, and then I will accept your explanation; but until you can explain to me the elements of the explanation that you might attempt to make, or try to make, I refuse to cheat my mind with words.

Yes, gravitation exists; matter exists. Both do, of course; but gravitation and matter exist likewise in the human body, act upon it and compose it. And the same facts in argument do apply with equal force to the chemical elements, the matter with which the chemist deals in his laboratory when he investigates the fundamentals of physical being. The atoms have lately been discovered to be as much entities and as much governed by gravitation and an inward urge or life as the earth, the larger atom, is also. There is but a difference in size or bulk between them. Indeed, as I have often pointed out before, the atom is in many respects, if not in all, a miniature solar system. But atom, and earth, and sun, and solar system in its turn, all are held in their respective courses and places by this mysterious inner entity which men call soul, working in matter by what chemists call attraction in the large and cohesion in the small, and which the astronomers call gravitation. All these things bear directly on the argument, for in all cases the things dealt with are entities each after its kind: each has its individuality, its character and characteristics lasting through shock and through change until dissolution comes — but that comes likewise to human beings.

Now I suppose that you would like to know how the earth propagates its kind. That is a matter which would take too long to tell you this afternoon, and therefore I cannot do so; but if you will study our theosophical literature you will find out the full and proper answer. The earth propagates its kind after the manner of the earth, as all other entities propagate their kind each one after its own individual way of doing so.

The earth has a life — rather a life-center, a life-consciousness, which is what holds it in the form that it has and retains — which is what keeps its component atoms together, gripped in the titanic grasp of its vital essence, even as the body of man is held in its regular coherent form by the grip of the vital entity within it. Otherwise, will you tell me please, what holds the component atoms of the earth together, and what compels it to retain its form through the ages as the years pass by and sink into the ocean of oblivion? Think about the matter a little bit, and you will get some realization of what the ancients meant when they spoke of the earth as a huge animal.

No, human beings and the minerals and the trees and the beasts and the other things that are on the earth are truly parasites, so far as the earth is concerned, little lives living on and within the greater life, but these are not the earth's offspring. Man's body is builded in precisely the same way in fundamentals as the earth is builded. Both are builded of innumerable hosts of little lives, just as the earth is; and all these little lives are held together, gripped by the central vital consciousness, which in the human being is the lowest aspect of his inner constitution; and the same observation applies with equal force to the case of the physical body of our planet which we call the earth.

If there were not this centralizing, this gripping power, the earth would disintegrate into its component atoms over night, or

mayhap within an hour.

"Brisbane tells his readers that 'man can conquer many difficulties and has shown that whatever he can imagine he can do.' If this statement be true, what is it that limits our power of imagination? Does theosophy throw any light on this question?"

It does indeed. I think that this Brisbane — I presume that this is the newspaper man — I think that Mr. Brisbane voices in a general way a great truth. It is true that man has creative imagination, and when it is working he can do almost anything. But we should sharply distinguish the imagination from mere phantasy or fancy. I can fancy, in my phantasy I can see, a railroad from the earth to the sun or the moon; but I could work my imagination till doomsday and be unable to bring it about as a physical reality.

Nevertheless the imagination is creative, is one of the faculties of consciousness, one of the powers of consciousness; and when the imagination, the image-building faculty, the power of visualization, combines with the will — that penetrating power that man has, piercing all obstacles — then he can build for himself almost anything — not merely his own future, but actually physical things.

It is a teaching of the ancient wisdom in the different lands, that the creative power of man, impelled by his will, can even bring into physical objectivity beings and substances from the invisible world. Men don't know their power, and that is why most men are failures in the sense that they don't realize what is within them, nor live what is within them: don't know the godlike powers of creative individuality which they have within themselves. Oh, the pity of it!



In the ancient Hindu writings this power of the creative imagination is called *kriya-sakti*, and was well known and frequently practiced in ancient times as by the sages of today. The ancient sages taught that one whose will was trained and whose creative imagination was developed, by using these two faculties could bring into physical being and activity whatever he willed: give it a physical body, which merely means to collect around the picture that he had cast into the air the atoms of the atmosphere, thus giving his thought a body and a form. This is a fact; and men do it even today in an indirect way incidentally, as for instance when a painter creates a picture, or a sculptor from a block of marble brings into being some work of imagination, whose beauty and grace, delight and enchant, and so forth, and so forth.

The difference between the weak man and the strong man is simply that the latter, unconsciously or consciously, uses some of the powers of his soul and of his creative imagination — his power to see pictures and to incorporate them in actualities.

Coming down to matters of earth, fortunes are builded, destinies are made, empires are founded and governed, evolution is directed by the working of this power within us of picturing and of following the pictures. Men call it all dreams! Ah! It is the beginning of the working of the power of the creative imagination. It is the true dreamers who bring things to pass.

Here is the difference between the weak man and the strong man — be the latter teacher, be he sage, be he criminal, or whatnot — he can picture, he can see, and within him is his will. It is thus that the gods have builded the universe — by "seeing" and "willing."

Here is a deep question:

"What is mind? Are brain activity and mental states

synonymous?"

They are not. Mind is a faculty, also an energy, of consciousness. It is not superior to consciousness. It is one of the energies of consciousness. Brain activity is the reflection of mental consciousness; and it is thus that the mind originates the pictures which become actualities in human life.

No, friends, the whole difficulty in questions like this is that our Occidental mentality has been for centuries psychologized with the idea that consciousness and mental states are something which *exist outside of* physical man. How about the materialists who say that all mental activity is due to the molecular agitations of the linings of the brain? Ah! Nobody believes that today. But nevertheless, questions like this one arouse the Occidental mentality from the psychologization that has been going on among us Western men for centuries, to the effect that the so-called soul is something which exists apart from the body, belongs to another realm, and that the body in a sense is added to it, by God or by nature, or by something or somebody.

We don't teach this. We do not make the sharp antinomy between soul on the one hand and body on the other: between mind on the one hand and brain on the other hand. Were this so, then I ask where is the link between the two, the natural link? If the soul were something quite apart from the body, which was put into the body by God, or in some way just worked itself into the body in childhood, then where is the natural link between the two; in other words what attracts soul to body or body to soul? Nobody knows. It is precisely this antinomy, or sharp suggested difference of nature and character between soul and body which the theosophist so vigorously repudiates.

The theosophical view is entirely different from this Occidental view of our fathers and grandfathers and great-grandfathers. We

say that the mind is a function of consciousness, and that consciousness is substance — the highest form of substance known. Put the matter in another way. Consciousness is an energy; and all matter, all substance, is a lower form of force, of energy. Mind and brain are essentially the same, not because mind springs from brain — but for the opposite reason. Brain comes from mind. The brain, our physical brain, the brain of the body, is but the deposit, the lees, the dregs, the lowest plane of mind, taking physical form and shape, due to the unconscious working of the will for physical existence and the unconscious picturization, image-making, inherent in the consciousness. These two working together give you your entire physical body.

Your body is actually builded of the substance of the soul — of the lowest part of the soul, what might be called the cast-off part, the lees, the dregs, the lowest plane of mind taking physical form and shape. Do you begin to see the difference between soul and body and their identity in substance? The theosophist positively refuses to make any distinction between energy and substance, between spirit and substance, between force and matter. To him they are fundamentally the same thing. We live in a universe of spirit, and all things and entities that we see around us are the expressions of spiritual entities, of consciousnesses.

But nevertheless, don't cheat yourself with mere vague words, with generalizations like consciousness, substance, matter, force, energy. These terms are all right; but if you want to be particular and exact in your thinking, you must go beyond the words to the meaning of them. Therefore say, consciousnesses, forces, energies, matters, substances. Remember that all things live in all other things and that every entity or thing that is, is composed of other things and entities. The small exist within the greater, and the greater within still greater ones, and so on *ad infinitum*.

Therefore such words as consciousness, energy, force, substance, matter, *et cetera*, are all abstractions. The word humanity is an abstraction. There is no such thing as humanity, but there are men. There is the point. Consciousness, therefore, really means consciousnesses. Divinity really means gods, innumerable hierarchies of conscious beings infilling the universe, and in them we live and move and have our being, even as the little lives composing my physical body and yours in us live and move and have their being: they are all little lives, learning entities living in our vital constitution, even as we live in the vital constitution of our physical globe, earth. Our vitalized bodies are therefore earth-animals in the sense already explained; and in the highest spheres we live in the hierarchies of the gods, as parts of their being, so to speak, as flesh of their flesh, bone of their bone, blood of their blood. That is what the theosophist means when he says that the inmost of the inmost of himself is a god.

To some this may seem to be high philosophy, but was I not asked a highly philosophical question? What is mind? Mind is one of the operations of consciousness; and in its working, it works in substances, and substance is energy, and the combined operations of these two produce the brain, a part of the body. The mental states are merely the "states in time" of the operations of this particular center of consciousness, called the mind or the soul. Why, even some of our Occidental poets have seized this truth. You know what the English poet Spenser has said:

For of the soul the body form doth take  
For soul is form and doth the body make,

as I have just pointed out to you.

Picture to yourself a little child. Picture to yourself the human life-seed of which the little child is the evolution. Picture to yourself this life-seed, and its path, if you can, by image-making,

by imagination, and in so doing your thought has reached a point where it vanishes out of the physical world. And yet, when this incarnating center of consciousness through that life-seed begins to work and to build the seed into the body and brings it into maturity, you begin perhaps to see the thought that I am trying to develop.

The body is simply the lees, the dregs, of the soul within you, and the soul is simply a name for your composite, inner intermediary essence; and higher than the soul within you, of which the soul or mind is an offspring, is your inner god, your inner divinity, one of the operators in the cosmic spaces. A child of the gods, it is a god itself.

Oh, if you knew what is within you! The Christs and the Buddhas and all the great sages and seers of the ages knew, and they became what they became because, knowing, they pursued the path of development through initiation and self-conquest, so that they became what they were. In every one of you is this Christ-spirit, in every one of you is this inner Buddha, in every one of you is a living god — a spark of the Cosmic Fire.

Another question:

"Where is the seat of the soul?"

Here we are again. This question implies the Occidental idea that the soul is something outside of, and apart from, the body, something outside of and apart from the physical man, and that certainly it must have a seat somewhere in the physical body. The queerness of this idea is clear enough and the very fact that I can see you smile and hear you laughing shows me that you understand the queerness of it all. If you knew the pleasure that it is to a speaker to feel that he has his audience with him in sympathetic understanding, you would realize how agreeable it is

to me.

Yes, having these thoughts in mind I may repeat the question to you: Where is this so-called seat of the soul? And in answer I tell you that there is no seat of the soul. The soul is the man himself, and the physical man is the deposit of the soul: the dregs, the lees, of the bundle of energy that man's inner constitution is. The physical body is what the soul has builded out of itself, and is the grossest part of the man; and because of this fact of the natural bonds of union of the parentage of the body in the soul, does the soul find the links of attraction to the body and lives within it.

But this does not mean that the incarnated entity so called, or the man — call that incarnated entity what you like, the ethereal part within, the focus of the energies which make man man — it does not mean that these energies working through a man have no particular part of the physical body through which they manifest themselves, because they actually have such localized centers of expression. And these particular foci, focuses, in the body are what are called the organs of the body; for man is a composite being, a bundle of forces, and the organs of the body correspond each to each to the different energies working through man's inner constitution, and this is the cause of the different types of organs in the physical body. They reflect the different types of energy in man's inner constitution. This explanation also shows the causes of the different physical senses that man has, which senses express the different types of energies or faculties in man's inner constitution.

"Is there any soul substance?"

Most emphatically there is. Let us suppose that man's soul was not substantial. Then I ask how could it manifest at all in substance? There would not be any link between the physical substance and the intangible unsubstantial character of such a

supposed soul. It would be, so to say, hanging up in the air like Mohammed's coffin! It could not be in a body, could not work in a body, could not manifest through a body, because it would have no links or line of connection between itself and the physical body so different from its own essential being, according to this strange theory. Do you see the point? The soul therefore must be substantial, but of substance of its own kind; and this is another way of showing that the inner man, the intermediary man, must be substantial, but of a substance belonging to his own realms; and this is the same thing as saying that man is an energy or a bundle of energies because substance is concentered force, concentered or crystallized energy.

Analyze this wonderful "matter" of which we hear so much. What is it composed of in the first analysis? Physical atoms. And what are these physical atoms composed of? Electrons. And what are they? Points of electricity. Such is the latest dictum of modern science; but the idea, however, is as old as the ages, and we have been teaching it in theosophy for fifty years more or less last past. So your physical matter is composed of nothing but electrical points, energy-centers, of force-atoms — which amounts to the same thing. Naturally, your soul, your mind, the intermediate part of you (call it what you like), the part between the inner god and the physical body, is substantial because it is an energy, a bundle of energies; it is therefore a composite thing. Indeed, if the intermediary part of man called his soul were just one pure unadulterated essence, something which it is impossible to find anywhere, then it could have no contact or lines of interconnection with any other thing in the universe; and all our experiences, all our knowledge, as well as our intuition, show us that such absolute essences are nonexistent; for everything that is, is interconnected and interlinked with everything else, and all things work together towards one common end.

Even what it is customary to call in theosophical philosophy the individuality, is composite of a number of things: will, consciousness, egoity, substance, energy. But as this composition of the individuality exists on a plane so superior to ours that it seems to us to be indivisible, in other words to be homogeneous, we speak of it as the indivisible part of us, or the individuality.

There is much deep philosophy imbodyed in these observations that I have just made; but they would take too long to develop fully in the short time at my disposal to speak to you from this platform, and I must therefore refer you to our books for a fuller and more complete elucidation.

"Descartes thought that there was a soul substance and placed it in the pineal gland; now the physiologists place the psychical center behind the forehead. What is the theosophical explanation?"

I presume that the idea in this question is the following: What is the theosophical *view* Well, Descartes merely re-echoed the ancient philosophers when he said that the soul is substantial. It is one of the few good things that Descartes ever said, in my opinion. The idea of placing the soul in one little gland in the head is rather arbitrary, to say the least. I don't object to the gland being small; but if this gland is the seat of the soul, how about the rest of the poor body? Does it receive soul control from the pineal gland as from a focus?

Now, it is true that the pineal gland is small, but this has nothing to do with the case from the theosophical standpoint; nor is it the "seat of the soul." The pineal gland is one only of the organs through which the soul manifests: it is the seat only of one particular energy of the mind or the soul, call it what you like, through which this particular energy of this intermediate part of man manifests. The pituitary body is another organ, the heart is



another, the liver is another, and so forth, all such organs of the physical body being the foci or centers through which corresponding various and particular energies of the intermediate part of man express themselves.

It is these energies of the intermediate part of man, whether you call that intermediate part of man mind or soul, which manifest themselves through the corresponding and respective organs of the physical body, which organs these various energies themselves have builded up for that purpose.

Now, all these organs together, with the rest of the matter which forms the body, compose the vehicle which the soul substance together with all its faculties and energies permeates. When electricity passes along or in or through or around a wire, shall we say that its passage is in one particular point of the wire, or in a particular succession of points? Similarly with the soul, it has no one seat in the body in which it resides or sits. It permeates it. It works through all the body, particularly through the organs which are the channels of the differentiated faculties and powers of the soul.

But this applies only to the intermediate portion of man's constitution. It does not apply to the higher parts of the soul. I have been speaking of the merely astral parts of the soul, the dregs of the soul, the lees of the soul, which in their grossest form compose the physical body with its various organs and tissues, etc.

Do you begin to understand the idea that I am trying to convey to you? It is these lower energies, these lower substances, of the intermediate part of man — call it human soul or mind, or what you like — which permeate the body somewhat in electrical or electromagnetic fashion — certain particular energies of this intermediate part of man working through certain particular and

corresponding parts of the body, which are called the bodily organs.

I cannot go at greater length into this subject of thought this afternoon, because it would take too long a time. Returning to the question, I don't know why the physiologists of the present day should place the psysical center of man behind the physical forehead. This is some curious and transitory notion or phase of thought, I suppose, which will in time very likely be replaced by some other idea.

Here is the next question:

"Can consciousness be explained, or some illuminating words thrown on its nature?"

Well, that is somewhat like asking a man to lift himself by pulling at his shoes. Such an act is a poor way to lift oneself from the floor. Thus it is also difficult to explain consciousness by consciousness. Consciousness is an energy, but it is also a substance, because the two are fundamentally one thing. Ask a man to explain to you what consciousness is, you are asking him a very difficult question which he doubtless would be puzzled to answer. It is somewhat like asking a man: Who are you? He answers: Who am I? I am I. Then you say: I know, but who are you? And he replies: Who is I? Well, I am I. You see, you are asking consciousness to explain itself, and this is a very difficult thing to do.

However, we can throw some illuminating words on the character of consciousness. It is energy in its essence. In its essence it is eternal. It manifests in manifold forms and shapes, in all degrees of evolutionary beings, which is the same as saying of evolving beings. The theosophist sees consciousness working everywhere. It is the very root-essence of the universe; it is the

primal force. It contains the cosmic life, for it is cosmic consciousness; and this cosmic life-consciousness expresses itself in the universe as the many-varied energies of the cosmos.

Consciousness is the fundamental fact of being. Please remember also that the idea of consciousness, *per se*, as I have already pointed out, is an abstraction, and one may well ask: Is there such a thing as consciousness *per se*, or should we not rather speak of consciousnesses in innumerable grades of hierarchical existence which, considered in their vast aggregate, for purposes of convenience we call consciousness?

Personally, I am strongly inclined to disbelieve that there is any such thing as 'consciousness' apart from consciousnesses. For instance, is there such an entity as humanity apart from the men who compose humanity? Is there such a thing as rose apart from the roses? Is there such a thing as goodness apart from entities or things which are good? Is there such a thing as evil existing absolutely as apart from entities and things which are evil? I doubt it all. For the same reasons I am strongly given to doubt that there is such a thing as consciousness absolutely apart from consciousnesses.

In order to make this a bit more clear, permit me to make the following observations. The universe is a composite entity composed of innumerable hosts of consciousnesses, and of these consciousnesses which are simply innumerable the less live in the greater; and the greater live in others still greater — live in them and move in them and have their being in them; and these still greater consciousnesses live in the gods and move and have their being in the gods, and so forth practically indefinitely; and we can picture these innumerable hierarchies as in and of the universe and surrounded by the UNIVERSE, which thus is verily the cosmic Divinity. These divinities in their turn live and move and have

their being in hierarchies of cosmic Divinity still more sublime.

Where will you stop in thought? In neither direction can you find an absolute ending. Endless are the frontiers of infinitude.

Beginningless, endless, are the frontiers of eternity; and therefore what is in one point of infinitude must be everywhere. Otherwise, how did that one point come into being if it exists alone by itself? Each point, as well as every point, is a child of the Eternal, and therefore partakes of the life of the Eternal, of the consciousness of the Eternal, and of the energies of the Eternal, and of the destiny of the Eternal.

All things and beings everywhere are knitted together in bonds of unbreakable union and this is what the theosophist means when he speaks of universal brotherhood: the essential oneness of all things that are.

"Is the spirit of Christ that you so often speak of in your lectures the same as the spirit of Jesus Christ? In other words, when you speak of the Christos-spirit, do you mean the soul of Jesus?"

I wish that someone would tell me what is meant by the "soul of Jesus." It is easy enough to use words such as these. But to the theosophist who is accustomed to studying the facts of nature as embodied in his majestic philosophy, the soul of Jesus or the soul of Buddha carries a very particular meaning. At any rate, when the theosophist speaks of the Christos-spirit, he does not mean the soul of the man Jesus. By the Christos-spirit he means the inner god at the center of everything that is — therefore of men also, of course: the inner Buddha, the Immanent Christ, the inner god, the divinity within. Using popular phraseology in the West for the sake of being easily understood, we often speak of the Christos-spirit instead of saying the inner Buddha or the inner god. This obviously does not refer to the soul of the man Jesus.

"When you say that The Theosophical Society has no dogmas, do you mean that it has no specific or definite teachings, and that it is a mere attempt to form a brotherhood of mankind based on merely general ethical grounds? If The Theosophical Society has certain definite teachings which it promulgates, as seems to be the fact, in what way does this differ from the ordinary dogmas of any church?"

Well, that is a natural question to ask. We have no dogmas at all; but we have very definite and specific teachings, doctrines, tenets — call them what you like. The Theosophical Movement is vastly more than an attempt to form a brotherhood of mankind based on merely general ethical grounds. That plan has been tried again and again and will always fail, because in order to succeed you must have something to fire the imagination of men and to stir their hearts. You must give them the vision sublime; and that is what The Theosophical Society was founded to do.

We have very definite teachings, which outline in formulated fashion for the Western World of the present day the mysteries of universal being. These are the doctrines of theosophy. Therefore are they scientific to the last degree, religious to the last degree, philosophic to the last degree, because they are an exposition of the nature of things as they are — Truth.

Our teachings and doctrines differ from the dogmas of the churches because we never say: "These are things which you must believe, if you wish to be saved." We say: "These teachings have been tested and proved to be true by the sages and seers of all the ages. You yourself can test them and prove them. That is what we desire you to do. Receive; study; and abide by the results of your study; abide by what your conscience tells you to accept."

We know what would be the result of such examination. We ask

only for a fair hearing; and we are now beginning to have a fair hearing — just beginning. In the past we have had to meet dogmatic prejudices, enmity of all kinds — religious, scientific, social, whatnot? But today we are beginning to be understood. More of this understanding, I think, is due to the wonderful discoveries of modern science than to any other cause that I know; for the modern scientific discoveries are so near to our theosophical doctrines that people have begun to wonder and to ask themselves: "This is very strange; how can it be?"

Well, I will read one more question before I close this afternoon.

"Who and what are the gods so frequently talked about in your lectures? Are they merely developed men?"

I cannot answer this question by a simple Yes or No. If you mean by developed men, the mere growth of the physical body into a god, then I must laugh at your idea. We certainly do not mean that. The gods spoken of in the theosophical philosophy, who are the spiritual beings infilling the cosmos with intelligence and consciousness and power, are entities who in long past aeons of cosmic development were beings like us, human beings. Did I not tell you a little while ago that the core of the core of your being, the heart of the heart of you, was a god, and that the entirety of evolution is the giving out of the latent powers and faculties of this divinity within: the unfolding, the unwrapping, the bringing forth into manifestation of these divine powers and faculties within, of this inner god?

As this evolution takes place through the ages, the evolving soul or entity passes from manhood to supermanhood, from supermanhood to beings still higher which are angelic in character, from these to the gods, and from them to beings still more sublime. But the gods are not merely "developed men" in the modern sense at all. They are beings who in former ages were

like us humans, as I have already said; but they are they who, through the revolving ages, have felt developing within them more and more the out-growing of the faculties within, until finally the outer vestures of mortality dropped away, and the god appeared: a spiritual energy, an incarnation of intelligence, wisdom, compassion, and love. These gods are simply beings who have become, through evolution, their own inner selves and who have passed over the age-long peregrinations of evolving faculty, throwing off from stage to stage vehicles outgrown and outworn, until, having rebecome themselves — their own inmost spiritual essence — they become the flowers of eternity, divine beings.

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[Vol 1, No 17](#)  
[Contents](#)

**No. 17 (January 21, 1930)**

**QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK**

(Lecture delivered October 6, 1929)

I am going to begin the lecture this afternoon with a question that is a very profound one and a very interesting one too. It is one which has been debated for a long, long time by scientific men as well as by religionists and by philosophers.

Here then is the first question:

"Theosophy teaches that the other planets have human inhabitants. Does this imply that their bodies conform to the type that we recognize as human, or may they differ as widely from us as our bodies do from those of the lobsters?"

There is much more involved in this matter than appears in the words of the question. I don't know that theosophy does teach that the other planets are inhabited by "human" beings; I don't think that is what our wonderful philosophy does teach. It does, in fact, teach that all other celestial bodies whatsoever are inhabited by beings appropriate to each one of these celestial spheres, just as this earth is inhabited by beings who have bodies appropriate for life on this earth. That fact seems obvious, and that also is the teaching of theosophy; but to say that the beings living on other planets are human beings — that is, beings such as we are, having human bodies like ours — I am positive that theosophy does not teach this.

I don't think that a man on earth in his physical body, an earth man, would have a very pleasant time of it on the planet Jupiter, for instance, or on the planet Saturn. And I have a notion that if a Saturnian or a Martian or a Jovian came to Earth, he would be



equally unhappy if he came with the body that belonged to the inhabitants of his own planet.

Having said this much, let me enter a caveat, lest what I have said be taken too strictly. It is the teaching of the esoteric part of our philosophy, of the more profound part, that the human race passes a certain period of time on our planet Earth; that it likewise passes a certain period of time on certain other planets of our own solar system. Also that there are in our solar system other planets which in our interplanetary peregrinations we, as a human host, never enter.

It is our theosophical teaching that there are many, many planets, scores of them, in our own solar system, which we humans have no cognizance of and therefore can neither see, nor hear, nor sense in any other way. The reason is that our senses have not been builded through evolution to receive the impressions, the energetic impacts, which otherwise would produce the sense impressions originating in the energies which these other planets send forth into space. That is why we know nothing about the invisible planets. Depending as we do upon our physical sense apparatus, our senses do not interpret to us the vibrations of energy that these, to us invisible, planets send forth.

But all the visible planets of our solar system excepting Uranus and Neptune are what may be called our planetary family: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, the planet for which the Sun stands as a symbol, Venus, Mercury, and the planet for which the Moon stands as a symbol. This is our planetary family, and the inhabitants of these planets resemble each other very closely because they belong more or less to the same evolutionary life-wave.

This does not mean that the inhabitants of Jupiter or of Mars or of Mercury or of Venus, if any at present, have human bodies

proportioned exactly as our human bodies are, or that they are formed of flesh as our human bodies are. On the contrary, the inhabitants of these planets, whatever and whoever they may be, have bodies different from ours but yet approximating to ours somewhat. Whereas the inhabitants of the other planets not belonging to our evolutionary life-wave, to our planetary family, as I have just explained, these beings have bodies which are very different indeed from ours, and may be said to differ more from our human bodies, for instance, than does the lobster from us. I wish I could dwell on this question more at length if time allowed me to do so, for it is a fascinating theme of study.

Question two:

"Theosophy teaches that every point in the universe is pervaded by omnipresent Deity; why then should one place be considered more holy than another? What constitutes a holy place?"

Well, it is true that our teaching is that every point in boundless infinitude is a consciousness-point, a monadic point, and that these consciousness-points or monadic centers are, so to say, the atoms of omnipresent or all-permeant cosmic spirit.

But it is nevertheless our teaching that certain places — and this teaching, as you will see, is quite consonant with Common human experience — are more favorable for spiritual development than are other places. Certain places are indeed such. A man writing a book, for instance, the poet composing some noble poem, the philosopher excogitating some cosmic scheme, the mystic attempting to send his spiritual thought behind and underneath the veils of material existence, would hardly choose for his work the noisy hurly-burly of the marts of men, but would go to the sublime peace and quiet of the mountains where nature seems more harmonious and attuned to what he himself has in his heart

to bring forth.

But it is our teaching, our theosophical teaching, that still more than this can be said. There are certain places where the higher life-forces collect, as it were, where they are concentrated. This is very difficult to describe, but perhaps a hint to you will give you the idea.

There are places where the spiritual vitality, so to say, is running higher and stronger than in certain other places.

For instance, there are certain spots on the globe — and the north pole is one — where there are actual fountains of terrestrial vitality; the real places that the mystics of the medieval times sought and sought in vain, and called the fountains of life. You will remember, of course, the story of Ponce de Leon. Such places as I have just spoken of actually do exist.

But there are places on earth where nature's higher powers and energies — where the cosmic forces of a still higher and more sublime type than mere physical vitality — pour through the earth; and these are the favorite spots where the sages and seers, the Masters of Wisdom, today gather. These are the natural holy places of the earth; and the human being living near, or in, or upon, one of such holy places is bathed in more concentrated cosmic spiritual vitality than in other places.

So what are holy places? They are the places where the forces from the upper realms of the universe find entrance into our sphere of being, into our material sphere. No place can be made holy by any human act — neither by consecrations by prayer nor by ritualistic ceremonies, nor by anything of the sort — but such places are holy only where nature herself has set the stamp of her own handiwork. These are the natural holy places, and such there are indeed. Holy places, therefore, are simply concentrations of

the vitality of the spirit, as contrasted with the gross physical vitality of material existence.

Here is a question of quite a different type:

"Is there any test by which one can make certain that something that springs into the mind comes from the higher nature and is not merely from some desire or colored by some desire?"

I think so. I think it is an obvious test, too, and an easy one. The higher nature is impersonal; it is self-forgetful; it is kind; it is loving; it is pitiful; it is compassionate; it has sublime inspirations. The lower nature is selfish, ingathering, acquisitive for self, hateful often, unforgiving, violent. There is your test.

If what comes wandering into your mind, or is brought hither by your own willpower and aspiration, is such as urges you to do good to your fellow men; which gives you inner peace and comfort: which makes you kindlier: more thoughtful of others: it is from the higher part. There is your test — an easy one; and you can work out the theory easily. This higher impulse may be a desire, but it is not a desire for the personality; it is a desire of the spirit, a desire to grow greater, to be more, to help others, to love, to forget injury, to forgive. There is the test.

Here is another question — a series of questions:

"What is inspiration? Where is its source? Is there anyone daring enough to set a limit to it? Does it come from within or from without, or both? What is the relationship between genius and inspiration?"

I have often answered these questions here; but they are well worth answering again and again and again. Inspiration is the receiving of interior illumination, and such comes only from the

source of illumination, the inner light, which is equivalent to saying the inner spiritual sun or, as we theosophists put it, one's own inner god.

In Occidental countries this source of inspiration, this spiritual sun within, is spoken of by Christian mystical thinkers as the Immanent Christ, the Christ-spirit within. In the Orient it is called by various names. The Buddhists call it the inner Buddha; and theosophists often speak of it as the inner god, for that is what it is indeed. Thence comes inspiration flowing into the lower mind, into the brain-mind, through the intellect and enlightening us, showing us the way, and giving us peace and comfort sublime.

"Is there anyone daring enough to set a limit to it?"

Oh yes! multitudes of people are daring enough to set a limit to anything; but I think the question really means: is there anyone who can confine it? No. Inspiration really has no limits whatsoever. The amount, so to say, to speak in human terms, of inspiration that any one human being can receive depends entirely upon his own receptive power, upon the degree in which he can assimilate the inner light.

But inspiration in itself is limitless, springing from an overflowing fountain, flowing full and free throughout eternity; for ultimately inspiration, which is the vision sublime, the inner light, comes from the very heart of the universe.

"Does inspiration come from within or from without, or both?"

From within. But the outer world can stimulate the percipient mind so that it opens to receive the light. Do you understand me? Have you ever arisen early in the morning, and gone out and watched the sun rise, with the fresh cool breezes sweeping over your brow: watched the glorious sun come up over the mountains of the east? Then you feel that you are receptive and perceptive,

and you feel your whole nature expanding and opening, and oh, the thoughts that pour into the mind! Such is the only way in which outward circumstances, the exterior life, can aid inspiration. Outer nature offers the stimulus, but the life is within, the light is within, the illumination comes from within the core of the core of your being. It is exhaustless. Oh, if men and women only knew who and what they are, what they have within them! Their ignorance is pitiful, simply pitiful!

"What is the relationship between genius and inspiration?"

This question is a very profound one. There is indeed a relationship. Both spring from the god within, from the working of the spiritual forces within the human being. But genius is, so to say, the natural working of the already evolved intermediate nature of the human being. Genius is a certain evolutionary stage which has been attained; whereas inspiration comes flooding into the soul, into the mind, as the "sun comes up like thunder out of China 'cross the sea," as the English poet Kipling puts it. Such is the way in which inspiration comes, as a flood of light.

Genius is accomplishment: that which has been achieved, the inner nature having been so evolved that it has raised itself into a natural harmony, and thus receives light more or less continuously in quiet and steady stream. Inspiration is higher, but it is temporary, though it may be the full flood of the inner light from the god within, one's own spiritual sun.

"Many of us carry away from your Sunday lectures the consciousness of vast and mighty forces of law and order governing the universe, and that all forms of life are contained therein, including, of course, human life.

"Some people seem blind to these forces of law and order, both in their greater and universal aspects, and in their lesser

aspects as governing the essentials of our present human life.

"What is the value to human beings of these laws and of their recognition?"

Well, these laws are; and human beings are their offspring. These laws are the working of the universe, and human beings, as offspring thereof, are cooperators in the great cosmic labor. The value to human beings in recognizing natural truth is in the opening of the inner nature, is in the hastening of the evolution of the soul, is in its quicker blossoming and blooming; for truth is a mighty power and opens many portals of the human mind which otherwise remain closed. There is the value of teaching; there is the value of a teacher, who stimulates, who touches magic parts of your nature, and thus you awaken. Such is the work of the teacher. He can "give" you nothing; but he awakens you to yourselves. Think it over.

There is the splendor and beauty and truth of teaching. There is shown the necessity of a real teacher. And even as you must know yourselves, when your own soul suddenly recognizes a truth, then you have the sense of expanding consciousness, the sense of satisfaction, spiritual and mental, when suddenly you see. "My God! I see!" Such is the value of recognition, which is the beginning, if you will, of the vision sublime.

"Are the influences of psychic forces responsible, at least in part, for such things as exquisite musical composition of a soul-awakening power, as well as, on the other hand, for revolting crimes?"

For the latter, yes, for the psychic forces are not of a high degree. They are the forces of the lower part of the intermediate nature of man, of the lower part of what is commonly called his soul or his mind. But they are not responsible for anything that is noble or

high: they participate therein, however, because when trained they are the vehicle, the body, the carrier, through which the inner light descends from the god within.

This is the case with the average man of our period of evolution; but in the great sages and seers, or in human beings of high evolutionary attainment, the psychic forces have become transmuted or so raised in etherealization and quality that they practically disappear as psychic forces, and become the lower grade of the forces working in the lowest spiritual realms.

A piano is silent unless the master's hand evokes the sublime harmony from it; but even the master's hand is powerless if the keys are wrongly placed or if they lack. Such as the piano also is the psychic nature, to follow the analogical example that we have given. The psychic nature transmits and helps to interpret, when trained and controlled, the visions received from the god within; but when left to themselves these psychic forces bring about not only unrest to the individual, but also frequently they mislead. They are the center of temptation, they are the seat of desire, they are the locality where selfishness and evil frolic and often riot.

"On a previous Sunday you explained the difference, from a theosophical standpoint, between soul and spirit. Do I understand, therefore, that soul is but a non-evolved spirit, and that spirit is an evolved soul, and that both are born out of human experience?"

This question is a trifle difficult to answer briefly because it is rather involved. I know that it is a little difficult to express very profound thoughts briefly in the form of a question, but here, as you see, there are three or four questions under the guise of one. In answer I will say that both spirit and soul are functions of the inner god. Spirit is the vehicle of Divinity. Soul is the vehicle of spirit. Body is the vehicle of soul, for all these three, spirit, soul,



and body, are grades or degrees of energy-substance ranging from the higher downwards, so to say — from spirit to grossest physical, material existence — and through all these the divine ray must penetrate before it can touch the brain-mind.

Soul is born out of human experience, but not from human experience. Human experience is not its parent. Human experience is the method by which the evolving inner entity learns. Do you see the distinction? What is soul? What is spirit? Spirit is the vehicle or garment, the body of light, the body of life, so to say, in which the inner god lives and works and has its being. Therefore spirit is virtually eternal. Soul is a ray of the spirit: a feeble ray working in physical and psychological existence — nevertheless always existing as a ray.

Soul, therefore, is born from spirit — in spirit has its origin — and is not born from human experiences. But it evolves by means of the outer stimuli of human experiences: through experience it grows greater, and ever greater, until finally the ray ascending towards its source rebecomes the spirit from which it came, but no longer is it an unself-conscious god-spark, but a self-conscious god.

All this is high philosophy indeed, but a philosophy which is fascinating, very fascinating. The soul, therefore, is not merely a non-evolved spirit in the usual sense of the word evolution, nor, on the other hand, is spirit an evolved soul in the usual sense of the word evolution. This usual sense of the word evolution is based, however, upon the now moribund evolutionary teachings of systems like that of Charles Darwin of biologic fame. But our teaching of evolution is far deeper, is far grander, and as a function of nature is based fully on Mother Nature herself. Evolution, with us, means the unfolding, the unrolling, the unwrapping, of what is within: an ever fuller and more perfect

expression of inner spiritual fire, of inner spiritual energies. The energy and fire are in essence eternal, expressing themselves through a consciousness-center which we humans call the soul; and the evolution of this soul is merely an ever fuller manifestation of its own interior faculties and powers which repercuss, so to say, or which reproduce their effect, on the physical body. Therefore the physical body likewise grows more perfect under this interior stimulus through the ages.

"I understand that The Theosophical Society is absolutely non-political. But if it teaches spiritual and ethical doctrines, do you not think it your duty to take an interest in politics in order to raise the general ethical standpoint?"

I don't think that this is quite a fair question; for, as individuals, we do take a normal human interest in politics — except myself. I don't like politics at all! I don't like to waste my time. But let me ask you a question: Would you involve yourself in something which is outside your line of activity, merely in order to show somebody that you are doing what you are actually doing? In other words, should we theosophists abandon our theosophical work in order to go and tell the politicians what we think they ought to do, meddling in their business and forgetting our own, abandoning our own line of activity? No!

We theosophists go into the homes through our teaching; we go by our teachings into the hearts of the politicians — if we can — and we shall reach their hearts some day; and our regenerating work is done there, in men's hearts, therefore from within and not from the outside. There is your answer. Change the men, change the hearts of men, and you won't need to talk about refashioning your politics or about elevating your politics. That is what theosophists are doing, or trying to do.

"Which was the higher: Gautama the Buddha, or Jesus called

the Christ?"

Well, I would know what to tell you very clearly if I were in a Buddhist country; but as I am not, I don't desire to offend any kindly Christian friend. It would be too difficult to explain the distinction that theosophists draw between the spiritual stature and understanding of these two sublime men. If we were to say that Gautama the Buddha was the higher of the two, I should tell you truth. If we were to tell you, on the other hand, that Jesus, later called the Christ, was his equal in a certain mystical and spiritual sense, I should also tell you truth. The difference is this: Jesus, called the Christ, was what we call an avatara, which means the descent of a continuous flow of inspiration from a divinity into a human soul and mind — in other words, what is popularly called the "descent" of a god.

But while there is much more to say about the mystery of Jesus, I have no time today to tell it to you, and will attempt merely to tell you in outline what a Buddha is. He is one who through life after life after life after life, through almost innumerable ages, has grown great, and from greatness to a larger greatness, and from that larger greatness to quasi-divinity, thus passing, by his own unaided efforts, towards spiritual perfection.

It was thus that Gautama the Buddha became the very incarnation of wisdom and love — wisdom and love achieved, not bestowed, which latter is an impossibility in nature. Therefore, which is the greater of the two: an avatara or a Buddha? One who has reached divinity through self-directed evolution, as our beloved Katherine Tingley taught, and as do the Buddhas; or one who passes across the spiritual horizon of human history like a flashing glorious meteor, and is then gone? The Buddha will return again and again through the aeons to assist his fellow man to attain divinity.

The Christ Jesus was a single manifestation of a sublime spiritual energy entering the human atmosphere of our earth in order to purify and to raise humanity, but which then was gone.

Nevertheless the influences of the life and of the teachings of that great being called Jesus the Christ still endure and help men; but so do the influences of the life and of the teachings of the noblest sage and seer known to history, the very incarnation of wisdom and love, as I have already said: Gautama, the Awakened One, the Buddha.

Theosophists are not Buddhists — please do not misunderstand me to mean that — but the first duty of a Theosophist is to recognize truth wherever it exists, and to render justice to the religions of his fellow-men. I will read to you one more question before I close my lecture this afternoon:

"It has been often stated by the theosophical Leaders that we shall meet again those of our friends who have gone on. I should like to know if this statement refers to meeting them in devachan — the heaven world — as well as to reunion in other earthly lives. If, as I understand, devachan is the realization of all our highest aspirations, surely one would meet there those who evoked all that was best in us. I hope you will be able to reassure me on this point."

This is a pathetic pleading, in a way: a question framed with a hope that I shall be able to tell this kindly friend that the one whom he or she loved so truly shall be met with again after death. But, O friends, think! What did you love in the one who has passed on? What bound him or her to your heart with bonds that will never, never break? Was it not the beautiful traits of character, the visioning of the light divine in the eyes, the recognition of the working of the spirit through the loved one's face and acts and in his or her thoughts? What was it that you

loved in the one who has passed on? You loved the best that which you can confide in and trust forever.

This best is eternal, for it is a part of the reincarnating ego. You will meet your friend again, and again, and again; for love is a mighty force and will draw you together inevitably. But the devachan or heaven world is but a sleep and a merciful forgetting of everything that caused pain and harrowing care and anxiety in the life last lived on earth. You lie down to sleep and you awaken refreshed and find your loved one at your side. Yea, death is a sleep. It is rest. It is a forgetting of all that cause pain; and it is more: it is a being in touch with love and vision. You are with the one you loved when you die, in all that comprises understanding and bliss. But there is no meeting of body with body.

Pause a moment! Have you not been happier in seeing the lofty sublimity in the heart and soul of him or of her whom you have loved, rather than in sensing the petty personality even of the loved one? Reflect! It is the personality, it is the lower part, which obscures the vision, which cripples the love, which blinds the sight. But in the devachan or heaven world there is peace, sublime truth, rest, lasting vision of the loved one, which passeth the understanding of men in physical life.

And then comes the reawakening into earth-life in the next reincarnation, and your loved one is with you again — really in the same body, and with the same soul and the same mind.

No. 18 (January 28, 1930)

## QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK

(Lecture delivered October 13, 1929)

I am going to talk to you this afternoon by answering some questions that people ask. On other occasions I have talked from this platform in answer to questions that children ask — for children are also people.

As I came into the Temple this afternoon and sat down in my seat, someone handed me a paper. This is the paper:

"This noon, at dinner, I was reading aloud to the boys the program for the afternoon Temple Service. On coming to your name I said: 'By the way, do any of you know what *Gottfried* means?' 'Yes, I know: it means "the peace of God," ' answered one of the young men. 'A piece of God?', queried another boy in surprise."

I do not think that I have ever been called before "a piece of God," but oh! how true this thought is in the spiritual sense, for is not every one of us in our highest parts an imbodyed divinity, a spark of the Central Fire which vivifies the universe, and from which the peace which steals into human hearts and blesses us comes? And it comes because we are "pieces" or atoms, so to speak, of the cosmic spirit, of that central spiritual Fire. The quaint remark which I have just read to you is an example of the wisdom of little children.

Do you know that this thought of the spiritual unity of all beings is at the foundation, is in fact the basis, of every great religion and philosophy of the past? This thought is that the human being has, indeed is, in the core of the core of himself, a spark of the Central

Fire, of that bright Intelligence which infills the universe; and they said, these great sages and seers of olden times, that the pathway to unutterable wisdom and peace and bliss and love is by following that still, small pathway within leading ever farther inwards, upwards, until self is lost in the All-self, and the pilgrim becomes at one with the Divine Fire which vitalizes and infills and guides the universe.

The Mysteries of antiquity were likewise based upon this fundamental fact of being. These Mysteries were methods, taught methods, imbodyed methods, of training by which the unit-individual may become one with the All, nevertheless never losing its individuality, its unitary being. As the Buddhist puts it so beautifully, when this occurs then the "dew-drop slips into the shining sea." What a vision — no wonder it has been called the vision sublime! The whole effort of the initiatory ceremonies of ancient epochs — the whole purpose of the Mysteries of antiquity, the whole purpose of the schools of the great sages and seers — was to teach man to come into his spiritual own; in other words, to become his spiritual self.

Man, know thyself, as the Greek Oracle put it; for in yourself lies all: everything, *everything*! How could it be otherwise? Are we different from, or separate from, or other than the universe? Are we not inseparable parts of it? Think! Therefore, everything that is in the universe is in you, *in potentia* — in potency — or in actual manifestation. Do you see the high dignity that this clothes humanity with? Do you see the vast and frontierless possibilities of achievement? Realize that these conceptions are realities, not merely fine talk, and that every normal human being who once begins to understand them must have not merely his brain fired with the reflection of the vision sublime, but will feel his heart expand so as to take within its sympathies boundless infinitude. Do you see also how morals and ethics are likewise based on this

sublime truth?

Here is a short question preceded by several lines of explanation.

"Rosita Forbes, the famous traveler and friend of the Arabs, met a Ulema, evidently a real spiritual teacher among the Mohammedans, who said the West was not yet ready for the deeper teachings which were yet alive in the Orient, because the Western peoples were not 'single-hearted' enough. What is this desired quality?"

"Single-heartedness" — that idea is nothing new. It is the burthen of the message of all the sages and seers of the ages. Gain the child-heart. Be simple; be not complex. Be upright; be not supine. See! Be not blind. Live in the life eternal, and live not the living death of the beings of matter. Be true, which is simplicity. Be simple, which is truth. Be single-hearted, not double-hearted.

Our Western world has been psychologized for the last one hundred years or more by the now moribund materialism of our fathers, now passing away and more or less dead, but leaving its baleful influence on our minds still; whereas, in the Orient, the mystic flame still lives. Men there still yearn to know and to understand. They understand enough to see that mere speculative theories about the nature around us are not truth, and that the passing phases of human intelligence are not truth; that truth if anything is simple, direct, clear, and that the only way to know anything is to be it. If you have no links of sympathetic self-being with it you cannot understand it.

Open therefore your hearts. Be simple, be true. Look within, ally yourself with your higher energies — which is the same thing as entering behind the veils of outward, material nature, going ever more and more behind or upwards until you see the vision sublime. Then nothing will ever shake you. Nothing can ever



move you. Nothing will ever disturb you. Be single-hearted.

"What is the real nature of the electron of modern chemical, magnetoelectric theory? Is it matter or force, or is it a ray?"

Now, isn't this an example of lovely Occidental logical thinking! First, there is the suggestion contained in this question that matter and force are two things, and that if a thing is neither matter nor force, it is a ray. A ray of what? Do you know that it is an ancient teaching of theosophy that matter and force — or equivalently, spirit and substance — are one fundamentally, two manifestations of the cosmic life, two phases of being, of the cosmic intelligence-life; and therefore that everything that is, whether it is in the matter phase or in the energy phase, is but passing through a temporary part of the long evolutionary journey of the monadic center — which monads are the building blocks of the universe, and which monads are now manifesting in and indeed compose the spirit phase, and which at other times manifest in and indeed compose the matter phase?

But what is a ray? If it is neither force nor matter, what then is it? If it has no substance, if it has no substantiality on the one hand, and if it is not energetic on the other hand — in short, if it is neither force nor substance — what is it? Obviously it is matter, substance, just as everything else is, and also obviously it is energetic just as everything else is. If it were neither matter nor force, it could have no existence whether as a ray or otherwise. All this is quite true, because force is merely etherealized matter or, as theosophists prefer to say, matter is merely crystallized force, one of the two fundamental phases or events of the cosmic intelligence.

I have spoken about this subject in our Temple of Peace time and time and time again; I have talked on this subject and I have explained it! So you will forgive me if I do not pause too long over

it this afternoon.

But what, then, is the electron? It must be matter; otherwise it could not affect matter, could have no relations with matter. It must also be energy or force; otherwise it would be without movement, without possibility of self-expression in its own characteristic and individual way. It is, therefore, both energy and matter; but is it a "ray"? A ray of what? Calling a thing a ray is saying nothing at all.

Let me read to you in this connection an extract, and a very apt and appropriate one, that I found in an English newspaper, *The Observer*, of London, of the issue of September 15, 1929:

"The theory that hydrogen was not an indivisible element, as hitherto supposed, but a compound, had been known in technical circles for some months, but, like most theories of the kind, had taken time to percolate through to the public lecture-room. It has an important bearing on the new wave-mechanics, and tended to confirm the recent belief that the electron, and through it the universe, resolved itself ultimately into 'rays,' rather than 'matter.'"

This is a statement of a very eminent British astronomer, Sir James Jeans. I would like now to ask: if it is a ray, but if it is not matter, what is it? If it has no substance, no substantiality, what is it? Energy? What is energy? According to the dictum of the latest modern science it is matter, or, as theosophists say, matter is concentered or crystallized energies, energy and matter being two sides of the same thing.

That conception is one fertile viewpoint that Dr. Albert Einstein, directly or indirectly, has restored to the attention of the thinking minds of the modern Occident. He has brought forth an old conception of the theosophical philosophy, known for ages: and

that is, that there are no "absolutes" in the universe. People used to think that there was something called absolute matter on the one hand, and something else called absolute force on the other hand, and that they were quite different things and yet that they interlocked and interworked and interacted. How all this was nobody knew and nobody could ever explain. But, said Einstein, there are no such absolutes, or at any rate they could not be proved. And this is quite true, for matter and energy, or spirit and substance, are two sides of the same thing, and that is just what we theosophists proclaim.

From the theosophical standpoint an electron is, of course, matter — but by no means necessarily the gross, merely physical matter of our gross physical senses. Therefore an electron is also force; it is likewise a ray, because it is a manifested expression in a certain direction of matter and force. The electron also is matter in one of its lowest subdivisions; it is energy in one of energy's lowest subdivisions also. It is a ray, because it is the ultimate material point of a spiritual monad, of a spiritual consciousness-center, of a spiritual consciousness-life-entity.

Every entity and every thing in the universe is a learning thing: every entity therefore is on its upward evolutionary way. The universe is divisible into numberless hosts of beings in all phases of evolutionary progress: endless hierarchies of beings and things and entities, graded in steps and stages; and the same principle prevails in similar fashion on our earth.

Are all men identical? Are there not good men, better men, and best men; small men, tall men, all kinds of men? Do we not see diversity and individuality and the characteristics that follow individuality in all manifested beings? There are multitudinous families of different stocks, composed of individuals, each one on its upward evolutionary pathway: growing, learning, evolving,

which means unwrapping, unrolling, what is within, and manifesting that within as the ages pass, thus bringing out spirit from the enshrouding veils of matter — which matter is but spirit in another of its phases.

Such therefore is an electron: the tip or end of a spiritual ray working in matter and manifesting as an electron, a point of negative electricity as the modern scientific chemists tell us is the case. As regards this modern chemical terminology, theosophists make no particular comment. We have no objection to that terminology. A name is merely a name; and electricity is as good as any other name. Get the idea that behind this electron there is vitality: a vital ray streaming from the heart of a spiritual monad which is the core of the core of the entity, manifesting at this point of its long evolutionary journey, and undergoing experience in its electronic phase — the electron therefore is an "event."

We human beings in our higher parts are therefore also monads, manifesting as human beings, and the human being obviously is more advanced in evolution than is the electron. Why should an electron be? What is it? Why is it?

Again, why is a man here as a man? By chance, or as the result of previous evolution? Do you like the word chance? I do not, because I am not going to cheat myself with words. Chance means nothing to me. I am simply fooling myself if I use words as counters, meaning nothing in particular, and only providing a screen with which I may veil my own ignorance. No! Instinct, logic, intellectual faculties, my spiritual intuition, tell me that the characteristic of individuality is in the background of everything that is, and is the cause of the individual appearance of things, and the cause of the showing forth of any entity's individual characteristics.

Fundamentally, man and the electron are the same. The

difference is that man is more advanced in evolution than is the electron. Man is higher than the beast; the beast is higher than the plant; the plant is higher than the mineral.

Here is a rather touching question that has been sent in to me for answer:

"Your lecture on Sunday afternoon revived certain thoughts that I have pondered upon from time to time. These are in regard to the re-attraction of friends in future incarnations. As I understand it, people who are far along the path have the choice of coming back more often in order to help humanity. Speaking from a pupil's point of view, he is sometimes strongly attached to his teacher.

"Question A: Though he is less advanced, can he if he loves his teacher hard enough, come back as often as his teacher does, or must he skip a few possibilities of again working with his teacher?

"Question B: Is there a final separation?"

It is the teaching of the ancient wisdom-religion, today called theosophy, that love is a mighty power; that it is, so to say, the very cement of the universe, linking everything to everything else; that love is eternal in essence, and that if this love be impersonal, unselfish — therefore not limited — it can span the gap which men call death and reach out over the so-called abyss to draw one who loved together with the other who loved.

It is our teaching that the bond between teacher and pupil is a very high one, a very holy one. It is based on an impersonal love. To use our own technical theosophical phrasing, a pupil should love his teacher more than his mother or than his father, more than wife or son, or daughter, or friend of his heart. And why? Because, for instance, while the parents give to the pupil his body,

the teacher gives to him his soul, because the teacher awakens that soul.

Yes, impersonal devotion of that type will bring the pupil back into companionship with the teacher whom he loved, if his love be impersonal and purely without individual thought for personal gain. Whether this love can so work, in view of the law of karma — that is, the law of cause and effect operating everywhere in natural being — that the pupil can come back into earth-life with every incarnation of his teacher into earth-life, is something that I would not like to answer offhand, because it is perhaps too much to affirm positively; but assuredly such a love will bring teacher and pupil together again and again and again, and the bond between them will grow ever stronger.

"Is there a final separation?"

Never, never; for love is the very cement of the universe. It is the great attractive power which links thing to thing, human heart to human heart; and the higher that one goes in evolution, the closer does love enwrap its tendrils through all the fiber of one's being; or, to change the figure of speech, the more does the human heart expand with love, until finally it embraces in its folds all the universe, so that one comes to love all things both great and small, without distinction of place or time. Oh! the blessedness of this feeling, of this realization! It is divine; for love, impersonal love, is divine!

Are there any Christians here present this afternoon? If so, I hope that they will not be offended with the following question and my answer to it. It is one of the questions that were sent in to me, and in simple courtesy I feel bound to answer it.

"Why are the Christian nations whose 'God is love' the most warlike?"

Well, I think that they are the most warlike at the present time. But I don't think that the Christian nations — a theosophist must be just — are at present more warlike than other certain races of men or nations have been in the past. The tread of the legions of Rome shook the civilized world at one time, and so did the thunder of the chariots of the Egyptians and of the Assyrians shake the civilizations of their respective ages. A nation is warlike in a certain phase of its evolutionary existence, coming to pass in what theosophists call the fourth period of its life; but that phase of its existence will be followed by phases of peace.

Look at the history of individual nations; look at the history of Spain, of Portugal, of France, of Italy, and of other countries of the European medieval times. Look at the history of Great Britain today. In all these you will find a period of growth, a period of national expansion, followed by the instinct to war and battle for the preservation and for the larger expansion of the national ideals — held up to the little children of the time as something which it is right and even holy to follow. Then comes a time, brought about perhaps by the very unwieldy weight of the national conquests, when peace works its holy magic into the national heart, and then men arise and preach peace! They see that in peace is a stronger power cementing men together than is the adding of more to the already great burden of responsibility that the nation then carries. There is the psychology of it all; but it all happens according to cyclic law, and nature rights wrongs always.

I don't think that the Christian nations are more warlike today, merely because they are passing through that particular phase of their national existence, than were the Romans of old, or than were the Assyrians, or the Egyptians, or than were the Chinese in their period of battle and warlike fever.

Yes, the God of the Christians is proclaimed to be a God of love; and yet in his name holocausts of victims have been offered to a God of hate.

But outside of all national religions or racial religious peoples, let us turn in thought a moment to RELIGION *per se*, which is a very different thing from any particular belief that may be followed. Oh, blessed, blessed religion which is beyond and above all human inventions and man-made creeds! When I think of the religion of Gautama the Buddha, in whose name never a drop of blood has been shed, never a letter of hatred conceived in the spirit of dogmatic intolerance has been written, then I see for that great religion a destiny sublime.

But theosophists are not Buddhists. We are, however, just in our judgment of our fellow men; or we try to be just.

Here is a very interesting question: as a matter of fact, a series of four questions, of which I will answer two this afternoon.

"Why is the human stock represented by only one type or species, so to speak, and the animal and vegetable stocks, etc., represented by such a variety of strains?"

This question was called forth, I take it, by the fact of the great modern interest in the so-called theory of evolution. Now, theosophists are evolutionists through and through and through, but we are not Darwinists nor neo-Darwinists, nor Lamarckians nor neo-Lamarckians. We do not believe that any thing or any entity, merely by some peculiar working or magic of nature — what is nature, by the way? — automatically becomes something else. I cannot conceive of that as a fact of nature. I can conceive only of growth, of becoming, of one thing self-growing into something nobler; but it is utterly impossible for me logically to conceive of a pile of metal and ivory and pots of paint and cloth



and wood, and so forth, "evolving" into a piano! If there is not an urging intelligence, a driving intelligent force, behind the energies working through the beings of the earth, and indeed of the universe, what is there behind entities and things which drives them forward from imperfection to relative perfection, from the less to the greater? Again, what is this nature that we hear so much about that originates all these wonderful things? Cannot you see that nature is a word merely expressing an abstraction of thought?

If you think that you know, then tell me what nature is? Why, you say, it is the sun and the stars and the earth and we and other things, and bodies and entities and so forth. Well, that is all right as series or a list of names; but do not you see that you are merely giving a list of names of beings and things? What is this nature that is supposed to bring forth all these things and to perfect them, according to the modern scientific idea? Men have made out of a mental abstraction a creative entity, and they called it nature, forgetting that nature thus conceived is but a mental abstraction, and that there is no such thing *per se*.

But there are entities — innumerable hosts of them — which are all growing beings, growing and developing and evolving from the impulses of the life within, each one evolving, throwing forth, unwrapping, what is within: showing more and more of the divine powers and faculties and energies which form the core of the core, the heart of the heart, of the god within. And the more this god within unfolds its faculties and powers, the more does the entity in which these god-energies work become perfect through evolution.

Evolution, therefore, is a ceaseless striving or growth towards an ever-receding goal of perfection, because what we humans think is perfection is to the gods very, very great imperfection.

Perfection and imperfection are relative like everything else, and are not absolutes.

The human beings of the earth compose but one stock comprising a few species, if you like: at any rate a single stock called humanity. For a number of reasons which I have set forth in other lectures delivered here in our Temple of Peace and which have appeared in our monthly magazine *The Theosophical Path*, I have shown that the human stock is the oldest on earth, instead of the last and therefore the youngest, as modern science proclaims.

What it is customary sometimes to call stocks of animate and inanimate entities, theosophists call evolving *life-waves*, meaning by this term a group or family of entities more or less in the same stage of evolution, of unfolding; evolving together, understanding and knowing each other, attracted together, and thus forming a group or family, or a class, or an order — use whatever word you may like. Our own present human stock which theosophists call the human kingdom, being the primordial and therefore the oldest stock, has advanced the farthest in evolutionary development.

What are these many stocks of the beasts and of the vegetables? They are less evolved than are the human stock; but each one of such stocks represents an evolving *life-wave* such as is our own human but more progressed stock.

There is a certain egoism in the idea that we, because we are humans and the most advanced, are quite different from the other things of the universe. Tell me why that should or could be so! We are not different in essence. The energies that play in and through our bodies are the same energies that play elsewhere in and through boundless infinitude; and the matter of which our bodies are composed, or the substance of which our inner natures are composed, is the same matter and the same substance which

make all other entities and beings to be vehicles through which pass the divine rays streaming from the spiritual Fire of the universe.

Let us forget our human egoism in considering ourselves unique in the universe; and in place of this egoism let us remember that we are one in essence with all that is, and therefore are linked in closest relationships with everything else. Let us invert our viewpoint.

Suppose, for instance, that the ox or the turtle or the serpent separated themselves from the rest of the universe and said: Why is it that we are one stock, and there are so many other stocks inferior to us? What would the other stocks of animate and inanimate entities have to say in answer, or what might they be conceived to say in answer?

We humans are simply the most evolved of the life-waves on our earth only. We humans are growing towards angelhood, godhood, and we have developed from our inferior human selves — not from the beasts, but from our inferior human selves — as is exemplified in the individual when the microscopic human life-germ grows or evolves to the full stature of a six-foot man, developing his faculties as his body matures and can express the powers and faculties of the god within, in some degree at least.

Just in a similar way have we humans grown through the ages of the past from our inferior selves, our less evolved selves; and these inferior selves or bodies we have used as steppingstones, climbing towards higher things. In an identical fashion our present humanity is merely a stepping-stone, so to say, on which, through which, by means of which, we humans are now climbing to godhood, progressively in ever fuller measure manifesting the god within.

(2) "The lower we go in the scale of evolution the greater is the variety found in the life-stocks. When we go higher than the present human stock, will the evolved human gods of that period have still less variety among them than the present men have?"

This is a very interesting question. "When we go higher than the present human stock, will the evolved human gods of that future period have still less variety among them than the present men have?" Evidently the idea here is that the many multitudes of minerals have given birth through evolution to the smaller number of multitudes of vegetables, which have given birth through evolution to a still smaller number of animal stocks, which have given birth through evolution to our unique stock, human beings.

That is not our teaching. There is not a single fact in nature today that proves it: not one fact in modern science that proves it. All nature indeed proves evolution, but not necessarily the theories of men as to how evolution works.

Well, in answer to this question, I should say that the evolved humans of the far distant future, who will then be approaching divinity, will indeed have less physical or material variety than they have now; but, on the other hand, they will be approaching a larger increase in manifestation, in every sense of the word, of the spiritual individuality within; in other words, our individualities will grow greater and our physical differences melt away and practically disappear. Nature is tending all that way so far as we humans are concerned.

In other words, the inner god of each evolving entity will, as time passes, expand more and more its manifestation through the physical vehicle, so that the individuality — all that makes man man, the spiritual and intellectual powers — will manifest in ever

greater measure, and thus the human being will grow grander and grander. But the differences of body will grow fewer and fewer; so that, instead of there being several varieties of man, of human man-gods then, as there are now several varieties of men — black and brown and pink and mixed — there will be one humanity ruling the earth like gods and walking like gods, thinking like gods, living and loving like gods. Greater variety in individuality, less variety in body, for the reason that all shall have more fully evolved towards the point of expressing the godhood innate in all.

"When I recollect a scene of my childhood days, do I revive a record from any private collection of memories, or do I avail myself of the general register of memories stored up in the astral light?"

I think in answer to this question that I should say that the individual revives a record, re-collects, re-members, from his own mental storehouse, and does not see the record in the astral light. The astral light is nature's record, for, as even our scientists of today will tell you, not a shadow falls on a wall which is not indelibly registered there forever. Practically ninety-nine percent, I should say, of the recollections and of the memories that pass through the brain come from the soul-record within.

"What do you think is the future of Christianity?"

Really, I think that some of these questions are a little unkind. I don't want to hurt anyone's feelings, and yet I don't like to ignore an honest question; so I will do my best to answer it kindly. My father was a Christian clergyman, and I remember how sincere he was in his beliefs. I never was a Christian. But of course that is merely a matter of what was, has been, and is, my own belief. I believe that the future of Christianity will be to become more and more theosophical.

I believe I see the time in the future, when the churches — a very different thing from theological Christianity, by the way — when the churches will be theosophical lecture halls, whither thinking men and women will flock to hear able Theosophical lecturers teach. That is what I think will be the future of Christianity. Our modern Theosophical Movement is an infant yet, is a mere babe. We have hardly begun to walk. But wait until we begin to run!

Here is a beautiful question with which I will close today:

"If man is an incarnate god and possesses divine powers and faculties, why are we not better than we actually are? If we were gods we would surely live as such. What is it in us that inhibits the action of the inner god, and how can it be overcome? I ask this supplementary question because, when listening to you, I reproach myself for not being better than I am."

This kindly friend has asked a question which I believe that many of you have, must have, asked. Man is indeed not at present an incarnate god; but is the manifestation, imperfect as yet — to be perfected in future aeons — of a god seeking incarnation of its energies. The inner god overshadows, inspires, invigorates: is the core of the core of us and the heart of the heart of us; but man is not yet an incarnate god. That is why we do not think and act and live and walk the earth as gods. But we shall do so in the far distant aeons of the future.

I would like to know the vain and egoistic mind who would place limits to the possibility of evolution and who would say: "Thus far and no farther!" Evolution is endless; time has neither beginning nor end. We are children of the universe, and our pathway in progress, in growth, is as endless as time; and our field of action, the theater of our efforts, and the majestic plays — cosmic in

character — that we shall put on the stage in future times, are in the fields of space, of boundless infinitudes.

"What is it in us that inhibits the action of the inner god, and how can it be overcome?"

I will tell you. Personality — that's all, and all the evils that flow forth from personality. I do not mean individuality, which is godhood, the indivisible part of us, deathless and immortal, which tastes never of death nor of decay — but personality: the small, mean, petty, restricted, limited things which form a close and compact atmosphere around our being, and which scarcely anything except immortal love can ever penetrate. Personality, selfishness, egoism — these are the things which inhibit the manifestation of the divine energies within us. These it is which cripple men, so that men do not give full expression even to the powers and faculties that they now have.

Great men are great through the working of the god within. It is this working which gives them intuition, which gives them light, which illumines their souls; and the recognition of this truth is the first step. In time you shall see the vision sublime.

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[Vol 1, No 19](#)  
[Contents](#)

**No. 19 (February 4, 1930)**

**QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK**

(Lecture delivered October 20, 1929)

The first question that I shall try to answer this afternoon is about eating — not, perhaps, a very spiritual subject to talk about, but at least to most people it is an interesting one; and as we all know that human beings in general eat too much, perhaps what I say may have some slight beneficial effect in reducing your grocery bills. The question came to me as follows:

"It always seems to me that if we could remember when eating to eat to our higher selves, it would have a great regenerative effect on our own lives and on the lives of other people. Surely, eating is or ought to be a sacred function. There is so much time spent on the preparation of food and on the partaking thereof, that it appears to me, as most of us act now, it is, like the tide, a vast force going to waste. I would be glad of a few words from you on the subject."

Well, I agree with the writer. I think that eating is a dignified function when properly done; and, moreover, that it is a function which should be pursued with due regard to the conventionalities of the soul as well as with due regard to the conventionalities of social practice. I know that at home, where I was brought up, the time of eating, or meal time, was always considered to be as much a philosophical banquet as it was a feeding of the body; and I think that in most European countries this tradition derived to us from the Greeks and Romans still prevails.

People there do not, as too often happens in this our own beloved land, merely stoke their bodies full of so much food fuel in order



to keep them going; but educated Europeans make of meal time a period of intellectual pleasure, of which the physical eating of food is a mere concomitant.

I think that this idea of a spiritual and intellectual banquet of the mind taking place coincidentally with the feeding of the body, has a very good effect on the body. The digestion is undoubtedly improved. One is also inclined to eat less than otherwise one is inclined to do. And furthermore, meal time, instead of becoming a period of hurried repast, becomes a delightful hour, an hour of friendly intercourse, where mind may meet mind on fields of mutual interest.

I have spoken of the tradition derived to us from the Greeks and Romans; and it is true that such is the fact. But of course I do not refer to the habits of gluttony into which the Greeks and Romans in the later periods fell. Yet we moderns cannot reproach them very much on that score. I think that on the whole we also eat as much, if not more, than they did, although perhaps not so much at one meal time. In some European countries today, people partake of five meals during the twenty-four hours, and I think that this is much more than is necessary.

Now, there is a more mystical side to this question of taking food. I mean that food partaken of in the right spirit and in an atmosphere of friendly social intercourse enters the body as nutriment in a different manner from what the food partaken of in other fashions does. Finer atoms are drawn from the food, and taken into the body. More ethereal elements, so to speak — a more ethereal nutriment — is inbuilt into the physical vehicle. Although this statement is quite unscientific, perhaps, nevertheless calling it unscientific is not saying anything of worth at all; because our science, splendid as it is, is yet a baby and is learning much from day to day, and just like a growing child

abandons in one year what five years previously was the creed of the most eminent scientific circles of that time.

The next question to be answered is a question regarding hypnotism. This question enclosed a clipping taken from a newspaper — an advertisement purporting to teach you how to hypnotize yourself and other people, and things like that; and also this advertisement specifies certain acts which these people undertake to teach you how to do for a price, such as, for instance, how to make a person's hands stick to a table. I don't know that there is anything particularly fine or elevating in acts of this kind. I think that there is not. I think that it is rather contemptible to desire to make somebody else's hands stick to a table. I don't see anything high-minded or noble-souled in it. Such an advertisement certainly would not attract me, and I should be inclined, if I received a letter soliciting patronage of that kind, to put it into the hands of a police officer.

Furthermore, I am not a thief — a psychological thief. I don't want to steal somebody else's thought by hypnotizing him, or to mulct him of sums of money that I may be able to squeeze from his pocket by giving him promises as to how to do this or that or the other thing upon someone else.

The question is:

"What light does theosophy throw on this and other kindred dangerous subjects mentioned in this item?"

Well, the light that it throws is very great. First, it shows the danger of these psychological practices — dangers moral and otherwise. It shows the contemptible nature of the practice of a species of psychic thievery. It shows the impositions, as I believe them to be, that are practiced on an unsuspecting public merely because that public is so prone to believe what it sees printed in

the newspapers or advertised for a price. This itself is a species of psychologization against which every man of common sense is always on the alert.

Do you ever find advertisements telling you how to love impersonally and to forgive; how to conquer yourself and your own weaknesses; to help your fellows to do the things which are lasting and high, noble and true; or, again, suggesting methods of splendid and glorious self-sacrifice for the benefit of others? Never. These things cannot be boughten for a price because they belong to the spirit and the soul of man. But you may have them, if you will, without price; for they are the teachings of the ancient seers and sages of the ages and are to be had for the asking, for they are as free — I was going to say as the air we breathe, but in our days even the air is beginning to cost us something.

Hypnotism, psychologization, is not only a dangerous practice on others, but on yourself, and it is likewise in my view a cowardly practice. To me it is a contemptible act. I think that the man or the woman who would study in order to find out how to make another human being's hands stick to a table, is a fit candidate for a lunatic asylum. He lacks a complete ethical sense, to say nothing of the sense of the proprieties, of decency, of high and generous feeling, of the instinct of human brotherhood. Think it over. Such is my answer!

Here is another question containing a certain pathos:

"When we are old, past seventy years of age, and seem to live in the wants and desires of this body only, where is the soul? Is it slowly withdrawing, or covered up with desires, or is it hovering over us like the guardian angel of small children?"

"I am sure the reason why so many young folk put their old folk in homes for them (the old people) lies in your solution of

it. [?!]

"Is there a way for us who are not so old, fifty or so, to avoid that kind of old age? What is its cause? Do we have to be old in that way?"

No. In the first place, there are many questions involved here, and the pathos of the main thought here has touched me deeply. I will tell you what the ancient wisdom has to say about old age, an answer which this questioner intuitively has discovered. For a certain period of time, dependent upon the interval preceding death, the soul is withdrawing from the aged body. This accounts for the so-called breakdown of the physical vehicle, for the so-called advance in the symptoms and physical phenomena of old age. But such withdrawal of the soul, in the normal course, is peaceful and quiet, and is nature's way of making death come as a quiet blessing of peace and harmony.

Death is birth, *birth*; and instead of the wrench that there actually is in the case of youth when death comes, death to our old ones comes in peace and quiet, stealing like an angel of mercy into their being, releasing the bonds binding the soul to its vehicle of flesh; and the passage is as quiet and gentle as the coming of the twilight preceding night, and it is a blessed sleep.

But sometimes, when the life has been lived in gross physical desires — when, so to say, the bonds uniting the soul to the body have been so riveted into the vehicle of flesh by self-indulgence in the gross appetites — then even in age death is painful; for the natural withdrawal of the soul has not taken place, or at least to such a large degree, nor is the physical age attained so great before death finally comes.

Yes, any human being can avoid a painful old age, or at least very largely modify its troubles; and this can be attained by living

humanely, by living humanly, that is all: living just like men, living in your higher self, instead of idealizing the wants and desires of your bodies. Then old age comes stealing upon you, bringing blessings with it, and increase in all the higher faculties and powers; so that the approach of old age is vibrant with the harmonies of another world, and beautiful with its visions of truth and glory.

No, these are not poetical words. They are words painting actualities. Old age is a blessing, if the previous life has been lived right. It brings with it things otherwise unattainable, such as an expansion of consciousness which youth knows nothing of. It brings with it increased intellectual power which, because of its very reach, the undeveloped person, the youth, the man of middle age, does not understand, and therefore ascribes to the vague generalizations of granddaddy. Granddaddy in such circumstances is nearer the truth and sees more than does the still unseeing eye of the youth. That is a fact. A fine old age brings an expansion of soul, not only of the intellect, but of the spiritual consciousness and its vision.

A man or a woman who has lived aright, who has lived cleanly, and thought highly, as age comes on him and the body weakens and the physical veils thin, sees, and seeing knows. His vision passes behind the veils of matter, for he is slowly becoming acquainted with the mysteries beyond the veil which men call death. Old age is nothing to fear. It is a blessing. It is a splendor seen as through a veil, of the life beyond, the higher life, the life in which the higher incarnating ego lives, literally.

Shadows: coming events casting their shadows before, the shadows of the splendor to be — such is a fine old age! No, these are not poetic rhapsodies; they are statements of actual facts; and if you study the old people whom you know, study them with

sympathy, you younger people, you will see and understand.

Here is a question of another type:

"I have attended many of your interesting lectures on Sunday afternoons, and was particularly attracted by your lectures on Questions that Children Ask. As a teacher of children I have come up against this problem:

"In their better moments children often express high thoughts both in writing and speech, and show a real, sincere enthusiasm for the more lofty things in life. But at times, in their everyday affairs, they do not hold to these higher things, or seem to care anything about them, and forget to make any attempt to put them into practice.

*"This is my question:* Should it be pointed out to the children that *until* they can 'live up to their high ideals,' and put these things into practice, they are being hypocritical by expressing them in mere words; in other words, they are not 'practicing what they preach'?

"Should they, on the other hand, not be made to feel that even if they are not strong enough to hold to their high principles, the more they can dwell on them in their better moments, the easier will it be to make them a power for good in their times of difficulty?"

I think that there is a slight confusion here. This questioner has a very kindly heart, is very earnest and sincere. I certainly think it proper to tell a child that merely preaching beautiful things, and thereby thinking to hide the doing of things of another type, is hypocrisy. Tell children the truth. And furthermore, as a teacher, you yourself set the example, which the children will follow, because a child learns infinitely more by what it sees its elders do, than by any amount of mere talking to it.

But never tell a child that it is not to think of noble and high things, and that it is not to voice these thoughts — that it is not to think of beautiful things, of highly ethical things. On the contrary, teach your children to let their minds dwell on these things, to cultivate them as thoughts; encourage them in this line; teach your children to express in words their thoughts along these lines; but also tell them sincerely to live what they preach. That is all there is to it.

Poor children! When they see around them every day in the week their elders doing just what their elders tell the children not to do! There is the difficulty. A child's impressionable mind, so sensitive, so quick to catch anything that is hypocritical in its teachers, parents, elders, finally learns to disbelieve what it is told when it sees its teachers acting contrary to their own precepts. Never, never, never cripple a child's higher nature by telling it not to think and not to practice beautiful things; and never forbid it to voice these thoughts.

On the contrary, lead these thoughts into verbal expression and try to teach the child to practice what it preaches. Teach it the heroic aspect of this, and finally the child will grow to love such actions and be proud of doing them. Teach your children to be proud of voicing high and noble thoughts. Flaunt — as I often say — flaunt your colors in the face of the sun. Be courageous and stand up for what you believe in; and then your children will do so likewise, and will be proud of it. Let your children feel that you yourself believe in what you teach, and that you are trying to practice it, and your children will follow suit. Never let them see you a hypocrite, teaching one thing and living the opposite! They will find it out very quickly indeed and shame you to your face!

"Please interpret the quotation: 'My son, the whistle does not pull the train.'"

When I got this question and read it for the first time, I said to myself: What next! And then my eye caught the kindly sentence following, written in faint pencil. "Do not misunderstand me. I do not imply that you are the whistle."

I never heard this quotation before, but I think it is a very apt one. "My son, the whistle does not pull the train." I have not had time to give to it the thought that I would like to, but I think that its meaning is that it is not the man who makes the most noise who accomplishes the most in action. *Toot, toot, toot*, as we used to say at home when I was a little boy, "blowing your own horn." It is usually the quiet man, the man who talks the least, who does the most; but sometimes the man who talks the least also whistles! It lets off energy which other men let off in useless talk. The whistle is thus merely significant of something greater than what is moving into operation, or trying to do so.

Here is another question:

"How do drugs or narcotics affect the physical body, the soul, the spirit, of man? How do the early cravings originate? What is the best way to combat this growing evil?"

It is an evil, and a rapidly growing one. In answer to the first question, our wonderful theosophical teachings show us that drugs or narcotics do not affect the spirit of man at all. The spirit of man is the inner sun and shines upon the soul, somewhat as our own physical day-star does upon earth. But the soul is the intermediate nature of the human being, which is bound into the body, so to say, or more accurately is conjoined to it by psychic bonds, riveted to it, and therefore suffers by the reaction that ensues when the physical body is in process of being ruined; and ruin of the physical body is the effect of constant use of narcotics or baneful drugs.



"How do the early cravings originate?" In habit, in use, like everything else, just as all other cravings do. It becomes a hunger. That is all there is to it. It becomes a habit. "What is the best way to conquer this growing evil?" Expose it for just what it is. Tear the veil from the falsehoods that are published about these things. Let in the light.

Here is another question:

"It is said that an occultist of high development has so attuned his consciousness to the harmony of the inner planes, that 'the music of the spheres' is, for him, a vivid and continuous reality. Does this experience of the cosmic harmony, the voice of the silence, spoil his appreciation for the only form of music that we know — the sounds produced by musicians?"

Not at all. This music of the spheres is a fact. The Pythagoreans were right. Sound is the production, or rather one of the phenomena, of the movement of material things, and actually there is not a movement of any particle of matter, small or great, which is not accompanied by a sound which we could hear had we the ears attuned to receive. But some of these sounds are too great, some of them are too small, for our gross physical sense apparatus to perceive; and so great is the sound produced by the moving spheres in their courses, a sound so great and majestic, that we consciously hear nothing at all of it.

Nevertheless, the vibrations are there, and an occultist, one whose inner nature is far advanced, and whose inner sense is developed, awakened, so to speak, perceives the music of the spheres as the voice of the silence. He perceives it as vibrations by his inner sense; and this harmony attunes even his physical ear — because his soul itself is so attuned — attunes even his physical ear, so that the music produced by men on physical instruments is understood and interpreted by him with a keener pleasure and

a more vivid sense.

Here is a question belonging to Greek philosophy. I will answer it very shortly, very briefly, because I do not know how many of you have studied the philosophy of the great Greek, Aristotle. But I like to answer all the questions that come to me. It takes all kinds of people to make a world, and whether one is interested in the value of knowing how to eat, or how to understand a Greek philosopher, is perhaps all one in the last analysis. Here is the question:

"What is Aristotle's 'entelechy'?"

"Entelechy" is a word used by Aristotle to signify the origin of a thing, the principle of its coming into being: what the Stoics called its seed, its ultimate root, the cause of it. It has been misinterpreted in modern European philosophy to mean the resultant of a thing. For instance, I have seen it stated that the Aristotelean entelechy meant that the soul was the entelechy of the body, signifying that the soul was the resultant of perfect bodily functioning; and the exact reverse is the truth, and the exact reverse was Aristotle's meaning, to wit, that the body is the resultant of the functioning of the entelech of man, the cause, the seed, the spirit-soul.

Entelechy in Aristotle's philosophy, therefore, means the principle of a thing, the root of it, its seed, that which gave it birth, or produced it. In the case of man, it is what theosophists call the monadic essence, the higher ego if you like.

"Can the continuous identity of the ego be explained?"

It can. It would not be an ego unless its identity were continuous. The ego is itself, and is one of the phenomena of the root-cause of all manifestation, which is consciousness: what the ancient mystics of Hindustan called Brahman, the original manifestor of

life, of matter, of all things, the cosmic self of which every human being is a ray; and this ray, manifesting in a physical vehicle, forms the characteristics which the physical vehicle manifests as differentiating it from the characteristics which another physical vehicle, manifesting another ray, manifests — and this is individuality.

The ego, the continuity of the ego, is inherent in itself. There is no other explanation, because that is sufficient. The root of the ego is consciousness, and when this consciousness manifests as a ray in matter through a vehicle, it becomes an ego, and self-consciousness is the root-thing of the universe, and is ever-enduring. The identity of the ego is therefore continuous.

"What do you mean by 'superhuman'?"

This question seems simple enough, and the answer is: anything which is above ordinary humanity. Please note, however, that it does not mean supernatural at all, but superhuman. Nor is it quite the same thing as the "superman" of the German philosopher Nietzsche. That is a particular case of human arrogance, I think, which does not apply to anything that is above ordinary humanity that I should define as being superhuman.

"Are there any superhuman qualities?"

Oh! many of them: self-sacrifice, impersonal love, impersonal devotion at whatever cost to the individual. These are superhuman, and yet humans manifest them, and other humans recognize their greatness and their beauty; and, thank the immortal gods, great men love them and great women love them too. There are many such qualities which are the reflection of the working of the immortal god in every human being. These are superhuman qualities. And oh, how our human heart warms under the life-giving rays of inspiration when we read of the

noble deeds of some superhuman being — superhuman for the time! How a little child loves to read about the deeds of the heroes!

Do you think that all this just happens so? No! I tell you that it is from a hunger of the human heart, for the human heart loves greatness, loves grandeur, loves all things sublime and high, loves the superhuman qualities.

"What exactly are the Masters or mahatmas, as I believe they are called?"

I have often answered this question before, and I shall try to answer it briefly again this afternoon. The questioner goes on:

"I have heard that they work for the welfare of mankind and have done so throughout the ages; that they have extraordinary powers, which they exert beneficently for men."

That is true, all true. What are they? They are what the Chinese philosopher, Confucius, called "Superior Men" — superhuman men; and what the Greek philosopher Plato called "Godlike Men"; and what we in our own pragmatical European age would call highly evolved men, or supermen, perhaps. They are men who are farther advanced along the path of evolution than ordinary men are; but they are men. They are not gods; they are not spirits; they are not spooks; nothing of the sort. They are merely men who have gone higher and farther than the average run of humanity.

You know the names in history of many of them. I will mention a few: the Buddha, Jesus called the Christ, Pythagoras, Plato, Lao-tse, Sankaracharya, Krishna, Apollonius of Tyana — and many more such. Among themselves they have different grades of development. There are among them great men, greater men,

greatest men — these last being men who are literally on the threshold of human divinity. These men have lived; that is a fact. That is all that these mahatmas are, these Masters of Compassion and Wisdom; and what the human race has once produced, shall it never again produce? What nature has once brought forth, can it never again bring forth? Answer these questions for yourself.

They form an association or band or society. They have lived throughout the ages, each generation of them transmitting to the succeeding generation the accumulated wisdom and knowledge that had been gained from immemorial time. They have wonderful powers over nature, because they have learned to know nature. They work entirely with nature, with the law. That is the reason that they are great. They are in harmony with things as they are, with the roots of things. That is why they are great. Oppose nature and what happens? Who goes to the wall? Nature or you? "Work in harmony with Nature, and she will regard thee as one of her creators and make obeisance unto thee" — a literal fact.

"Why do they not eradicate the evils that afflict man, warn him against disasters, or avert them?"

But they do, as far as they can. But how can you eradicate an evil when the act would be contrary to all natural law? They are the servants of the Law, and in that lies their power. They work with nature, and not contrary to her mandates. They warn men as far as men will let them. They are warning continually. Now and again, every now and every then, they send forth from among their own number someone to teach men, to carry a new message of wisdom and knowledge of nature's secrets into the world. They have done this through the ages, warning, warning, teaching, encouraging, consoling, constantly saying: Come up higher; come to us.

Jesus, the Buddha, Sankaracharya — all these great men have been messengers from the Lodge, the great White Lodge, as we say — all of them! But if men will not listen, if men turn a deaf ear — they continue working nevertheless, constantly.

"Where do they abide?"

Wherever they will!

"Why do they not move among ordinary men, and shield them?"

They do, as far as they can.

"Can you elucidate the mystery of this so-called exalted race?"

It is not an exalted race. They are exalted men, the chosen ones of the ages, the fine flowers of evolution.

"What are the requisites for seeing and communicating with such superior beings?"

That is an easy question to answer. Become like unto them. It is the old, old mystical thing to do. Knock, and the door will be opened unto you. But you must knock with the right knock. Become like unto them, and you will know them. Do the Law and you will know the Law. Know the Law and you will do it!

If you want to learn something, where would you go to learn it? Where it is taught. And you would follow the rules and regulations of that school in order to learn to know. The same rule applies here. Follow their teaching faithfully, without discouragement, and you will become like them, and you will know them, and they will know you. That is all.

Where can you find these teachings? You may find them in all the great religious philosophies of the world, and you may find them today in theosophy. These great Masters of Wisdom are back of

The Theosophical Society today. They sent forth H. P. Blavatsky from among themselves, as their messenger and teacher to the world in this our age. There is the declaration and the promise; and we theosophists look upon a promise as a sacred thing. We never fail in our promises.

"In reference to the question asked last Sunday: 'Why are the Christian nations the most warlike?', and your reply to the effect that nations *have* to go through a cyclic period of war, and later comes the cycle of peace, might not some people erroneously argue as follows: 'What is the use then, during one of these war cycles, to try to prevent war? Why not wait until the peace-cycle comes?' "

In the first place, I did not put the matter in that way. I did not say that nations 'have' to go through a period of wartime. I said that periods of wartime come during the life course of all peoples; but that it comes as an affliction; it comes as a temptation; and if they fall under the temptation, war succeeds war. But that need not be. That is all that I meant.

War is not a necessary thing at all. It is an example of human imbecility and lack of judgment, and particularly so is aggressive warfare an example of human selfishness. You may say: Should not a nation protect itself? Yes, but what sane man has ever called that warfare? Warfare means but one thing — war for purposes of conquest. And you need not do it, and if you do it you will reap the consequences. The duty of every sane and normal man is to work for peace, to work for the settlement of international disputes by means of measures based on reason and justice. Does anyone disagree with that?

"Two Sundays ago you told us about Jesus being an avatara, and that after his single manifestation on earth, he would not come again.

"(a) What happens to all the karma he created while he was here on earth?

"(b) Does the Divinity from which came this 'continuous flow of inspiration into the human soul and mind' of Jesus absorb and work out this karma, or does it remain unattached to anyone, and is it finally taken up by a great soul who is willing to undertake its fulfillment?"

The idea here seems to be — it is a wrong idea of course — that karma is something apart from the actor, something that exists outside of one. Karma is a Sanskrit word. It is one of our fundamental teachings, the word karma signifying a philosophical doctrine. It means the law of consequences; that what ye sow ye shall reap. It does not mean something existing outside of you, which falls on top of you and crushes you flat, and therefore it is not fate.

It means that what you have inbuilt into your character will be yours to meet and face in the next and in future lives; and that your character being thus straightened or distorted, as the case may be, advances or retrogresses, as the case may be. Karma is in you yourself, in you the actor.

But how about the case of Jesus? It is true that Jesus as an entity never existed before, and never will exist again. It is not a case of reincarnation here, but the case of an avatara, as I explained before: the incarnation, in certain very mystical circumstances, of a ray of a Divinity, of the fire of a Divinity, for the purposes of cyclic teaching. The coming of the ray flashes across the horizons of human history like a great light, and then is gone.

But what happens? Acts have been done, teachings have been given, so that the whole destiny of races of men perhaps has been changed. Who is responsible? That part of the avatara which was



the intermediate nature of the avataric being who lived. An avatara consists of three things: a physical body; an intermediate part; and a ray — actually the spiritual fire of a god, of a divine being working through this intermediate part and both then expressing themselves through the physical body. Such is an avatara.

An avatara's intermediate part is furnished, as I have tried to explain before, by one of the Masters of Wisdom who loaned, as it were, his own soul for this cyclic work: who loaned his own intermediate nature, so that the holy body of the child could receive the spiritual fire from the god or divinity. Therefore the Master of Wisdom who loaned himself takes upon himself the load of responsibility for what has been done. That is where the karma inheres: the consequences, and therefore the responsibility.

This is a very deep and profound question, and those of you who were not here on other occasions, and were not able to hear what was then spoken of, I fear may have some little difficulty in understanding this; but it is a fascinating tale of some of nature's most secret mysteries, and if you want to know more, study our theosophical books.

Two more questions:

"I believe you have told us that if we understood the secrets of the laws of vibration, we could, for instance, destroy a solid wood table, or something of that sort. Could one explanation of earthquakes and other disastrous catastrophes be that some person accidentally hit upon one of these laws, thereby causing destruction on a large scale, and also thereby becoming an agent of the lower forces?"

It is possible, but most exceedingly unlikely. It would take a

human titan to do it. Furthermore, why should it be thought that an earthquake is the result of the working of evil forces? I don't think so. Is the tidal wave the result of the working of evil forces? Is the cyclone the result of the working of evil forces? I don't think so. You ask my opinion, and I will tell you that my feeling is just the contrary.

These natural happenings are the working of nature's laws of readjustment of disturbed equilibrium; they are the karma of nature, and actually they are the working of the higher forces, those forces which are rooted in cosmic harmony; and it is one's individual karma which puts him within the sway of nature's operations when she seeks to restore equilibrium. One reaps what one has sown. Never tell me that nature is ruled by evil forces. Why, you would have half the population of the earth in a lunatic asylum out of sheer fear, if that were the case; and it is not true.

Nature is not ruled by evil forces in that way at all. The root of nature is celestial peace; the root of nature is harmony, and love; but love itself is a restorer of equilibrium; and when things move on a cosmic scale, on a universal scale, the phenomena accompanying such movements are of necessity great. I leave this thought with you for your own consideration, because my time to close has now come.

This is the final question:

"In the great heart of humanity there is a deep homesickness. Why?"

Yes, there is. There is a hunger in every human heart, which nothing can satisfy or appease — a hunger for something more true than ordinary human beings wit of, a hunger for the real, a hunger for the sublime. It is the nostalgia of the soul, of the spirit-

soul of man. It is the homesickness brought about by the soul-memory of our spiritual abode, whence we came and towards which we are now on our return journey.

Men unconsciously, intuitively, unknown to the brain-mind, see the vision sublime on the mountain-tops; and oh! this yearning homesickness for the indescribable, for the immortal, for the deathless, for that which bringeth unutterable peace and a love which is frontierless in its reaches! Every human heart feels this, and it is the saving power in men, the thing which gives them hope and aspiration, which raises the souls of us with the recognition of the glory that once was ours; for, as I said, it is the nostalgia of the soul.

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[Vol 1, No 20](#)  
[Contents](#)

**No. 20 (February 11, 1930)**

**QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK**

(Lecture delivered October 27, 1929)

I have quite a number of questions to answer this week — twenty, twenty-five, thirty, perhaps — and what shall I do? Shall I answer each one very briefly, or take a few and answer them at greater length? I think the better plan will be simply to follow the inspiration of the moment, and when the psychical touch of response that a speaker always receives from his audience comes upon him, then to dwell at greater length on the points of thought which seem to be mutually interesting.

Here is the first question:

"You recently defined a holy place as a region of the earth where spiritual forces were concentrated. Would it be of any advantage to the ordinary man to live in such localities inasmuch as these forces would probably rouse into activity his evil propensities as well as his latent good qualities?"

Some people have interesting minds. They send to me a question to answer, and then proceed to answer it themselves. This question is answered from the standpoint of the mind of the questioner, because he appears already to have made up his mind that such holy places arouse evil propensities in an ordinary man, as well as latent good qualities.

I think that our wonderful, our majestic, system of theosophical philosophy, however, can tell us something more about this matter. Why should it be assumed, in the first place, that high spiritual forces are they which arouse the latent evil propensities in one? I don't know why they should. I don't think they do. I

think that this is an assumption on the part of the kind friend who sent this question in to me. I think that it is very beneficial indeed for the average man to live in a holy place, in a place where the forces of nature are vibrating in consonance with the higher realms or spheres of being; and I utterly fail to see how spiritual forces in the man which would be stimulated by these vibrations could arouse in any human being his or her evil propensities.

Therefore do I say that I don't think the statement is true; and consequently it would be immensely beneficial for any human being to live in a place where nature, the Great Mother of us all, has concentrated her forces of a spiritual character, and where, therefore, spiritual currents are running strong. Of course some people are so oddly constituted that you cannot do anything with them — at least apparently. I will admit that. It is sufficient for them even to see a holy man immediately to become pugnacious and to want to fight his ideas: this attitude of mind arising perhaps through the peculiar trait in human nature which impels one to think that "because I am not like him, therefore he is not as he should be."

But the forces of nature are not themselves responsible for such peculiar traits in human beings. These traits come from the imperfections of the man who so acts or thinks; and in justice to human nature I think that there are very few such men or women in the world, when compared with the great majority.

Here is another question which, I take it, comes from the same kind friend, and is much along the same line of thought.

"May not a place become holy by reason of its being the residence of a man of high spiritual development?"

Yes, for a man, not merely through his spiritual nature but

through his intellectual and psychical constitution, is a very dynamo of energy, and the thoughts that he throws forth from himself — the energies that he spreads abroad even from his physical being — radiate from him as the solar rays do from the sun, and produce an atmosphere, so that when you come into the presence of such a human being, you say: Oh, how reposeful is his presence! I feel calm, I sense refinement, I touch the frontiers of peace. I am happy! Such an atmosphere indeed can a good man throw around his domicile also, because he himself is the heart of it.

Everything that is, from electron to highest god, is essentially a center of energy; and therefore let us look to the converse of what I have just before spoken of. If the atmosphere of a holy man does good and helps his fellows, likewise the energies of an evil man — one whose heart is filled with selfishness and impulses to evil-doing and whose mind is filled with thoughts of how to carry these impulses into action — make around himself an atmosphere which troubles, hurts, injures, and arouses evil passions in those who come within the sphere of influence of his atmosphere.

Verily, a holy man does make the place wherein he lives holy; and this is an old old idea which has existed from immemorial time the world over. So much so that where a very holy man has lived, people who are spiritually sensitive will tell you for centuries afterwards that the place is filled with vibrations similar to those engendered by the holy man when he lived and worked there.

Have you never entered a house, entered a room, gone into a home, where you sensed the inspiring vibrations, to use the popular term, and are at peace and are happy, and feel bettered and inspired? Of course you have. How many times have I heard kind friends say to me, or say to my colleagues: It was wonderful

to come into your Temple. The atmosphere was beautiful. There was such a sense of peace and rest!

Now, please do not misunderstand me. I don't mean to say that we have any holy man hiding in secret in the Temple here, but merely that this Temple's atmosphere has been the recipient for many years of beautiful thoughts — high, generous, whole-hearted, impersonal, and therefore good and holy. Harmony is the explanation of the wonderful atmosphere we have in this Temple of Peace, for harmony is the very essence of love; and where love is, all other things of beauty abide, for beauty is the harmonious relation of things with other things, and therefore of human hearts with other hearts; and only love can produce it: for love and harmony are one, whether this be in the sphere of the cosmos or in the human heart itself.

The following came to me as a question, although it seems rather to be a request for an interpretation.

"The following question is dedicated to the Raja-Yoga University choir. How do you interpret the quotation: 'Sing — your very song shall vibrate in the universe when you return to earth a thousand lives from now.' "

This looks to me like a very positive declaration. It does not read like a question at all. However, I think that it is a very true declaration. In comment I may say that it is one of the common places of Occidental scientific discovery and thought that no vibration ever has an ending, but goes vibrating onwards into the spacial deeps of infinitude forever and forever. Out of the deeps of time it came, and into the deeps of the future it is marching onwards. So does a thought live also.

Therefore, expressing the thoughts of one's heart in song, or in high and beautiful words, comes to much the same thing after all.

For you make a record on the screen of time which by reaction will affect yourself very beneficially indeed, and will come back to you some day — back to you, its creator. Then harmony will again enter into your heart, and you will sing the old songs in the future: in another language perhaps, and perhaps expressed in another mode, but the same music that now fills your heart will then fill it again.

I will go a step farther, turning from beauty to philosophy — not that I mean that philosophy is ugly — but just changing the thought a bit. No vibration, whether it be musical or otherwise — whether it be a psychical vibration, or a physical vibration, or a spiritual vibration — ever really "begins." It comes out from the deeps of eternity and infinitude, and returns to those who once before sent it on its way at some past time, who now again receive it; and so it will continue forever. And in each new return of such a vibrational cycle the creative human soul and the creative human imagination impress on this vibration, or on these vibrations, a new touch, a new something — call it what you like, human words fail — which stamps the vibration with a new musical soul, a new musical individuality — raise it, if you like — so that each new return of the musical vibrational cycle is accordant with the evolutionary progress achieved by those who have received and modified it in the past.

Nothing ever really begins, nothing ever really ends. Beginnings and endings of things are dreams, illusions, and only appear to be beginnings and endings of things because we are not wise enough to know how such things come to us and whither they go when they pass from us. A seed — whether it be of a star or of a flower matters not — comes from some other thing similar, alike unto itself: produces its own kind, which in turn becomes a creative focus of energy and produces its offspring. So it is with vibrations or anything else — however absurd this may sound in the ears of



the modern pragmatists.

We human beings are each one an aggregate of vibrations — yes, each one of us; and we are not here coming from nothingness and going into nothingness, but are the fruitage of what we were before, and we are now making for ourselves what we shall be in the future. We ourselves are the seeds of our future lives; and we are now the fruit of what we were before. This is, in brief, the theory of reincarnation, you see.

"Sing, and your song will return to you." Only, friends, real song is from the heart, not from the mouth. And one who has harmony in his soul is a natural musician, whether he knows three consecutive notes on the written score or not.

"I am told that theosophists do not accept the ten commandments of Moses as binding upon them. What, then, is the moral code in which they do believe, and upon what principle is it based?"

I know that the friend who wrote this question has a very kind heart, but it looks to me exactly like a verbal catch, like a verbal trap. However, I am awfully glad. I love to walk into traps — I usually find that I come out at the other end, carrying the trap with me!

Please do not let us confuse a formal code with the principles and sanctions of ethics themselves. A code may contain these latter, and usually does, but not necessarily so. We do not accept the moral code of Moses merely because it is the Mosaic code, or because other people believe in it as a code, as a formal written instrument; but we do not reject the Mosaic code, on the other hand, in so far as it contains good things — certainly not.

Theosophists have no formal, written, theosophical code of ethics, but I think that we are the most moral, ethical people in the

world; and I will tell you why. Because we recognize the principles of the moral law and the sanctions behind these principles; and we know that if we do not follow them, not only do we fail, but also that we suffer greatly.

Our ethical code, then, is an unwritten instrument and is the cream of the moral law: of the ethical systems of the entire world, whether they be Buddhistic, or Brahmanical, or Mosaic, or Christian, or whatnot. We believe that right is right and that wrong is wrong; and we do not believe this because it is written in a code and reduced to a number of different articles or clauses; but we believe it because we have a philosophy of the universe behind us, which shows us that ethics, that moral principles and sanctions, are based on the very fabric and structure of nature herself; and that morals — not merely formal morals, customs, etc., not conventions religious or social or what they may be, but natural truth — is the unwritten code, nature's code, in which we believe and which we follow as best we can.

I should deeply regret it were anyone to think that I have given Brother Moses a black eye. That is not my intention at all. I simply mean that, while the Mosaic code does contain undoubtedly certain splendid principles of conduct, particularly applicable to the times for which they were composed, our theosophic ethical system is far deeper, far broader, far more beautiful, universal, having the cosmos or universe as its background and the human heart as its shrine.

Here are three profound questions:

"What becomes of us when we lose our individuality?"

I don't know whether this questioner means when we lose our personality or our individuality, because theosophists make quite a distinction between these two. The individuality is the spiritual

and immortal part of us, deathless, the root of us, the very essence of us, the spiritual sun within, our inner god; whereas what we call the personality is all the lower man, all the psychological and astral and physical impulses and thoughts and tendencies, and what not. When we throw off or deliver ourselves from the influence of these latter, then we become in very truth a god walking the earth.

Unfortunately, most people are not in such high spiritual condition, and that is why we have so few human gods among us today!

There is another side to this matter, a very deep and profound one, which truly it would be hopeless adequately to explain this afternoon, because it would require a full half-hour of introductory explanations of various kinds; and this side of the matter on which I now touch refers to the fate of a lost soul. Read our theosophical books, if this latter subject of thought interests you, and you will find the explanation of it briefly outlined there.

Dividing man, as we do, into spiritual individuality and person or mask — the word "person" as you know being taken from the Latin word *persona* which means "a mask," through which the actor, the spiritual individuality, speaks — freeing ourselves from the domination of the person, the mask, the veil, through which the individuality speaks, then we show forth all the spiritual and so-called superhuman qualities; and this will happen in the future, in the far distant aeons of the future, when every human being shall have become a Buddha, a Christ. Such is the destiny of the human race.

When human evolution shall have run its full course, then we shall be like gods walking the surface of Mother Earth.

"What is mind?"

Mind is a faculty of consciousness, from one standpoint. It is an aspect or function of consciousness, from another standpoint. It is the dregs of pure consciousness. Mind belongs to the intermediate or psychic nature of the human being. Call mind mentality, and you see at once the difference between it and pure consciousness, such as the gods have. Mind in this sense is a limitation; it is the mental instrument through which consciousness expresses itself in human beings, and in beings living on other planets who are equivalent to us humans and who have reached a similar degree of evolutionary development there that we have attained on our earth. Mind, therefore, is the psychic instrument in which human consciousness works at our present evolutionary stage.

Furthermore, we say that there are several kinds of mind, all of them expressing fundamental consciousness which is the root-energy of the universe: that is, the spiritual mind, the human mind, the animal mind, and the ordinary brain-mind which is very close to the animal mind; whereas, through all these faculties there is the unitary stream of consciousness, and in and through each one of these minds the consciousness expresses itself as best it can; and the whole purpose of human evolution is to raise our consciousness from the animal or brain-mind into the more typical and higher human mind, and from it into the spiritual mind, and when this shall have been attained then we shall be like gods.

Here is another very profound question:

"What is Truth? I do not mean truth in the ordinary sense as contrasted with telling a falsehood; but Truth in its higher and deeper meaning."

According to the Christian New Testament, Pontius Pilate asked what truth was and then washed his hands and went away. Now, of course I answer all these questions from the theosophical

standpoint; I don't even bother with ordinary ideas or any other so-called philosophy or religion or whatnot. I am here to tell you what theosophy has to say. That is my job.

Truth to us, truth in the abstract, is Reality, the Real — not as any human mind may interpret natural reality, but the Thing itself. That to us is truth. The Real is the fundamental essence of the universe, as consciousness-life existing in the bosom of being; and when great sages and seers have interpreted this Reality and put their interpretation in human formulations, then we can truly say: "This is a system of truth"; but as I have just said, REALITY is its essence, is its background and sphere. Reality and Truth, therefore, are fundamentally exactly the same thing; and when I say natural truth, I do not mean merely the truth of physical nature at all; I mean what we theosophists mean when we speak of nature — more especially the spiritual realms, the invisible worlds, the causal spheres, those which through their workings and interlocked activities produce in our material sphere things as they are. That is reality even here — the reflection of the cosmic Real. And when we interpret this reality truthfully, accurately, actually, then we say: "That is truth, reality, things-as-they-are-in-themselves, not as human minds may interpret them."

Now we are going to leap from the cosmic to the infinitesimal. I have a question here before me about electrons; and yet, when one comes to consider points of deep philosophy, the infinitesimal is as sublime in its way and as majestically grand as is the cosmic, for it is an inversion of the cosmic. Because from the theosophical standpoint there is as vast a deep of infinitude in the infinitesimal world as there is in the cosmical sphere. Otherwise you would have a jumping-off place in the infinitesimal where everything ended, and if this were so, taking your leap from the jumping-off place, into what could you leap? The human mind very naturally and very properly refuses even to conceive of such a state of

things, because it has an intuition that it is fundamentally false. Nature is everlastingly continuous: there are no absolute frontiers and endings where existence and being stop.

Therefore, space, time, consciousness, have as wide being and existence in the world infinitesimal as they have in the world of the cosmos. And now listen: What we call the cosmos, the wide spaces of space, as they say, are merely such to us because we are human beings of a particular type in the universe; for I can tell you that there are conscious, sentient, living beings and things to whom the spaces of an atom are just as grand as our spaces are to us. In fact the atom, as I have been telling you for several years past from this platform of our Temple of Peace, is as fully inhabited by celestial bodies on an atomic scale and by entities inhabiting those bodies, as is our own cosmos.

Further, there are beings so much more immense than we are that their relation to us is like our relation to the atomic world, so that our whole spatial infinitude is their infinitesimal world. Let this thought sink into your minds. It will be very fruitful of suggestive ideas in your meditations upon it. Our ultramodern scientists are brushing the frontiers of these theosophical teachings even today, but hesitate as yet to pass over into the unknown which they dimly see on the horizons of their thought; and yet, how their hearts long for it, and how their minds are reaching and straining beyond what they recognize as the physical sphere.

Here is the question about the electron, to which I have just alluded:

"What is the theosophical teaching with regard to the scientific electron? Is it a hard little point of matter, or is it just a wave-center?"

It is both, it is either, according to the way by which you look at it. I wonder if I can make this a little clearer. Everything that is, is an energy-point essentially and ultimately: whether it be human being or atom, star or god, it is builded around an energy-point, a consciousness-point, call it soul or spirit, the name matters not at all for the present — it is a center which, looked at from "above," seems material, and is material to that above; but looked at from within, so to say, or upwards, it appears as a vibration, a series of waves.

The human heart may well exemplify the electronic structure. As the heart appears to us it is a material, physical organ, beating constantly in rhythmic vibration; but if we were to transfer our center of consciousness to the astral realms, we should not see the physical organ: our eyes there would not be built to cognize it, but we should sense a series of waves, of rhythmic beatings, and we would say: These waves come from a wave-center. Such also is the electron itself, quite apart from its place or function in the atomic structure. In itself it is just such as I have described — an energy-point, ultimately a consciousness-point, a beating heart of consciousness-life, in other words a monad expressing its energies in the atomic sphere.

Let me read to you in this connection what a very great modern British scientific thinker has to say, for it is a most unusual thing. I quote from an address to the British Institute of Philosophical Studies, delivered by Sir Oliver Lodge on July 26, 1929. This address was entitled, "Beyond Physics," which is a translation of the Greek word "metaphysics." I will read to you a few extracts that I have made from a report of this address:

"One remarkable outcome is that the difference between a wave and a particle is disappearing. We have to do with something that is neither, and yet shares the properties of

both; something for which the name 'wavicle' has been suggested. The constitution of an electron, notwithstanding its utterly minute size, is by no means so simple as we used to think it might be. In the outer orbits of an atom, a long way from the nucleus, an electron behaves something like a little sphere, revolving round a center of force under astronomical laws. But an electron nearer the central nucleus, and therefore traveling at high speed and subject to stiff control, does not seem to be located at a point at all, but spreads out over the orbit like a succession of stationary waves. The whole thing is rather complicated. All I want to insist upon is that the difference between a wave and a particle is one of degree rather than of kind. . . ."

So say we theosophists. Sir Oliver Lodge is a very intuitive man, and were it not for what I personally think to be his rather peculiar quasi-religious ideas, I would say that he is a man who is inspired, to a certain extent. Like Planck of Berlin, like Bohr of Copenhagen, like Einstein of Berlin, and like Eddington of England, he is one who has received a light and has tried to interpret it and formulate it in human fashion.

Why does an electron in the atom seem to behave in such contradictory fashion: just like a little atomic planet when its position is far from its atomic sun; and almost like a solid ring when it is near to its nucleus, the atomic sun? Because in the latter case it revolves or vibrates so rapidly that our senses of perception do not perceive its revolutions as interpreted to us by our clever scientific instruments, but sense only the effect of its activity conveyed to our perception as a continuous streak or ring of substance-energy.

Set a wheel revolving with extreme rapidity, or put a bar on a



pivot and revolve that bar, pivoted at its center, with extreme rapidity; and instead of seeing the spokes of the wheel or the two ends of the bar, if you see anything at all you will sense just a series of waves or a blur in the air. Now try to poke your finger, as suddenly and rapidly as you like, into this blur, if you are courageous enough to risk the mutilation of your finger, and you never will find a place where your finger can enter. Your finger will touch matter at whatever point of the blur where you may try to insert the finger, simply because the wheel or the bar is revolving with such extreme rapidity that the spokes or the two ends of the bar seem to be everywhere at once. The wheel or the bar thus seems to have become a physical, continuous, wave of substantial matter.

So you see that from our standpoint, the electron, supposed by modern science to be the ultimate particle of physical existence, is at once a wave-center and a material point or particle. It is indeed both, depending upon the way by which you look at it. Thus all physical matter seems heavy, solid, substantial, because the electrons of which it is composed are more or less closely compacted together in and by the atomic systems which they in their turn form; whereas in more ethereal matter, such as the air, the atoms are not so closely united.

An electron, in theosophy, is not only an energy-point: it is also a consciousness-point expressing itself as an electrical particle or energy-point. Do you realize that there is no difference, essentially, between matter and force, or equivalently between spirit and substance, — that the two are essentially and fundamentally one? The same underlying Reality, the same Reality in the background, expresses itself in these two phases: one, the various phases of spirit, and the other the various phases of physical substance of which one phase is so familiar to us. But the essence of each is the same.

I shall now answer one more question this afternoon. This is a very pretty question, and a profound one also.

"Do flowers have souls? If so, what kind of souls?"

Why not? If they have not souls, what have they? What gives them permanence of type? What gives them individuality? What makes a rose differ from any other flower? What makes a carnation differ from a geranium, or the so-called humble violet differ from the magnolia? It is individuality, the inherent life-force within it, expressing itself in this, that, or any other form, shape, color, odor, and in the general harmony of its own being. This is the working of its soul of which all these varied phenomena are the outward expressions.

The soul of a man is, *mutatis mutandis*, exactly the same thing — the consciousness-energy expressing itself as his character, as his facilities, as his inner energy, as his thought, as all his emotions and powers. That is why one man differs from other men, why no two men are identical. Yes, flowers have souls; plants have souls; animals have souls; humans have souls — the very chemical elements as manifested in their atoms, of which all matter is ultimately formed, have souls: every atom is ensouled, every electron is the expression of a soul, of a consciousness-point. Let the name be what you like; but pray get the thought!

And through this soul of any entity pour the still higher and sublimer energies of the spirit above and behind, the inner god. Do you know what evolution is? It is merely the bringing out of what is within, an ever larger and more perfect expression of soul, or spirit — of character in other words. That is all that evolution is — the unwrapping, the unfolding, of what is within; and growth, just simple, plain growth, is evolution in the small, proceeding at a rapid rate.

As a child or the six-foot man has grown from a microscopic human seed, thus evolving from the infinitesimal into our own sphere by growth — by evolution, by unfolding, by unwrapping, the essential faculties and powers within — so does the human race, through the ages, collectively and individually evolve, bringing forth the soul powers, everything, that is within.

And this procedure will continue until in far distant aeons of the future, the human race shall have run its final course on this earth, and evolution shall have brought forth its finest; and instead of men, we shall see human gods walking the ground. That is our teaching; that is the promise of the future. And every one of you today has all the potency, all the latent powers, and is the promise of what you are to be in the future through evolution. Ally yourself quickly with this inner spiritual essence of you, and then you shall be great men. Such were the Buddhas and the Christs of the past. Be it!

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[Vol 1, No 21](#)  
[Contents](#)

**No. 21 (February 18, 1930)**

**QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK**

(Lecture delivered November 3, 1929)

I have here in my hand quite a bunch of questions that have been sent in to me for answer. How shall I answer them? Shall I take a few questions and give to each of them a long answer, or shall I give a very short answer to every question of this bundle? I think that I will do exactly as I have been doing before in these lectures — follow the inspiration of the instant; largely because, as you must know, you as my audience give me something in the way of inspiration. I feel it when a question and its answer interest you, and I also feel it when these do not interest you.

The first question that I have to answer is an old favorite of many people. I don't know why it ever should be a favorite. I think it is an old mental nuisance. At any rate, it comes popping up serenely before our attention very frequently, and has been asked doubtless millions of times through past ages, and it is the following:

"Which came first, matter or mind?"

Now, if we said that mind came first, then we should have a universe of mind, and no matter in which it could express itself — and who can believe that? Contrariwise, if we say that matter came first, then we should have a universe of matter without any mind to direct it, or to hold it in coherent, organic unity; and who can believe that? How could it exist, how could it obey any laws at all, since there would be no laws, without mind as the source of law and order, and beginning and end? How could such a condition possibly be?

So theosophists say that neither came first: they both came together; and, speaking with still greater accuracy, they never "came" because they always are, always have been, and always will be. Try to figurate in your mind a time when there never was any mind in the universe or, on the other hand, a time when there never was any substance in the universe. You cannot imagine either case. But you can always conceive of a time and times when mind and matter — the two sides of the same fundamental essence — existed, just as they do at present and just as they will exist in the eternities of future duration.

In the Middle Ages, as all know, the scholastics of the times had another favorite question which they always propounded to themselves and to each other, and this question was never answered satisfactorily, and it was this — among other similarly favorite questions: "Which came first, the egg or the hen?" We may ask ourselves today why men should have thought that it was necessary to begin this biologic line with an egg or, on the other hand, to begin it with a hen. How about the biologic originals of either hen or egg? In those days the scholastics knew nothing about what modern scientists call evolution. They were psychologized with the idea that things were created by Almighty God more or less as things now exist. But we moderns are no longer under the same psychology — at least I am not, and I don't think that you are so psychologized.

A humorous English philosopher, a scientist who lived not very long ago, thinking over these matters, thought that he could go the scholastics one better, and in consequence he is alleged to have remarked, humorously of course: "A hen is merely an egg's way of making another egg." Well, isn't it the fact?

No, I don't think that the egg came before the hen or, contrariwise, that the hen came before the egg. They both came

together, so to say; and exactly the same remark applies to the case of mind and matter, or spirit and substance. Mind is material: otherwise it could not affect matter; but this word matter does not necessarily mean "physical" substance. There are several kinds of substances or matters in the universe: spiritual matter, intellectual matter, psychical matter, astral matter, physical matter, and matter below the physical; and there is mind everywhere, and as the great Latin poet Vergil says, it is a fiery flame which permeates all things, and invigorates things, and gives to them the fire of life. Such is mind.

But mind is nevertheless material — but of a matter of its own ethereal type. Mind is therefore substantial; but what is matter *per se* In itself it is an illusion, as I have often explained before from this platform. It has no real being in itself. Physical matter, for instance, is simply the effect produced on our very imperfect physical sense apparatus by the energy inherent in points of electricity, according to the latest scientific dicta; and matter, therefore, is energy. Energy and matter are one. Theosophists say also that spirit and substance are one, and force and matter on planes beneath spirit and substance are merely reflections or condensations of spirit and substance.

Mind and matter are one, and these two constantly interact: they are dual in nature and a pair of opposites, inseparable each from the other and therefore always together; and the whole purpose and effort of evolutionary progress, in other words of growth, of advancement, is the raising of matter into becoming its essential self: mind. Mind is but the reflection of consciousness, looking at the matter from a still more fundamental viewpoint; and consciousness thus becomes the ultimate essence of the universe.

The next question is the following:

"Is God the origin of evil as well as of good?"

What a series of suppositions is here! Who and what is God? Who and what is evil? Who and what is good? Do evil and good, as a matter of fact, have an origin, and is each forever distinct from the other? I do not admit any one of the postulates just mentioned by me which seem to be intrinsic in the question asked. How difficult is it not, then, to answer a question containing postulates or ideas which seem to be impossible of acceptance! But let me try to answer it as best I can.

God, I suppose, means — but do *you* know what this word means? I don't know, because there are so many definitions given by varying minds. Therefore, truly, I don't know just what it means. I know what people *think* the word God means, but if you can tell me just what the average, intelligent, educated man means when he says God, then you will tell me that this man understands God, and therefore comprehends God, and therefore has an intelligence great enough to take God in, and therefore is larger than God is. I refuse to admit this.

To the theosophist the cosmic spirit is beyond all possibility of human understanding or comprehension, for the human understanding, the human spirit, is but a ray of the ocean of infinitude in consciousness, and the drop of water cannot contain the ocean, except perhaps in a very mystical sense which is beside the frontiers of the present argument.

My mind, like your mind, though rooted in the infinitudes, is still the child of finitude. In the inmost of the inmost of every human being there is everything, for his spiritual essence is rooted in the heart of the universe, and this heart is everywhere: it is not a point in space, but is universal. God, I suppose, as a word merely means what is popularly called cosmic mind or cosmic soul.

Well, I could argue until the evening came about this matter, but I

do not choose to do so. Call God, then, the cosmic spirit — if indeed there be such a thing as an individualized cosmic spirit, and this again I do not believe.

What is evil? Here again is another difficult question. Evil is largely relative. I know that I think certain things are evil or bad, and I am pretty certain also that some other men would not so consider them. Evil, I repeat, is a relative thing. Actually what men call evil is imperfection. Evil is whatever lacks perfect beauty, perfect harmony of being. That is evil. On the other hand, what is good? Good is everything that is contrary to evil, and therefore is harmony, perfection — both relative of course in the same way that evil is relative.

So you see what this difficult and complex question involves. As I have told you before, I don't desire to hurt anybody's feelings, and very frequently I am in a position where I find it difficult to speak without trenching on matters that are bound to hurt somebody's prejudices or opinions. But it is my duty as a theosophical lecturer to tell you just what theosophy teaches about things, and that I try honestly and sincerely to do. But I can hardly make a step in my explanations without feeling that I am treading on some poor dear heart's private and harmless preconceptions and prejudices.

You know what the Jewish Bible has to say about good and evil, and about their connection with the Lord God. We do not teach things similar to what I shall read to you, and I merely call your attention to these extracts from the Jewish Bible on account of their historical interest. In the third chapter, sixth verse, of the Prophet Amos: "Shall the trumpet be blown in a city, and the people not be afraid? shall evil befall a city, and the LORD hath not done it?" And in *Isaiah*, chapter 45, verse 6 and following: "I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil; I am the LORD, that



doeth all these things."

Unquestionably sentences such as these that I have just read to you from the Jewish Bible have an esoteric meaning of their own, which it would take, however, too much time to explain to you today. My point in quoting these extracts is neither to approve of them as they stand in literal form, nor to puzzle you, but to show you what an ancient religious work has to say.

Now, as the Christians adopted the Jewish Bible, and therefore its teachings, and as however much they tried to modify and interpret those teachings according to their own religious viewpoint, nevertheless they had to take passages such as these, and therefore became responsible for them; and yet they tell us that their God is the author of all good, the divine Father in heaven, the maker of all harmony, the source of all love — therefore we must infer that love creates evil and consequently disharmony.

Now, theosophists don't believe this at all. It is not the teaching of the ancient wisdom, today called theosophy. We say that evil and good are simply human words expressing imperfection on the one hand, and relative perfection on the other hand, not merely in human beings but in all other entities. And second, theosophists say that there is no "creation": that there never has been, and never will be; but that all things that are — high and low, spiritual and material, divine and sub-material — are composed of hosts of evolving consciousness-centers: souls, spirits, call them what you like: every one of them marching on its upward way to betterment. Consequently, that those entities and things which have not progressed so far as others have, the superior entities call evil; and these evil ones in their turn call those entities below themselves evil in their turn, and so forth and so forth. Both evil and good thus are seen to be relative

conditions depending upon the entity which sees and describes.

Even in human customs evil and good are relative things. In this country, for instance, it is considered an evil or bad thing for our mothers, wives, sisters, and daughters, to expose any part of their persons except their hands and their faces, or rather I mean that it used to be in the days of my childhood. But in Arabia, for instance, a woman may expose any part of her person, and is not thought the worse for it, but she must not show her nose.

Showing of the nose and mouth is considered to be a crime against the law of God; but obviously it is merely immoral or unethical because against the customs and habits of the people and of the time.

People sincerely believe in things like this that I have just mentioned, and carry their beliefs into legal effect: embody their opinions, preconceptions, prejudices, customs, and habits, in their written codes of law; and thus we get the various forms of: Thou shalt, and Thou shalt not. Thou shalt not work on the Sabbath day, for it is holy. But other people do work on the Sabbath day, and do not find it holy at all. Some people even amuse themselves on the Sabbath day, and love to play on the only day of the week in which they have freedom from toil.

Is such an act intrinsically wicked, or is it merely "evil" because it offends the prejudices of other people? The latter of course. Evil, therefore, is obviously relative.

These are just illustrations of how people otherwise good and sensible allow themselves to be taken in by custom and habit embodied in words. I think we may say, then, may we not, that evil is in itself a condition or thing relatively imperfect to other things or entities and conditions: the evil thing in itself is what is evil in some people's opinion, or in itself imperfect; and in fact, turning from human customs to the actual feelings of our hearts

and the intuitions of our minds, we see that evil is what is imperfect, undeveloped, inharmonious, productive of pain and suffering; and contrariwise, that good is what is beautiful, harmonious, lovely, kind, brotherly, sweet, and clean.

But, O immortal gods! what would the gods think of our human judgments of things? What we humans call good to the Immortals would unquestionably seem to be hopelessly depraved — but again relatively, I mean.

So when you ask: Did God create good and evil? you see what a tangle of ideas we come upon when once we try to analyze so seeming simple a question as this. I have tried to throw a little light on the matter from the standpoint of the theosophical teachings.

Here is another question to be answered:

"I am told [I am glad he said that!] that theosophists believe that all the so-called misfortunes of life are of our own deserving, and work out for our ultimate benefit. Why then does the higher nature try to warn us against disasters, thus depriving us of necessary discipline?"

Well, it is true that all the misfortunes of life we ourselves have made for ourselves. We have deserved them, because we are the parents of them. They come upon us because we ourselves receive them, and are merely receiving the reaction, the effects, of the seeds of thought and act that we have sowed in the past — a wonderful doctrine which theosophists call the doctrine of consequences, or karma.

But I never heard before that the higher nature tries "to warn us against disasters, thus depriving us" of receiving the inevitable consequences of what we have done. That would be impossible. It is true that the higher nature warns us constantly. It enlightens us

always. It is eternally pointing the way to things higher and better than those which we know and follow at the present time, and in this sense our spiritual being may be said to warn us against disasters.

But the idea that these constant intimations of truth, these constant intuitions of beauty and harmony and of urgings towards a clean and noble life, should be considered as depriving us of the necessary discipline which it is in the very nature of our evolution to undergo, does not follow at all. There are times indeed in life when the higher nature — and please think over this carefully and don't judge my words too quickly — when the higher nature actually leads us into paths of trial so that we may grow by reacting successfully against the trials.

How does a child grow? What would become of a child which was protected against every possible avenue of experience: coddled, shielded, having no chance to breathe its own life, no chance to learn to walk, to feed itself, to clothe itself, to meet any of the lessons of life whatsoever? What kind of a mother would she be who would try to bring up her child after this way? A child learns through experience, and its higher nature — for the time being its parents which are its natural guardians — see to it that it is learning, see to it that it has a chance to learn easily and properly, that the lessons it has to face and meet and overcome be not too severe at any one time; for the latter indeed would spell disaster.

The higher nature within us works with us learning human souls in much the same way. Think it over. This is all a battle of Self against self: not exactly a fighting each other, but nevertheless a constant enduring against odds, and this is, in a way, a spiritual exercise. It is exercise that makes us strong, that makes us lithe and vigorous, ready to face still greater trials and difficulties. The greatest friend that we have, the noblest cleanser of all, is sorrow,

or is pain, for the heart must be cleansed by pain even as gold is tried in the fire.

We humans ordinarily do not like this — in that respect we are just like little children — but nevertheless the fact is so, and we soon learn, when we become thoughtful, that the real man faces the trials and difficulties of life in a joyous mood — do you see? — and conquers. Yes, it is the inner joy which carries us on to victory, the sense of feeling that we cannot achieve before we will to do it; and this could not be unless the very heart of the universe were harmony and love; and, as my splendid, great-hearted predecessor Katherine Tingley used to say, "Life is Joy," a very profound aphorism, for the heart of things is celestial peace and love and beauty. This essential fabric and structure of the universe it is, which has produced the harmony and so-called law that thoughtful men see and try to understand in the universe around us, and in our own hearts also.

The higher nature is always with us, constantly warning us in the shape of intimations and intuitions to be courageous, to face life boldly, to be truthful, to be clean, to be strong, to be sincere, to be upright, and many other such things; and these precisely are the very qualities in human nature which, when followed out continuously, protect us against disaster. The only real disaster that the spirit-soul of man knows is weakness, is failure, and is discouragement. Physical disasters and other things of physical life are often blessings in disguise, and I will say frankly that the higher nature teaches us how to meet these in the proper mood, and how best to come forth from them triumphant.

Here is another question very much like the other one. I don't know whether a misanthrope wrote these questions, or whether he is just a little bit melancholic:

"Will you tell us something of that strange law which operates

to intensify our evil propensities at the very time when we are most in earnest in our efforts to control them?"

I don't know that this law is such a strange one. When you try to conquer anything that is an imperfection and therefore an evil in you — call it a yellow streak, if you like — why, naturally, you have a battle on your hands. Leave it alone, and you won't be bothered until it catches you unawares. That is where the so-called intensification comes from. There are evil things fighting for their very existence within us; they are evil energies and powers; they are the imperfect parts of our very being: part of our animal and mental being, so to say, which we have coddled, and indulged, and fed, and trained, and kowtowed to, and bowed down to, and given ourselves up to the domination of, so that they think they are, individually speaking, God Almighty within the human heart; and they will fight like God Almighty too, when you finally undertake to discipline them and to put them where they belong. They then know that their time has come, and fight desperately against the restraining and disciplining hand.

The intensification simply arises out of the fact that you have yourself to fight, the lower part of yourself; and it is not going to give up without a struggle. This is the same old simple doctrine that we all know and have heard from childhood. That is all there is to it. So it is not a particularly strange law. The more earnest you are, the more active you are, and the more eager you are, the more do you want to do the work quickly; and it is always more difficult to do a thing like that in a hurry than it is to take your time about it. Consequently, conditions and energies both are intensified.

But before we leave this question, let me tell you what I honestly think along the parallel line of thought. I don't believe that it does a bit of good to fight these things, to struggle against them. Why

on earth make a martyr out of yourself? The rule is not good. A better one is to ignore. Forget them! Treat them with contempt! They are contemptible things. Turn your eyes to the light, and before you know it they have simply dissolved like the mists of the morning — die. That is what the old, the ancient, the archaic, philosophers of China — Lao-tse, for instance — said. Don't struggle; don't fight; don't quarrel. Be quiet! Be still! Be! — Think about it!

"Are consciousness and mind a duality, in the same way that energy and matter are a duality, or is it possible for consciousness to exist apart from mind?"

Well, it depends upon what kind of mind you mean. Do you mean our common human mind, or cosmic mind? This question is so broad that it is not easy briefly to answer it. Its breadth implicates a certain lack of definiteness, which in consequence implicates a certain necessary lack of definiteness in the answer.

Of course consciousness and mind in human beings are a duality. You cannot have consciousness on this plane without a mind through which it may work and pass. The mind is the transmitter, the stepper-down onto this plane, so to speak. But consciousness most certainly can exist apart from our human mind, the consciousness of the gods, for instance; but if so it certainly must have a mind of its own through which it works and functions according to the plane on which it happens to be at the time.

Furthermore, there are different kinds of mind, but one fundamental consciousness works through all these different kinds of mind. In man, for instance, there is the spiritual mind, and the ordinary human mind, and the animal mind, and the ordinary brain-mind. These are all minds, and they all reflect the stream of consciousness, each after its own powers and capacities. But the gods have evolved forth from within the core

of their being a consciousness-mind superior to ours. Consequently they have a godlike mind through which their stream of consciousness manifests itself, through which it expresses all its sublime energies and powers; and in just the same way the human being has the consciousness-mind superior to the intermediate apparatus that the beast has.

So mind and consciousness always go together of course. But so far as any one entity is concerned, consciousness can exist apart from the mind of that individual — most certainly so.

Listen to this question:

"If the sun looked like a man, that is, if it had eyes and a mouth, and sometimes smoked a pipe, it would be easier for the average man to realize that it is a conscious entity. Why is this?"

I consider this to be an interesting question. Legends sometimes put a man in the moon. Why should not they put a man in the sun — a sun-man, of course, not a human man? Well, the reason why the average human being finds it difficult to think that the sun is an entity, a conscious entity, is because he finds it very difficult to think of any other kind of self-conscious entity than he himself is. Is that a reason? How profound!

And yet, friends, on some of the other planets of our own solar system of worlds, there are inhabitants, and in a few cases inhabitants who have attained a higher stage than our man-humanity has on our earth, who would look so strange and queer to us that the average man here would never believe for a moment that they were sensitive, thinking, conscious entities. He would say: "They are monstrosities." Why? Because he thinks of himself. He wants to see a nose, and two eyes, and a mouth, and perhaps a pipe, and two legs, and two arms, etc.! Then the body



would be to him a quite proper, conventional, human, and therefore must be a self-conscious, thinking entity!

We humans anthropomorphize, to use the popular term: we turn things willingly into human shape in our minds; and if we can do that successfully, then we are convinced, and we like it. We say: "Oh, yes, surely consciousness can exist there, because it is so like me!" But I can assure you that there are beings on other planets and in other spheres, who look upon us as most frightful monstrosities, or would if they saw us, and who would think that a creature looking like a forked radish as man does, with the extraordinary appendages that a man has, with hair sticking out of his skull and elsewhere on his body, is a most intolerably frightful, ugly kind of creature. I mean this.

Do you realize that the future races of men on this earth are going to be so sublimely beautiful that if we could see them today, envisage them in our minds, we should probably say: "My God, what a horrible-looking creature!" because we are prone to think that these future beings of beauty ought to be perfect examples of us, after the form we have now?

I suppose that if an elephant could talk, it would tell you: "What a horrible creature that keeper of mine is. Just look at his ears — tiny little things! Look at my ears! Look at his nose! He can't even pick up an apple with his nose, as I can!" So, therefore, if the elephant tribe were to be the judges of beauty, we should fare very badly.

That is the explanation why we want to put a couple of eyes and a nose and a mouth into the sun, and perhaps a pipe! This is humorous, and I mean it to be so; but I am also hinting at very serious things. We can draw lessons from these things — how imperfection of imagination, in other words how imperfection, or rather what men call evil in our hearts, can blind us to the truth.

Oh! Let us be generous hearted; let us be big minded; let us be open souled; so that when truth comes our way and knocks at our hearts, we shall be ready to receive the Christ or the Buddha — not the person of Christ-Jesus as told in Christian legend and story, but the Christ-light, the buddhic splendor which infills the universe, and provides the fountain of all the army of the sons of light, and of which a ray glows in every human soul and gives it stability, and power, and inspiration, and aspiration, and almighty love.

In the next question I shall descend from points of esoteric philosophy to the infinitesimal world of the physical universe.

"Is it the teaching of theosophy that the speed of light is the greatest possible speed in the universe?"

It is not. Light, our modern scientists say, is the greatest *known* physical speed, or rather the material energy or force or wave, or call it what you like, which has the greatest speed in passing from place to place. This is all right as far as it goes. We have no objection to the statement at all that light has the greatest known or recognized speed. But theosophists know that there are speeds of moving entities or energies, or forces if you like, within the universe compared with which the speed of light is a tardy laggard. I might instance gravitation as an example of things belonging to the universe of physical matter.

At the instant I do not refer to the speed of thought, nor to other great speeds belonging to the inner and invisible realms, but restrain my present remarks to material things, and therefore I say again: How about gravitation, which is supposed to act more or less instantaneously everywhere, so far as our measures can ascertain; and yet it most emphatically is not absolutely instantaneous, but gravitation, like any other expression of

nature's forces, has its own relative speed. It has never occurred yet apparently to any open-minded, scientific thinker of our ultramodern era, to suppose, and therefore to suggest, that gravitation may likewise have a certain speed of its own in exercising its influence, and that it may pass from one corner, so to say, of the universe to another corner, in measurable time, or what men call time. If gravitation takes no time to pass anywhither but is instantaneously manifest everywhere, we theosophists do not know it. All we know is that gravitation is a material phenomenon, and therefore is the manifestation of an inner energy, and therefore is more or less localized or particularized, and therefore must have its own relative speed.

We know that gravitation is the stronger, the greater in effect, the nearer two bodies are together. All these ideas regarding gravitation are purely materially phenomenal; and I believe that gravitation, like light, is one of the forces of the universe, and has its own speed of passing from place to place, but that its speed is greater than that of light. Nevertheless I was not alluding to gravitation when I spoke a moment ago of energies and entities existing in the universe and having a speed so great that light compared therewith would be a tardy speedster.

Consciousness being the root of substance, therefore substance and consciousness are essentially one. Similarly consciousnesses are substantial; and as the very nature of consciousness is motion, movement, therefore consciousnesses are in motion by the nature of their essential being, that is, move according to time, that is, have a speed — and in fact, a speed so great, so incomprehensible to ordinary men that it is difficult to explain, and of course we have no means of measuring it, for all our methods of mensuration are connected with physical matter itself. In any case, compared with the progressions or movements of thought, such physical, material, movements of matter as are

manifested in the speed of light or in that of gravitation are very, very slow. Pray think the matter over.

You may be interested to know that this doctrine of theosophy regarding the substantial nature of thought and consciousness, and their intrinsic or inherent characteristic of motion, is beginning to be whispered even in the lecture halls of our ultramodern scientific thinkers. But even thought and human consciousness themselves are slow as compared with energies still more spiritual. Such is our theosophical teaching; and these still more than spiritual energies to us would act with practical instantaneity everywhere. We have no means of measuring these spiritual speeds, so to say, except by our divine faculty of thought. We can easily conceive their existence, and can recognize the fact that they are; but how to mensurate their movements — it is yet wholly beyond the power of human physical laboratory instruments of any kind.

In this connection let me read to you something very interesting. A great name in the world is often nothing but a name; but sometimes behind the great name there is great worth. Fashion may make a great name. Theories loom large in their era in time, but are replaced by other theories. Thus also the names of men come and go in human reputation. So I don't quote any man because he has a reputation, nor because the world considers him great; but if he voices what our majestic ancient wisdom teaches us is true, then I quote him for the truth that he so intuitively voices.

I am going to quote two or three extracts from a very recent lecture given by a famous British scientist, Sir Oliver Lodge, in an address to the British Institute of Philosophical Studies, delivered on July 26th of this year, entitled *Beyond Physics*. This title is a translation of the Greek word "Metaphysics." This curious

thinker, but in some ways intuitive man, used the following words which I will now read to you:

"We can think of phenomena before they have occurred; and indeed we might make preparations for observing them when, later on, they cross the diagrammatic line of visibility and seem to us to occur. In other words, I suggest that *thought* can penetrate even the inaccessible region, though it must be admitted without any physical justification or observable result, until the proper time arrives. We shall find that waves do exist that can travel quicker than light, though whether we ever utilize them is a question."

"In electrified space it turns out that waves can travel quicker than light. . . .

"I have already answered the question how waves of any kind can travel faster than light. Such waves seem to be mere forms, they are not open to investigation, they make no appeal to our instruments or our senses, no signal can be sent by them, for they convey no energy, the energy is all associated with the group-waves. When those group-waves travel slowly, the constituent waves are quick. . . ."

Let me interrupt a moment to say that Sir Oliver is here using words of his own invention in order to describe certain intuitions which he has concerning the nature and structure of the physical universe, and of the universe within the physical sphere. He speaks of what he calls group-waves or material waves in the universe as manifesting what he calls the directing energy of constituent waves — these latter waves being they which build up more grossly material waves or energy-waves or group-waves, which last make the physical matter that we know. He seems to say that in the last analysis, matter or material substance is these

constituent or guiding waves which form and direct the group-waves making physical matter. I continue:

"The group-waves follow a path determined by the constituent waves, which therefore act as a guiding and directing agent, elusive in itself, but important as exercising control. The present idea is that certain group-waves constitute matter, and that this is a form of energy capable of being guided by something other than energy, something which acts as a guiding or directing principle. The guiding waves and the energy-waves are interlocked or interacting, and yet are distinguishable from each other.

"The whole thing is puzzling, because we have not got to the bottom of it. . . ."

I should say we have not! Some of the words that Sir Oliver uses, and some of the things that he describes, would make one think that he had been attending some of the lectures in this Temple of Peace delivered by me during the last few months. I continue my quoting:

"It must be apparent that these are the kind of assertions which we have been constantly making about life. Life is a guiding and directing principle. It controls matter and energy with a certain spontaneity, and yet it differs from both. What we have wanted is a physical basis for such activity. The presumptuous and hypothetical suggestion which I want to risk is that these constituent waves of excessively high frequency, far higher than anything we have yet apprehended, may be the physical basis of life and mind. The ether is hypothetically full of them, their nature is unknown, and yet they are responsible for everything that exists. I suggest that they form the physical basis, though not in the least a material basis, for an

idealistic interpretation of the universe, in which life and mind are supreme. They are a concomitant of the slow-moving group-waves which constitute matter, and they can travel at a nearly infinite pace — one is tempted to say like thought. . . .

"So now that we find that matter may be a localized peculiarity in the midst of an ocean of excessively rapid periodic influences, there is plenty of scope for the idea that the seat of our intuitive apprehensions is to be sought there, that whatever their ultimate nature may be, there is their habitat. We may presume that those periodicities are truly animated, and that they constitute the agencies and instruments through which we operate in the material sphere. The whole universe seems to be an animate structure far beyond our present apprehension; intelligent beings are making use of its constitutional periodicity; and upon that periodicity or wave-structure we ourselves and all animate beings are wholly dependent for any display of our vital or mental activities."

Immortal gods, what a change has come over the minds of our scientific luminaries! Indeed, this man is approaching some of the essential, fundamental postulates of the ancient wisdom philosophy, and he knows it not. Theosophists teach that the universe is animated from within outwards, works from within outwards, and that this animation is not the product of one fluid consciousness, homogeneous and ever-unvarying, but consists of innumerable hierarchies: hosts, armies, multitudes, of conscious beings, together composing the ethereal realms which are compact of life and of consciousness and of mind, for all these three — life, consciousness, mind — are substantial, and the physical world is merely the reflection of the interlocked activities of these substances, directed and guided by the so-called

laws of nature, which are merely the reproductions in the outward, material sphere, of what takes place within that material sphere.

Thus you see somewhat of the reason and scope of the old Hermetic axiom: "What is above is as what is below, and what is below, the same is above," for the below is the reflection of the above. The material is the reflection of the spiritual. If not, what and where is the seed of permanency in things, their seeds of individuality? How much more might I say had I the time to talk to you at greater length!

Many more questions before me this afternoon remain unanswered; but I choose one that I shall use as the last question to answer this afternoon because, as I have told you before, one whom I deeply loved and revered, Katherine Tingley, a few weeks before she passed on said to me: "G. de P., as often as you can, close your lectures, your studies, in the Temple of Peace by telling your audiences of the god within." Here is the question:

"If we are going to become the future Buddhas, Christs, gods, as you said in the Temple on last Sunday, who are going to be the humans then?"

This question has reference to the far distant aeons of the future. The humans of that far future period will be the entities who are now the laggards in the evolutionary race — those who live in what we call the animal and vegetable kingdoms; but by that time they shall have evolved forth from within themselves sufficient of their latent divine powers to make them human; and this evolution of latent energy and faculty proceeds not according to the Darwinian theory, but is evolution as understood in theosophy: the throwing out, the unwrapping, the unrolling, the expressing, of the powers, faculties, energies, potencies, locked up within. As the child grows from a microscopic human seed,



developing through the years of its growth what is latent in it — thus unwrapping itself, thus unfolding itself until it attains adulthood or full-grown manhood — thus does evolution proceed likewise in the case of the larger time scale of the human race.

In aeons to come men shall evolve into the human gods that they are already in their inner selves, and shall express equivalently grand faculties and powers in the bodies that then they shall have; and in those times we shall walk and confabulate with the gods, because they shall be our fellows, the evolved product of the humans of today.

In each one of you there is a divine being, an inner god, trying to express itself through the thick veils of mind and matter; and the whole purpose of evolution is the thinning of these veils, so that the light in the Holy Temple which is the human heart may splendidly illumine man. Then he shall be a living Christ, for the Christ-light shall be working in him. He shall have awakened the living Buddha in his being, or rather, shall have evolved forth the Buddhistic splendor already in his soul.

You are gods, and the temple of cosmic Divinity!

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[Vol 1, No 22](#)

[Contents](#)

**No. 22 (February 25, 1930)**

**QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK**

(Lecture delivered November 10, 1929)

A question from a little child: "What makes the moon, sun, and stars shine?"

Can you answer that? That is indeed a difficult question. Do you know that the greatest minds in modern science have not yet solved that question? No scientist knows what makes the celestial bodies luminous. Many and various have been the theories concerning this matter since the renaissance of scientific thought in European countries, which means a period many centuries after the downfall of the Roman Empire, and scientific men don't know much yet of the reason why the stars shine. Now a little child comes and says: "What makes the moon, and sun, and stars shine?" thus asking the same question which has perplexed the greatest of our scientific minds!

Of course the moon shines by reflected light. The moon is a dead body; which does not mean, however, that there is no life in it; on the contrary, the moon is full of life as all dead bodies are, for every atom everywhere of any body whatsoever, living or dead, as the phrase goes, is full of life, full of movement, full of energy.

But where, then, is the difference between living bodies and so-called dead ones? Only this, that what men call a living body is one which is under the control of an all-permeant oversoul, whether this oversoul be the soul of a man, or the soul of a beast, or the soul of a plant, or the soul of a star, or of a true, individualized, non-optical constellation, or of a universe: this oversoul is the indwelling mental life, the indwelling

individualized energy. But a dead body is one in which the various parts composing that dead body are no longer held in the control of a governing, over-seeing, over-enlivening power, commonly called soul. Your answer, therefore, is comprised in the last few sentences that I have uttered.

It is the soul of the sun and the souls of the stars, the other cosmic suns, which make it and them shine. What is this luminosity pouring through the sun, or through the stars? An exhibition of energy; a manifestation, as we Theosophists say, of vital power. It is the soul of the sun, the spirit of the sun, if you please, which makes the sun shine. Had we the eyes to see the marvel, had we the vision to sense the wonder, we should see everything animate or so-called inanimate, shining, luminous, filled with light and splendor; and this light is merely the manifestation of the vital power thus pouring forth through the physical vehicle; as happens in the case of our sun whose luminosity we see because our optics, our organs of vision, are able to sense one particular range of the electromagnetic vibrational energy that it pours forth.

It is the soul of a star which makes it shine; and more: I will tell you that had we the eyes keen enough, properly attuned to the vibrations, we should see that everyone of us is shining like the sun. We should see the luminosity, the light, that we emanate. Actually we are shining like gods. This is truth, and it is merely our quasi-blindness — unattuned, unevolved, as our optics are to sense these ranges of vibration — it is only the imperfection of our sense of vision which prevents us from seeing the light that each one of us emanates.

Oh, what wonders we should see could we perceive what takes place! Such marvelous play of light and color, such splendid exhibitions of vital energy, which each one of us and all other

things are constantly pouring forth; and the sun in the celestial spaces, and the stars in their places, do just that — pour forth the vital energy within. This energy rushes out from the heart of each in a vital stream, and one phase of this vital stream we humans call light when we see it; and when we cannot see it, we nevertheless are conscious of other ranges of energy, and therefore speak of electricity and of magnetism and radiant energy, and give to the different phases of this vital energy different names.

But now our ultramodern scientists are telling us that electricity and magnetism and a number of other things are simply different ranges of vibration of electromagnetic substance-energy.

The marvels of the universe in which we live are very great — and how blind we humans are! When theosophists taught these things to the public twenty, thirty, forty, nearly fifty years ago, how we were laughed at; but we had great fun out of it nevertheless! We worked, and taught and waited, and now we are beginning to see that the things we then taught are now recognized as scientific truth. It is a great thing to be on the right side. I had liefer ten thousand million times be a martyr in the cause of truth than simply run with the multitude.

Here is a touching communication that I have received; it is in this instance not from a child, but it is from one between the age of childhood and, I dare say, middle age. The communication has reference to a few remarks that I made during the course of a private meeting last night, and I shall read it to you in order to show you one sort of questions that I receive and am asked to answer. One of these days I am going to answer some questions a great deal more openly than I have hitherto done, and then I shall say things that will make people — wonder!

"That was such a beautiful, beautiful speech that you delivered

last night, in answer to the children's question about the fairies, that I am going to ask you if you will, at one of your Sunday afternoon lectures, speak about the fairies, so that the people may know how the little ones believe in them, and also how they love to play "Fairies"; and then too, your audience will get a touch of the heart of Lomaland.

"I am so happy that I am here: I don't know that any more words would express what I have in my heart. I love the work, and I just want to do all I can to help you."

Now, isn't this a beautiful and touching note! It shows the spirit that our wondrous theosophical teachings, when they are understood and not merely talked about under the guise of highfalutin phrases and long names, can arouse in the deepest recesses of the human heart.

Here is a question which is marked: "An easy one!" and it is signed: "Yours truly, Inquisitive." This is it:

"When did cause begin, and when shall effect cease?"

That is indeed a question, isn't it? I will tell you what I think about it. I think that cause, causation, never began. I think that effects, consequences, will never cease. I cannot conceive such a state of things. When men talk about a First Cause, do they realize what they mean? What preceded this supposititious First Cause? Who or what put it there, or whence came it — this supposed First Cause? Who or what introduced causation? If it had a beginning, it obviously will have an end. No, there never was a First Cause, and there never shall be an ending of things. Causation never began, and effects will never end. This is indeed an easy question to answer!

If you are not fully satisfied with these brief observations, then examine our wonderful books, wherein you will find these

matters much more fully set forth than a public speaker can tell you about in the short time that he has at his disposal. One of the most symmetrical and satisfying parts of our majestic theosophical philosophy is precisely that which deals with the so-called origin, course, and destiny of the universe. Theosophists do not say, however, that *things* never had a beginning and that things never will have an end. On the contrary, we emphatically say they do, but my reference here is to things or entities which are all finite in form and function, as for instance any one particular universe, which of course had a beginning of its present life-cycle, and will reach a term of that same life cycle; but in the frontierless spaces of space, other universes shall be in the full flower of their being, until their time to pass away also comes; and then those which have passed away return into physical manifestation again, re embody themselves in the same general way as men reincarnate — for re embodiment or reincarnation are simply expressions of the same fundamental law working throughout nature and governing the incoming, the culmination, and the out-going for the time being, of entities and things, whether infinitesimal or cosmic.

But infinity or eternity, which after all are merely words expressing limitless space and limitless duration, never had a beginning and never shall have an end. The one would not be infinity, nor would the other be eternity, were there any absolute beginnings and absolute endings.

"Please define the subconscious mind. So many things and happenings are ascribed to it that it would be interesting to learn the extent of its functions and responsibilities."

What a question! How can I define something that nobody knows anything about? I don't. I know these words well enough, subconscious mind; I have heard them until I am tired of them,

but I have never yet heard them explained. Nobody seems to know just what they do mean. Subconscious mind seems to be a phrase, or a name or a definition, if you like, given to certain latent or hid aspects and powers and faculties and energies and forces, or states of consciousness, of the human being, of which our modern investigators are beginning to know a few results; and they group together these results under the name the 'sub-conscious mind.' Why this center of consciousness should be called subconscious is somewhat of a mystery, perhaps because it is supposed to be below the ordinary consciousness of the brain-mind.

But I will tell you just what I think the psychologists are trying to say by using this phrase. The subconscious mind evidently is the vegetative part of the human intermediate being, which intermediate being is commonly called the mind or soul; and the vegetative part is that aspect of the soul which has become so habitual in function and action that we are not conscious of its working. It works along smoothly because of the ingrained habits originating in innumerable ages of the past, much as the heart beats, as the blood flows, as we grow unconsciously, as we wink almost unconsciously. These functional activities I call the vegetative part of us, signifying those things which we have learned and which have become so habitual with us that they act automatically.

Let me also here allude to the many, many things that are laid up in the storehouse of this intermediate part, called the mind or soul. Countless millions and billions of experiences and lessons that we have learned and have forgotten and which are unknown to our present brain, but which, nevertheless, form part of us, composing a storehouse, as it were; and in certain states into which we may put ourselves consciously or unconsciously, we tap, as it were, this reservoir, and then something rushes forth or

comes forth, or pours out, through the average, ordinary mentality of the human being; and then men talk, when these forgotten events of consciousness occur, about another personality, and say that it is a case of multiple personality; and this storehouse of ancient memories and experiences is what is commonly called the subconscious mind. It is not a high part of our intermediate being. It is the lower part of that intermediate being.

But what is the higher part of that intermediate being or soul? Genius, inspiration, almighty love, compassion, pity, willpower which is stayed not nor can it be held. These are a few of the manifestations of the god within, of what we may perhaps call the superconscious man.

Here is the difference between the lower and the higher parts of us; and it is with this latter part, the higher part of us, that it is our bounden duty to ally our present conscious being, to become it, to grow into it, in other words to become consciously the god within. Some have called this inner god the immanent Christ; in Buddhist countries it is called the inner Buddha. But whatever name men may give to it, there it is: a fountain of wisdom, love, inspiration, power, knowledge, in fact the source and fountainhead of each and every faculty, past, present, and to come in the aeons of the future.

Compared with this higher part, the so-called subconscious mind is but the vegetative part of us: that part of us which has become habitual in act and function, automatic like the to us unconscious functionings of the physical body — yet often not consciously known by the brain-mind.

I have answered many kinds of questions, but I have never been asked before to speak about snoring. Here is the question:



"I have sometimes been startled to hear myself, just upon waking up, emitting a last loud *snore*! By covert inquiry I find that this is not an uncommon experience; but this is the interesting thing about it: it seems as though the sense of hearing awakens before the sense of sight, because my eyes are still shut when I hear the sound. Do the five senses awaken at different and regular intervals? And what are these senses: are they universal, in the sense of being cosmic, or do they pertain only to this globe?"

I am trying to think how I myself have felt when I have doubtless at times heard myself snore! I believe — I prefer to put it in that way — that the five senses do not awaken at the same time: that they awaken one after the other, and that the sense of hearing is one of the first to awaken.

Why should one have five senses, and not more and not fewer? You must know that this is not an uninteresting question. In fact it is a very interesting one. It is known that some of the humbler creatures have not as many senses as we humans have, and yet some of these humbler creatures have senses which in their own spheres of activity are keener than any one of our senses is.

It is our theosophical teaching that these senses (numbering five at the present time, and two more to come in the future before mankind shall have finished its evolutionary course on this globe) are expressions of five different energies of the intermediate nature of man; that these five senses themselves are very far from being perfected; and that these five energies expressing themselves in and as the five senses are our avenues, or function as such, by which we may become self-consciously aware of the outer world. In a way these senses are a help to us; and in another manner they are a detriment to our progress. They are a help because they show somewhat of the nature that is around us,

and it is through our senses that much of our ordinary consciousness at the present time functions. We learn much about the world around us, and much about our fellow human beings, by means of the avenues of communication and portals of awareness that the five senses are to us.

This learning ultimately teaches us lessons of self-control, and helps to awaken within us the faculties of pity, of love, of compassion, of the will to do better; but someday in the far distant future these senses shall have evolved into something else entirely, and then they will have been outlived and will be completely forgotten; and the physical sense organs shall remain merely as physiological remnants, so to say, in the body of splendor that mankind then shall have. In those future aeons we shall have so evolved our inner faculties that we shall have become cognizant not only of the outside world through finer faculties, but shall have become cognizant of the universal field of consciousness within ourselves.

Man's inner spirit is the temple of infinitude, of its manifold life-energies and life powers; and in the course of our cyclic progression into matter, these life-energies and life powers manifest themselves outwardly; but we are now on the ascending arc of progressive development, and the whole trend of future evolution will be the development in mankind of the urge towards, and therefore the ultimate facility of, looking inwards, so that individual man may know himself — know himself as one of the collaborators with the gods in the construction and government of the universe: as one of the sparks of the infinite, cosmic Fire: for man has everything locked up within him, every power and energy that exists in the infinite spaces; and all evolution is but the bringing out of these locked-up powers, the unfolding, as a flower unfolds, of what is within. The five senses distract our attention away from the temple of the Most High, the

spirit within the human constitution manifesting through the human body.

Such are the senses. They are cosmic in a sense, because they are derivative ultimately from cosmic principles, cosmic substances; but they are particular to the mankind of this globe, because our humanity on this particular globe is passing through one of the phases of its long evolutionary journey. On other planets the inhabitants of those planets have other senses, have other means of cognizing the outside world. Just as their bodies are shaped differently from ours, so are their senses somewhat different from ours.

Forget the idea that we men of this planet Earth are the sole measure of perfection in the boundless universe! What arrogant stupidity, what stupid arrogance! We are but one humanity on one planet, and there are many humanities on many planets.

"I have heard it said that venomous reptiles are, in a very real sense, the evil thoughts of humanity in an objective form. To what extent are we responsible for the noxious elements in nature?"

This is a profound question, one very difficult to answer offhand. I can give you an answer which will contain the elements of truth, but I cannot elaborate that answer this afternoon. I have spoken of this subject on a number of other occasions also. Not only venomous reptiles, but the entire range of the families of beings and entities beneath the human, are, as I tried to point out in a series of lectures delivered from this platform in 1927, ultimately derived from man. Hence they are derivatives in a sense, offspring, instead of being ancestors. Man is the chiefest entity on earth, the oldest. He is the chiefest because he is the oldest, therefore the most evolved; and all the other families of beings ultimately sprang from humanity, from mankind, in a very

fascinating, wonderful way which you can read about in our books, and in the present and recent issues of our monthly magazine, *The Theosophical Path*, wherein have been running for many months past the series of lectures just spoken of that I delivered here in 1927.

But that is not all. That is what you might call merely the biological aspect. There is something much more difficult to understand, more profound, about this matter, and the explanation of it belongs really to our esoteric teachings, which are our secret teachings, and about these teachings I cannot here say much, except this: Man is a focus of creative powers; he is a focus of energies constantly throwing forth from himself innumerable streams, rivers, of little lives. Through his physical emanations these atomic lives, these life-atoms, leave him. Through his mind they leave him likewise, and in his mind they are thoughts, which are thus cast into the thought-atmosphere of the world; furthermore, each thought is an entity, because obviously it could not exist for a fraction of a second if it did not have an individuality of some kind inhering in it and composing its essence which holds it as an entity in individualized form.

Thoughts are things, because thoughts are substantial. Thoughts are substantial entities — not composed of the substance of our physical world, but of ethereal substance, etheric substance if you like the term better.

Now these streams of emanations from the creative center which man is, from this focus of life which man is, pass into the invisible realms as thoughts, and into our physical, visible realms also as his physical emanations; but the invisible ones — the thoughts good, bad, indifferent, highly colored, almost colorless, highly emotional, cold, hot, clean, sweet, infamous, and whatnot — all kinds of energies — leave the focus of life which man is; and it is

these life-atoms, leaving man which begin to evolve thenceforth on their own account and in time become the intermediate nature of animals as they so evolve.

Man's emanations thus build up the animal world; the animals feed on these life-atoms of many kinds —= physical, vital, astral, mental, and whatnot. As man thus emanates streams of life-atoms, so does the sun pour forth its vital essence in space, giving life and energy and ethereal substance to all that its invigorating rays touch, as well as its own atoms, its electrons, and whatnot belonging to the physical sphere.

Thus does man continually pour forth his vitality. These life-streams issuing from him give life and evolutionary impulse and characteristics to the entities of the kingdoms below the human, because these subhuman kingdoms are the evolved productions of the thoughts and vital emanations of the human race. Man's thoughts of hate and antagonism, his often beastly passions, and the various energies of an ignoble type which flow forth from him, are the roots of the things and entities in the subhuman kingdoms which man considers to be inimical and antagonistic to his own kingdom; while, on the other hand, human vital and mental emanations of a different type — of aspiration, harmonious, kindly, amiable, symmetrical, character — act in a similar way in providing the intermediate or psychical principles of the nonvenomous, harmless, and shapely beasts, as well as the large range of plants and flowers of beauty and usefulness in the vegetable kingdom.

Contrasted with the animal and vegetable kingdoms, man stands as a god, having both a creative and inspiring post, so far as these inferior entities are concerned.

What has been said is only a brief outline of the very fascinating subject of thought that this answer has touched. I have told you

that I could not elaborate it today, but in what I have said you have the key to the facts. Study our theosophical works, and you will understand more fully. In the sense that I have just outlined, we humans are responsible for the evil entities and things on this globe; but to say that man is responsible for the noxious elements in boundless nature would be using too particular and strong an expression.

Here is a question of a different type:

"Christ called his disciples 'the salt of the earth.' Does this signify that a few good men can prevent the corruption of society in general?"

Yes, and this Oriental figure of speech is well chosen, for physical salt is an excellent preservative, saving from decay; and similarly the influence of a good man can be very great. One good man can save a nation. Think of the lessons of history in this connection. I will tell you, likewise, conversely, that one evil man can damn a community if they ignorantly and foolishly allow him to do so. You know the saying of the Christian Scripture: "Evil communications corrupt good manners."

"In your theosophical book *The Voice of the Silence*, it is stated: 'Close thy mind to pleasures, as to pains.' What is the teaching of theosophy as regards innocent amusements?"

The questioner has answered his own question. If they are innocent, they are harmless — there is no harm in them. By all means enjoy yourself in innocent and stimulating amusements. But this beautiful saying of *The Voice of the Silence*, "Close thy mind to pleasures as to pains," refers to the training of certain disciples whom theosophists call chelas, who are in fact disciples of the Life Beautiful, for the ideal man is one whose will is not swayed nor is his judgment biased either by pleasure or by pain;

and this is in fact also the doctrine of the ancient Stoics of Greece; the Superior Man, as the Chinese say, is one who stands firm and is not led astray by pleasure, nor does he weaken under pain.

Innocent amusements are not only helpful but often decidedly advantageous. I like innocent amusements. I think tennis, for instance, is a delightful pastime. If anybody told me that I had to give up my games of tennis, I think that I would tell him to — tell me something else.

The next question is as follows:

"We are told to concentrate our thoughts upon the work in hand. Some people are occupied in repeating a few simple movements of the hand throughout the working day. Are they required to think of nothing else?"

Why, of course not. Otherwise they would simply be human machines. It is bad enough as it is among some of our poor factory workers. But such movements repeated day after day finally become so habitual that they are done automatically, and no particular attention is paid to them. It would be foolish to do so. The mind can be raised with high and noble thoughts. The worker, while his hands are busy, can trace his ancestry in thought to the gods in space, and feel the inspiration of a divine ancestry flowing through the veins of his soul, so to speak. He can thereby be truly a man.

People talk about freedom and slavery. Oh, what mockery! Real freedom is within. You can have freedom though bound in chains; and when men of our age begin to realize these high truths, all their patter about political nostrums of one kind or another will become utterly unimportant in their view. The greatest and most effective way of changing men and of getting better conditions even in the physical world is to teach them how

nobly to think and grandly to feel. You won't be bothered after that with any other kinds of trouble so far as men are concerned; and that is what theosophists are trying to do — I repeat it: *trying to do!*

From the list of questions before me I pick up what is a beautiful thing. It is not exactly a question: it is rather a comment:

"In the course of your lecture on Sunday, November 3rd, you stated that 'on some of the other planets of our own solar system there are inhabitants who would look so queer to us that the average man here would say they are "monstrosities."  
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"I have been thinking that were the native flowers of our planet Earth possessed of a consciousness sufficiently developed to observe and appraise man, they might bring in a verdict that man today is unspeakably grotesque and monstrous. His lust for the blood of animals and his fellow beings, his relentless pursuit of material power, have robbed him of all semblance of beauty, and his face, instead of being radiant as the sun, is all nose and chin, and the words of Shakespeare — 'in whose eyes there is no speculation' — do not apply to *him*. What a contrasting tragic figure we make when standing by a bowl of dew-laden roses!

"How will you ever restore the battered form to perfect grace and fragrance?"

Evolution, growth, learning: these take place in time, and it is time which brings beauty out of deformity, and grace from awkwardness. It is time which heals all wounds and mends all things. Time is the blessed river of Lethe, of Forgetfulness. Evolution brings in time the symmetry of a great and noble mind reflected in the physical body, unwraps and unfolds the faculties



of the inner god, the powers of the Christos-spirit within — the life, the harmony, the beauty, and the love, of the Buddha within — when these come forth, unroll themselves, unwrap themselves, so that the very physical body follows the lines of energy thus forthcoming, then shall we have a humanity beautiful, of beauteous form, men of symmetrical and beauteous mind — and this state of things will ultimately come to pass.

The next question on my list is as follows:

"This question of heredity is a terribly interesting and vital one to both parents and their grownup sons and daughters. The young folk blame their parents for their very being and everything else. I've heard them say: 'I did not bring myself into existence, so I can't help what I am, good or bad. I'm not to blame. Granddad and Father, or both, did this or that, or Grandma and Mother did this or that: it is heredity, therefore; I have to do it; how can I help it?' How can justice be done to both sides, parents and their young folk? The actual suffering on both sides affects thinking folk in a larger degree in family life than anyone can conceive of."

You should know that such a question never could arise in the mind of anyone who has studied theosophy and has understood what theosophy, the ancient wisdom, teaches. In the first place, what men call heredity is merely the obvious transmission of certain traits from parent to child; and its power, so called, has been enormously overdrawn. Heredity is not an energy: heredity is merely a name for certain visible results that are seen in human life.

It is a strange situation where children blame their parents for what the children themselves are, and where the parents blame their own parents; and thus each generation passes the responsibility back indefinitely. I will tell you that I have never

done this. I should feel ashamed of myself if I blamed my parents for what I know perfectly well I myself am responsible for, and every decent man and woman who thinks knows the same.

The explanation of what is called heredity lies in the teaching of reincarnation: that every soul comes into each new body that it takes up, carrying in its very being the seeds of what it has built itself in the past to be; and in the new body it will build for itself another body in the next life on earth; and we come to the family or to the parents whose vibrations, to use a popular term for easy understanding, are the most akin to our own. That is all there is to it.

What we call heredity is simply the transmission of certain traits from parent to child, which traits follow a certain stream of life-atoms. That is all there is in this wonderful heredity that we hear so much about; and many of the bigwigs of science today are beginning to wonder just what heredity is after all.

Strictly speaking, there is no heredity, unless, as I say, we restrict that word merely to this observable passage of a stream of life-atoms carrying certain qualities through parent, through child becoming a parent, through child again, and so forth; and the reincarnating ego is a certain bundle of qualities, of characteristics, of passions, of energies, of thoughts, emotions, loves, aspirations and inspirations — in fact a bundle of everything that man ordinarily is; and it is drawn psychomagnetically to the bosom of the family where it finds vibrations most like its own, synchronous with its own.

Wordsworth says: "We come trailing clouds of glory from God who is our home." Quite a Christian idea. But the theosophist says very differently: We come out of the past bringing ourselves with us, advancing, evolving, learning, growing better and better and better as the ages pass. Yes, we make ourselves, and we ourselves

are responsible for what we are.

Look at the immoral doctrine that the other idea is: "I am not responsible; I can do anything I like; nature has no hold on me; what is the use of trying?" Is that the kind of doctrine that appeals to any courageous man or woman, or to any thoughtful human being? No! Nature makes no such mistakes as that. Think the matter over. I repeat: You are precisely what you make yourselves to be. You are now what you have made yourselves in the past, and you are making now what you shall be in the future. Therefore, be your best, which is equivalent to saying the best of what you are within. Choose to be the god within, rather than a human weakling; for you are either one or the other.

"What is the inner significance of the Biblical quotation, 'Consider the lilies: they toil not, neither do they spin, etc.'?"

Well, this is from the Christian New Testament, the so-called Gospel of Matthew, chapter six, and it is preceded by passages wherein the great sage then speaking was trying to show that the wise man does not worry, does not pass — or should not pass — his existence in fretful and feverish anxieties, but should live free from pleasure or pain, free, manifesting the sublime spiritual qualities in his own inner being.

The great sage who spoke did not expect that his words should be taken literally: that we should take no thought for our raiment, nor for what we should eat or drink. The sage was not speaking to idiots, for it is obvious that we must eat, drink, and clothe ourselves decently. But in order to point his moral, he pointed to the lilies of the field. He said: "Consider the lilies of the field. They toil not, neither do they spin. They grow. And yet I tell you that even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed as one of these." And this statement is true. In a flower we see peace, beauty, harmony, symmetry, restfulness, quiet, strength, complete

indifference to results, and we sense an odor which charms, and we see a form which delights. There, then, is the lesson given to us by the lilies of the field, or by any other flower.

Does beauty tell you nothing? Does harmony make no appeal to you? Does fragrance affect you not? Do restfulness and peace, and the exhaling of the inner life, of the inner beauty and splendor, make no appeal to you? Then your souls are dead.

Why cannot a man be a flower of humanity, expressing the divine energies of the living god within? For they are there! I will tell you that not only does a great and good man, as the ages pass, grow quickly beautiful — not only does his very body exhale a fragrance — but his very form, his face, become luminous, lighted with intelligence and fire, and he is clothed with peace, so that his very presence is strength-giving and brings to all who have the eyes to see and the hearts to feel, inspiration and the appeal of almighty love.

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[Vol 1, No 23](#)  
[Contents](#)

**No. 23 (March 4, 1930)**

**QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK**

(Lecture delivered November 17, 1929)

I am going to begin our study together this afternoon with an allusion to the wisdom of children, the buds of future men and women, because I believe that in the minds of the little ones you will find precisely the same qualities that exist in our own sophisticated hearts — but unspoiled. Out of the mouths of babes comes wisdom; and while this saying has mystical reference to the sages and seers of the human race, who are always called, in the terminology of the ancient Mystery Schools little children because their hearts were unspoiled and their intuitions were direct, nevertheless this saying also refers to an actual fact in human life that the figure of speech was taken from — that the child-heart sees truth intuitively, and only the child's undeveloped brain prevents it from giving easy and complete expression to that truth.

I have two delightful notes here, sent in to me by two teachers in our own Raja-Yoga School. The first is a fragment of a conversation that took place between three children, between the ages of four and five years.

Paddy said: "I am never going to die." Laura asked: "Why?" And Paddy answered: "Because I don't want to." And then little David interjected: "Oh! We have to die, so we can be born again!"

I have heard it said that reincarnation is so abstruse a doctrine that none but the most educated minds can understand it. It is precisely the sophistication of our minds that prevents us from understanding it, and understanding it fully; but the child-mind

— unspoiled, intuitive, clairvoyant — sees the truth.

Here is another pretty little thing from a child five years old:

"I know we can be very good, but why cannot we be perfect?"

Can any one of you answer that question? You laugh, friends, because you know you cannot. No one who is not a theosophist can answer that question fully, but our wonderful theosophical philosophy does give us some statement as to what the proper answer should be.

Do you want to be perfect? I don't, because I don't want to stop growing. I want to grow forever and forever, becoming continually more great, grander. I don't want to reach a term in development of my faculties and powers. Becoming ever more perfect, yes; but reaching perfection, and then stopping growth? No!

The child-mind intuitively saw that truth, but did not know how to express it. "I know we can be very good, but why can't we be perfect?" It would be an awful outlook for the human race if evolution should ever come to an end. But how can it possibly come to an end? No, I don't want to be perfect.

Perhaps you may remember the saying in the Christian New Testament: "Be ye perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect." Now, that saying is not a contradiction at all of what I have just said; because who and what is this Father in heaven that the Christian scripture speaks of? It is the evolving, cosmic intelligence and life, with infinitude behind it and infinitude before it; and, like everything else, every other entity everywhere, it is continuously passing through phases of its own divine evolutionary course. And in It we live and move and have our being.

My meaning is that we should be perfect in the sense that this hierarchy of our universe is perfect, a spiritual entity existing for others, and on a continuously enlarging pathway of ever grander development. In this sense we are perfect even as our Father in heaven is perfect.

One of these days I am going to talk to you about Christianity, and about the Christian Bible, and how to interpret them. I am screwing up my courage to do this because I don't want to hurt the feelings of our brothers the Christians, for one reason; and the other reason is that I know that they won't understand me.

Now, let us turn in thought from the matters of childhood to those of adulthood. Let us turn from the intuitions of a little child to the intuition of a great scientific thinker, a modern breaker of the molds of mind. Here is the question which embodies this new idea:

"What is your opinion of Einstein's statement [which appeared in *The Saturday Evening Post*, for the week ending October 26, 1929], to wit: 'Human beings, vegetables, or cosmic dust — we all dance to a mysterious tune intoned in the distance by an invisible player'?"

Poetic! But before I pay Einstein a compliment, I am going to say something about him running in the other direction. Dr. Einstein possesses the same more or less anthropomorphic outlook on the universe that has crippled the soaring of the human spirit in the Occident for the last two thousand years. Why should we speak of an invisible player, to the rhythm and beat, to the measured guidance, of whose tune we dance? — as marionettes, I suppose.

Here is the old personal God idea, you see — a sort of aggrandized, over-worked, over-grown, over-evolved man, and Einstein makes his cosmic Divinity intone a tune!

However, from one point of view, that is to say from our theosophical point of view, I do not object to the idea, mystically speaking, of an invisible player intoning music to the spiritual-electric rhythms of which we live and move. The most beautiful, the profoundest parts, of our wonderful theosophical philosophy tell us that the universe is filled full with gods, spiritual beings, existing in all degrees or grades or stages of intelligence and evolving life: of which the smaller exist within the life-compass of the greater, and these greater in their turn are but the spiritual atoms of other entities still more sublime.

So that the tune of life which we dance to — the evolutionary course that we follow, our limitations and the frontiers that we can reach in the constantly increasing perfection of our faculties — all depend upon the fundamental vibrational rate of the life essences of this sublime entity within which or whom we of our own home-universe live and move and have our being. This fundamental vibrational rate, the rate of this vital essence in other words, of this divine cosmic being, furnishes the background or the general keynote of the life of the spacial ocean in which we are.

This cosmic entity is but as a spiritual atom — an atom of intelligence and consciousness, to be sure, nevertheless but a spiritual atom — existing in the life essence of other entities still more cosmically sublime. These ranges of being and consciousness, these steps and degrees of the universal life, are literally endless. There are no absolute jumping-off places beyond which is — what? Nothingness? There is no nothingness! Life is infinite, continuous, both in space and time.

Einstein's statement, anthropomorphic in form as it is, is nevertheless a wonderful intuition of the fact that smaller beings are encompassed in the life of greater; but in this observation or



thought of Dr. Einstein, a statement does not appear that this greater life in its turn is but one of another host of entities existing within the life-compass of some other entity unspeakably greater.

I turn to another question received by me, and this question reminds me of my boyhood. Oh! the hours that I used to pass in my boyhood, thinking over questions just like this one — until finally the light came to me, and then I knew!

"Is thought merely a movement of molecules in the brain, or a result of molecular agitation, or is it an energy which governs the molecules?"

The latter, say theosophists. If not, will you tell me, pray, what is the movement of these molecules so called? Why do they move? What is their beginning and ending in movement? The only answer that the materialist can furnish is: I do not know. But the great intellects of the human race, illumined by high spirituality, the great seers and sages of the human race, have sent their spirit into and behind the veils of physical substance, and into and behind the mental veils which obscure our vision, into the recesses of the spirit, and have brought back what they have seen; and then have formulated their vision, their insight, into philosophy and religion and science; and they tell us that within the physical universe there is a spiritual universe of which the physical universe is but the outer garment or veil, the mere reflection, copying the energies, substances, reasons, and laws which prevail within.

The physical universe is but the reflection of the within. And this within is not one; it is an infinite range of what theosophists call planes or steps or grades of intelligences, of consciousnesses, of substances, of energies, each one interlocked with every other one: each one, so to say, interpenetrating every other, and all

together furnishing the phenomena and the noumena, the effects and the causes, of things as they are — not merely of the physical universe that we sense more or less perfectly with our physical eyes, imperfect as these organs of report are, but of the universe in the theosophical sense, as the manifestation of cosmic lives and intelligences, these cosmic lives and intelligences existing in hierarchies of conscious and thinking beings.

Oh, what a vision! How suggestive! Once the idea is grasped, how both mind and heart are taken captive, and the imagination led on from point to point of thought, until the logic of it all is seen, and finally there comes the light; and then the thinker realizes his oneness with all that is, his unseparate nature from all that is: that verily in himself, which means all his constitution inner and outer, there lie all the wonders and mysteries of the boundless All of which he is a child, of which he is the product; and therefore is he an inseparable part of it, life of its life, intelligence of its intelligence, consciousness of its consciousness.

It is these various grades or steps or degrees of nature — of substance, of energy, of consciousness, of everything — that form the varied phenomena of the universe that our marvelous intelligence tells us somewhat of, and in which universe we see the various degrees of perfection: the less evolved, the more evolved, the still more evolved, and so on to the still greater evolved. And here we stop, simply because our human imagination, as yet weak and of little power, fails to comprehend the greatness of it all.

But see the promise of this conception of the universe! See what growth will bring us: in ever expanding consciousness and in ever deepening love for all that is, when we sense our intrinsic, inherent oneness with the universe, spiritual, intermediate, and physical.

So thought, and all other phenomena, are simply the manifested effects, the resultants, of the ever-working energies of the human constitution; and these energies it is which differentiate one man from another man, and produce what we humans call the phenomena of individuality. The root of us is a spiritual being whom we may call variously our inner god, the divine monad, or by some other equivalent phrase.

Here is a beautiful question. I thought to myself when I received this question: Can I give to my friends in the Temple of Peace some conception of our theosophical teaching in answer to this? Here it is:

"Is the sun of our solar system inhabited, or is it a 'consuming fire,' therefore uninhabitable?"

Most decidedly it is not a consuming fire. The sun is not on fire. Cast that old, formerly scientifically orthodox, and now completely discarded, idea, notion, out of your minds! The sun is not burning. Theosophists go very much farther than this mere negation of a former scientific fact. We say that in itself it is not even hot, though there may be heat, in one sense of the word, surrounding it, paradoxical as the statement sounds. It is a ball, a vast globe, of all kinds of energies: spiritual, intellectual, psychical, vital-astral, electromagnetic, physical. How much more could I tell you about the sun, had I the time to do so, and were you prepared to hear it!

"Is it inhabited?" Shall we turn to Herschel's idea and say that the willow-leaves of Nasmyth are the solar inhabitants — that those strange rufflings of the solar surface that the astronomers see are the inhabitants of the sun? No, certainly not! But an intuition of the reality was in Herschel's mind. The sun is the source of all life in our own solar system, the heart of that system. It is not only full of life, but also full of lives; but these lives are not men. A

man's physical body would be simply annihilated were it to fall nearly within the encompassing range of the titanic forces that play through the solar orb: any body of matter as we know it would be instantaneously dissipated into blue, impalpable ether.

Nevertheless the spirit of man — deathless, immortal, of titanic power — could undergo undisturbed the play of forces pouring through the sun; and not only that, but it would feel an inexpressible joy were it to penetrate the solar orb. The sun is the heart of our solar system. It is the home of all the vital energies that play through our own family of planets. It is all this, but it is vastly more than this. It is the manifestation of an indwelling soul, a spirit if you like, of which its terrific powers, its blinding luminosity, are but feeble expressions; and we speak of them as feeble only because we human beings, living atoms of the sun's family, can understand no more of it than what we do understand — unless indeed man turns to the understanding faculty of his spiritual being, which is, in holy truth, a child of the sun. In his inmost essence, man is a son of the sun.

We are not sun worshipers. Please do not misunderstand me to mean that. We do not worship the sun. But cannot we recognize a truth without being belittled by the public and given an unfriendly name? Every new truth is, as a rule, unwelcome to men; and theosophists have been voicing unwelcome truths since our Society was started in 1875, but we are continuing on the path that was then entered upon of revealing truths to men.

Most of the one-time unwelcome truths that we formerly enunciated, most of them I say, are today accepted scientific doctrines. That, if you like to consider it so, is our present reward. But we are not pausing in our work. We are going to enunciate a great many more doctrines which will be new to the Occidental world in general: doctrines that most people won't like to hear at

first, because they will be new. This is a promise that I make to you, so prepare! However, I advise you to come along with us, if you have the feeling of our common human nature that you desire to be on the right side. Therefore, I repeat: follow us, and you will have your great reward. I mean this, every word of it.

I have so many questions here before me that I am afraid I won't be able to answer them all this afternoon, so I take up a few.

"What is the attitude that a theosophist should take in reference to the schemes of those who believe that humanity can be reformed by legislation?"

I don't know what theosophists in general might say. Speaking as one of them, my attitude towards those people who think that you can legislate a man into being honest or good is simply that of quiet good humor. I would say: "Brother, you are wasting your time." The way to make a man good, the way to make him obey the law, is by working upon him from within, not by trying to regulate his life from without. Nine hundred and ninety-nine men out of a thousand will resent that. Nobody likes it.

But show men truth. Take their hearts and imaginations captive with the beauty of ethics philosophically explained. Show them truth and an explanation of truth, and you have hooked them, because they are with you. Every decent man will say: "He is right."

You know, my favorite job is hooking people. I am a fisher of men, and I am proud of it. I go out fishing for men on every Sunday, and in a little while I hope that I shall be able to make a fishing tour over the world, and for that purpose I have my bait ready and my hooks are sharp, and I am going to hook all the men that I can. What are my hooks and what is my bait? My bait is the sublime wisdom-religion of antiquity, and my hooks are

telling men of their own inner faculties, unknown to themselves — an appeal to their own inner, spiritual being — a call to them to know what they themselves are. Man, know thyself! I am trying to show my fellow men what mysteries and beauties they have locked up within; and every word that I say along this line is a hook; and, as the Founder of Christianity, Jesus, said: Be ye fishers of men.

"I like your teaching to the effect that we should control our thoughts, that good thoughts should be substituted for evil thoughts, and so on. But in reading your literature I come upon advice like this: 'Silence thy thoughts.'

"It seems to me that if I were to stop thinking, there would be nothing left of me. Please tell me what becomes of my consciousness when the flow of thought is stopped."

Well, in the first place, you would have peace. You would begin to know something. Isn't it amazing how people seem to think that a mind crammed full of the ideas of other men is a genial mind, the mind of a genius? Stop thinking? But you cannot do that, nor is that the advice given to you. The advice is: "Silence your thoughts," which means: control them, be the master of them. Do not be the slave of the vagrant mental tramps that run through your mind; but be men. Give birth to thoughts and rule these your children, and when they become naughty, put the dampers on. Silence them.

Be a thinker, not so much of thoughts, but of thought. Do you see the difference? In other words, leave the restless activity of your brain-mind, and go into the inner chambers of your heart, into the recesses of your consciousness, the holy place within, and see the light. Receive the light. Silence your thoughts, and enter into consciousness. Think it over, please.

Examine your own mental processes, and see how much time you waste in merely thinking thoughts, useless thoughts, most of them, and neglect to drink of those sublime fountains of knowledge and wisdom and consciousness that you have within you, the sources of inspiration and genius: to drink of the genial springs, of those Pierian founts, whence flows all that makes life worth while.

Here is a question of another kind:

"I am sometimes served with walnuts which have three 'halves,' and I have seen a calf with six legs. If nature is divine in origin, how is it that these blunders are happening all the time?"

I think that this kind friend thinks he is going to catch me. Now, watch me hook him. Why does he think the things he mentions are blunders? What makes him think that? Doesn't he see that in supposing that nature is blundering, he is taking things for granted, and therefore crippling his own vision? Why take it for granted that nature does not know better than you do what she is doing; and because a six-legged calf or a three-halved walnut should fall in your way, that therefore nature is out of joint and things are going awry: in other words, that because this is not normal, therefore it is wrong? Don't you see that you dislike it because it seems to you to be wrong?

Is genius normal, for the matter of that? I should be awfully glad to hear that it were so! Then all men would be geniuses: then you are a genius and I am too!

But I will tell you just what these so-called teratological phenomena are, these so-called monstrosities — and there are many, many kinds of them. They are either hark-backs — a harking back to what once was the rule, the norm — or they are

shadows of what is coming to pass, future events casting their shadows before, things which nature is attempting to bring forth and can only bring forth at present in sporadic instances where conditions and environment are proper.

Now, to which of these two explanations any particular wonder may belong is another question again, and it would require a very wise mind to decide. But our wondrous Theosophical philosophy gives us a clue even here, because it tells us what previous humanities and previous races of beasts and previous vegetations were like; and it also tells us what future humanities and what the beasts of the future and the vegetation of the future, shall be like. Sometimes men are born today with six fingers, or six toes, or even one more than six.

As of course you know, people used to kill other people not so long ago who thought a little differently from the normal run of men. They were killed because they were supposed to be wicked for thinking differently, and consequently they were considered abnormal. In other words, they were not like everybody else. They were wicked to have thoughts that nobody else had; therefore of course the devil had something to do with it. They were called witches or wizards or whatnot.

Is it not clear that the idea that because things are not normal therefore they are wrong — don't you see that this idea is a superstition? We should rather look for the cause, and look with an open mind, to obtain some new truth, than to suppose that our judgment of things is infallible, and that our normal state is nature's fundamental and changeless rule.

Nature makes no radical mistakes. Hence the idea that because a six-legged calf is born, therefore there is something wrong with nature's ways and that it is a blunder, and that therefore nature cannot be divine in origin because a six-legged calf is born, is



rather foolish.

You see, the ideas do not hang logically together. It is wrong to suppose that because you do not understand a thing, therefore nature is out of tune with herself. What I am actually trying to impress upon your minds is this: that it is not only ludicrous in itself, but positively foolish to attempt to mensurate nature in all ways by the standard of what our ordinary human experience considers to be the norm.

For instance, do you know what the inhabitants of other planets may be like in appearance? I have spoken of this matter before, and I will now again tell you that if you could see the inhabitants of some other planets, you would not like their looks at all — because they don't look like you! That is a fact.

Now, we white men, or rather pink men (most of us are pink), think that we are the beauties of the earth; but other races do not think that we are. They think that we white men, or pink men, have a rather unpleasant aroma about us, and also an unpleasant color of skin, and disagreeable features. I have talked intimately with men of other races, and I have learned just about what they think of us. Don't think that because a thing is not like you, therefore nature has blundered in shaping the other so different from you.

"Are we justified in asking an actor to personate a murderer? Can he escape the evil influence of the emotions of hate, or greed, which he is required to simulate?"

This really is a profound question. There are two sides to it, or rather, two ways of answering it. I myself have acted on the stage, or rather, have tried to act, and I have found that if I tried to impersonate an imperfect character I began to get imperfect thoughts: began to feel that my own life had links of strong

sympathy with the imperfections that I was personating.

I also have played the part of a god on the stage, and I know how it is to feel that you are a god. It is an ennobling thing to feel in that way. However, I have never acted the part of a homicide. I think that I would like to try that role sometime, merely in order to find out what homicidal feelings might bring to my mind. I don't think that it would affect me, but I do believe that if a man passed his life in impersonating, and in trying to feel, the actions and thoughts and emotions of a murderer, night after night, he would break down a certain mental and emotional barrier which all decent folk have in their consciousness, and thus come to realize that murdering would become, to a certain extent, familiar to him.

Now, that is my feeling about it. I may be wrong. Fortunately, actors do not pass their lives in impersonating one thing all the time. They change their roles. A murderer on the stage one day, and an attempt to be a god on the stage the next day; and I suppose that the one role counteracts the evil influences of the other. Answer this question in the way that you yourself like!

Here is a profound question, and a very interesting one:

"Is it true that cosmos and chaos are a duality: that chaos is a something incomprehensible and terrifying (that is, terrifying to a human mind), in which vast universes may and do come into being only to be swallowed up and dispersed by other vast cosmic energies; and that cosmos is that portion of chaos which has been seized and held in beauty and order by the determined will of *individuals*, whether they be gods, demigods, or men?"

To the latter part of the question regarding cosmos, I can answer at once that such is the teaching of the ancient wisdom-religion,

today called theosophy; but that chaos is not something which remains forever chaos; and further, that it is not merely ungoverned, unensouled, unrulèd space. Chaos is a Greek word originating in a Greek root meaning, "to yawn open." Actually it is what we moderns call space, in the original, archaic conception comprising the idea of an indwelling, over-brooding, cosmic, spiritual power, which the modern idea lacks.

Again, chaos, from which we have the English word *chaotic* — meaning an assemblage of things in disorder — meant to the Greek philosophers who used this term simply that in space, once that universes have passed out of physical existence, there remain seeds of what had been — seeds deposited by these universes. But these seeds of life, when in future aeons the time for manifestation comes anew, are destined to develop into another cosmos or universe of law and order.

Chaos, therefore, really is but the other aspect of cosmos. To use our own theosophical terms, cosmos is manvantara, and chaos is space in the state of pralaya. Chaos is space filled with the seeds of universes and of beings to be: in other words, it is sleeping, resting, Matter. Cosmos, therefore, is simply a Universe in manvantaric being and pursuing its evolutionary course until its time comes to sink into sleep and to undergo the dissipation of its composing atomic hosts; and then what is called chaos will again be there, until once more the clock, the cosmic timepiece, so to say, shows the hour for the universal rebirth, for universal reïmbodiment, and then the universe that was comes into being again: the old hosts of atoms are reassembled once more, and form a cosmos — suns and planets, constellations and whatnot.

Even so pragmatical a mind as that of Herbert Spencer grasped this ancient thought — also a favorite teaching of the old Stoical philosophy — and Spencer wrote of the time when, according to

his idea, nature would run down only to resurrect again from its cosmic ashes.

I now turn to a question which was sent to me some weeks ago, and as my time for closing is nearly here, it seems only fair that I should answer it this afternoon:

"Dean Inge, dean of St. Paul's, London, in an article published on September 18, in *The Evening Standard*, on "Magic and Miracle," makes the following statement:

"America has provided us with several superstitions, and a philosophy which tolerates them. The philosophy is the old philosophy of Protagoras that "Man is the measure of all things." A civilization which rests on bluff aspires to bluff Nature and the Author of Nature. Man creates his own values to suit himself; if he feels jolly, he can snap his fingers at science. "What is truth?" said jesting Pilate, and would not stay for an answer.'

"Do you accept the philosophical saying of Protagoras that 'Man is the measure of all things'? If so, please state in what way this saying is to be interpreted."

Well, of course, Dean Inge has his own opinions about things. He is an interesting man and he knows the generous American heart. He knows that he can say anything about the American people, and if he says it in a courteous way, the Americans will understand him — have their own opinions, of course, of what he says, but won't be offended. It is true, there is quite a deal of bluff in this country; but are Americans the only bluffers? Privately (tell it not abroad!) I think that Dean Inge himself is somewhat of a bluffer. It has been my experience, friends, that we usually accuse the other chap of just what we ourselves are guilty of. Our own fault looms so large in our consciousness that we think

perforce the other fellow must be doing the same thing or thinking the same thing.

Now, in answer to the question: Yes, it is the teaching of the ancient wisdom that man is in very truth the measure of all things. There are very many sides from which this question can and should be answered. First, being an inseparable part of the universe, man must have everything in him which the universe contains. He is its offspring, a child of infinitude; he is not separate from the universe. Nothing can exist anywhere in the spaces of space, in boundless infinitude, which man has not in himself as an inseparable portion of the whole.

Next, how do you understand anything? Do you understand it by some wonderful, mysterious faculty, which is different from and not found in the universe of which you are an inseparable part? You can understand the universe only by your own inner powers, spiritual and intellectual, which merely reflect the energies and operations of that universe — which is all things. Therefore are you naturally, intrinsically, a measure of all things. You can know truth only by your own faculties. Another man may have a vision and may tell you his vision; but you cannot really understand it until you yourself have seen; and you can see that same vision because the other man and you are both inseparable parts of the cosmic Mother, and the same faculties, energies, powers, possibilities, play through you both and through all others. In brief, man measures everything by his own innate powers.

When we reflect that those innate powers are but the offspring of the universe which man is measuring, then we see that he, man, is a measure of all things, because in the inmost of his inmost, he is all things. A child of the universe, its life is his life. He is rooted in the divinest of the divine, if indeed we may pause there, and lives even his physical existence in the midst of the encompassing

substances and powers of the physical world, of which in his physical form he likewise is an inseparable part.

Man, therefore, is essentially everything, existing on all planes of consciousness; therefore he is a measure of all things, the measuring rod, by which he may translate to himself the mysteries, divine and other, within himself — which means within the universe.

And in proportion as you ally yourself with your own inner god, with the fountain of divinity which is constantly pouring through your inner being, does your consciousness ascend and expand in power and reach, so that with inner growth comes expanding vision on the one hand and the expanding consciousness to interpret that vision on the other hand.

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[Vol 1, No 24](#)  
[Contents](#)

No. 24 (March 11, 1930)

QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK

(Lecture delivered November 24, 1929)

I don't feel like answering questions for you this afternoon. The beautiful music that we have just heard has thrown me into an entirely different state of mind. I feel like talking to you after another manner: opening my heart to you, and saying things that will bring to you an illumination and a sense of peace and comfort.

However, as I have promised to answer questions, I will do so, and I shall try to give you answers to the questions that I have before me that will be satisfactory. What curious creatures we human beings are! We never want to do the thing we ought to do, and we always want to do the things that we should not do!

But I am going to be good, and in so doing you will see an example on my part of self-conquest, and of self-control! The musical number, Massenet's *Elegie*, that my sister has just played, brought me back in memory to the side of a dying friend; and it was this memory that gave a direction to my thoughts different from that which I had when I came into our Temple of Peace.

What I first take up is not a question, it is an anecdote, unless indeed an anecdote can be a question of a certain kind; nevertheless it is in anecdote, and a true one: a true story about a little child and I received this story in this morning's mail. It was sent to me by a Dutch friend who has a little boy who used to be in our Raja-Yoga School. This boy is still very young, at present five years old, I believe. He and his granddaddy were talking together one day. The boy's name is Pieter.

"Pieter said: 'But grandpa, when you were as small as I am now, you were in Holland. Then your daddy lived still, and your grandpa too?'

"Grandpa: 'No, I never met my grandpa, and my daddy died soon too.'

"Pieter: 'My daddy will not die soon, you will die first.'

"Grandpa: 'You never can tell who will die first.'

"Pieter: 'Yes, when I will be as old as daddy is now, you will have died, because daddy will be as old as you are now, and you will have died. And then after a little while, you will be a little baby again, and I will be a big man.' "

Now, I am perfectly positive that this child of five never was taught anything about reincarnation as a doctrine, and if he had been, I doubt if this child at the early age of three could have had the mental ability to apply it two years later in a conversation that he had with granddaddy.

Where do these ideas of little children come from? Do they just happen? I don't believe in this just-happen idea. It isn't a sensible idea. As a matter of fact, anything that happens, happens because it was caused to happen. We are not living in a lunatic universe. So consequently when a little child of four or five talks about rebirth and about coming again on earth, and growing to be a big man, and tells his granddaddy that the granddaddy is going to be a little baby, we see here the working of an instinct, or rather an intuition, of the soul; and the little ones have more of these intuitions than we grownups think that they have. It is our sophisticated and spoiled adult minds that won't believe that the little ones think as deeply as they do — albeit unconsciously to themselves.



We cannot believe — we find it hard to believe — that the little ones can ask us questions which we adults cannot answer. And yet, during the course of some lectures that I gave here a few months ago, I asked a number of questions which had been sent to me, as coming from little children, and I then asked if you could answer them. I did not get a single reply. Nobody stood up, or raised his hand! As a matter of fact, I had difficulty in answering them myself, and I think I could not have done it if I had not had our majestic theosophy behind me to tell me what to say.

I now come to the first real question before me:

"Am I right or wrong in my feeling that *diplomacy* and *sincerity* cannot walk hand in hand? By diplomacy I do not imply tact. Personally I dislike diplomacy, particularly when the underlying reason or reasons are well-known or obvious. My feelings are that when diplomacy is used in such cases, a certain amount of sincerity is lacking in its true sense. I would rather have a person speak to me right out and say the truth; it hurts much less. Please explain."

I don't think that this question requires any explanation at all. I fully agree, I think that the only true diplomacy is of the heart: tact, kindness, truth-speaking, thoughtfulness for others. When a man has to resort to devious and roundabout ways in order to establish a point or to strengthen an argument, he is always working to get something for "me." Now, that may be all right in certain circumstances, but there are very few cases where simple honesty and straightforward speech fail. They are magical. And it is the most wonderful way by which to disarm the other scheming chap, because he never believes that you are going to talk to him in that way — truthfully.

Here is something that is rather pathetic, I think:

"In the course of an address delivered by Major Henry R. Sanborn during the Convention of the American Legion held in San Diego last August, the speaker asked some questions which he did not attempt to answer. As reported in *The San Diego Union*, of August 25, 1929, Major Sanborn said:

" 'I am not trying to make a speech, but to develop reality. The boy marching along the road with me when the shell struck — taking *him* and leaving *me*. Why? In the trenches, some were taken and some left. Why? And so they pass on. My battery — seventy-nine gone. Why was I left?'

"Question: What answers does theosophy give to Major Sanborn's *why's*?"

One all-inclusive, fully satisfactory, no devious explanations; and this answer is what we call karma meaning consequences, the doctrine of consequences, that what ye have sown in nature's fields of life, ye shall reap; as ye sow, ye shall reap, in this or in a later lifetime.

But this does not mean that necessarily death is something to be so carefully avoided. Oh, ten thousand times liefer death than dishonor! And there are very rare times and very rare occasions in human life, friends, when it is better by far to die than to live.

This is not a preaching of suicide. That is not what I mean. In our theosophical view, suicide is radically wrong and utterly indefensible. But when sometimes in human life there comes the parting of the ways, the right-hand path or the left-hand path, the path of duty or the path of selfishness, which pathway does the true man choose?

So it is not the path of death which arouses our sympathetic interest in these *why's*; it is, as this gentleman queries, a question

of religion and of philosophy. He sought for an answer to this question, but could find none; and yet the great religious philosophies, the great philosophical religions, the great literatures of these of the entire world, are full of the answer. Search your own heart and you will find in adequate answer there also.

The universe that we live in is one governed entirely by what people call law and order; that the tree bears its fruits; consequences accrue and ensue to us from what we do, and the consequences are like the original causes. It is not a helter-skelter universe. It is not a lunatic universe. It is one governed by law and order entirely, and in every realm of being, and in every sphere of life; and throughout the entire universe consequences are the resultants of previous actions done or of actions left undone. Therefore was the questioner left; therefore was the boy marching with him killed. Better so.

Nature makes no fundamental mistakes. You must see the comfort in this doctrine. There is in Nature no haphazard action, no fortuity, no injustice: but truth, justice, and the cosmic, the universal, love, which is the cement of the universe, which tells us that whatever is, ultimately is right; that as we sow, we reap. See also the ethical aspect of this. And that was what was meant by the great Syrian sage Jesus, in saying: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth, where thieves break through and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where thieves break not through and steal, nor doth moth or rust consume, nor is there any corruption."

These remarks do not refer to the treasures of worldly goods. It is such literal misinterpretations which have killed the spirit of the doctrine of Jesus. No! The great Syrian's observations refer to character, to the great gifts of the human soul and heart. These

are the ones that we should cultivate; for having them, none can take them away from us. They are with us forever, because they are we. The slave in chains with a godlike mind is infinitely freer than the so-called free man enslaved to his money bags. The former's spirit can soar the spaces of space, while the other wanders not at all from the material objects which engross all his facilities. What servitude! Therefore, sow well! Sow your character and reap a noble destiny!

"Did Mme. Blavatsky herself choose the word "theosophy" to designate the wisdom-religion which she was bringing anew to the world, or had some of the great teachers before her day used this same word for the same teachings?"

"Why was a Greek word chosen for the name of the teachings as a whole, when all the terms and phraseology of the teaching itself are in the Sanskrit tongue?"

In the first place, they are not all in the Sanskrit tongue. Many of our technical words are Tibetan, Greek, Hebrew, Latin, and derived from other tongues. A great many are Sanskrit. Theosophy itself is not a new word. It was used by many of the ancient Greek thinkers, and by a few of the early Christian Fathers, in the latter case to mean the wisdom of God, which they said was Christianity; but by the Greek Pagan philosophers it was used to mean that divine wisdom which the spiritual entities infilling the universe studied and lived: *Theosophia*, god-wisdom.

Ammonius Saccas of Alexandria, the Neoplatonist philosopher, called his school a theosophical school, and the name was chosen in the modern Theosophical Movement on the occasion of the formation of the Theosophical Society in 1875. The formers of the Society had gathered together. They had a dictionary with them; they opened it; they said: "What shall we call this Society?" A number of names were proposed, and Colonel Olcott, then the

President of the Society, or President-to-be, passing his finger down the column of names, finally came to the word 'Theosophy,' and he said: "How about Theosophy?" "Fine!" they all said. "We will call our Society the Theosophical Society," and so they did. It was a good name, an excellent name. I don't think that this name was chosen by chance; I don't believe in chance. I don't know what chance means. I know that I have heard men talk of chance, and I know that they think that they said something, but on analysis I find that they said nothing at all.

When a man does not know how to explain a thing he says: "It is Chance." And how any scientific philosopher can talk of the law of cause and effect, and in the same breath speak of chance, is beyond me to understand. I can understand why they do it in one sense of the word: they don't realize the logical impasse into which they go. There is no chance in nature. Please try to analyze chance, and you will agree with me.

"In the *Bhagavad-Gita*, a Hindu scripture, chapter 2, a method is outlined by which we may 'forever burst the bonds of karma and rise above them.' Does this in any way correspond to the Christian teaching as to the forgiveness of sins?"

It does not! Forgiveness of sins, according to the Christian theory, must be preceded by conscious repentance, and I suppose that if you repent and pray hard enough, and believe in the purifying power of the "blood of the Lamb," your sins will be forgiven unto you. But theosophists do not teach that doctrine. What the original Christians meant by the teaching of forgiveness of sins is precisely what we theosophists today teach when we say that the only way by which sin can be forgiven, is by neutralizing it, by expiation, by reestablishing the equilibrium in nature that has been broken. You must thus repay, for our universe is governed by immutable law and unshakable order.

It is pleasant enough to talk about the forgiveness of sins for him who sins. But how about the poor beings who have suffered from the sinner's sins? Will forgiving the sinner restore these sufferers? Will it help them? You must see the reach of the moral iniquity of this doctrine. You must see the terrible situation — logically, philosophically, religiously, and scientifically speaking — into which it puts those who uphold it. No wonder that we theosophists reject it!

I don't wish to be unkind, or to seem unkind, in the remarks that I make or have made. Our doctrine is that we reap what we have sown, and knowing this we are urged to sow aright. The only forgiveness of sins, if we can call it that, is by our reestablishing the broken equilibrium brought about by our own acts. That is meant in the *Bhagavad-Gita* in the saying that we shall in time so evolve that we shall rise above the plane of cause and effect, in other words, that we shall have worked out the effect: we shall then have re-established the equilibrium which once we broke, and for which breaking we are held responsible. For I tell you, friends, that man is a collaborator with the gods in the governing of the universe. In his inmost parts, he is a spiritual being of enormous, of titanic power; and even in his human aspect he has facilities and energies which are naturally his, and which he can use, and misuse, and abuse, both to his own detriment and to that of others; and living as we do in universal law and order, who is responsible for the broken equilibrium? The actor.

I can tell you that so just is nature, so accurately adjusted, and withal so kindly, that he who breaks a law of nature must pay the penalty, to use the popular expression, to the uttermost farthing; and it is in this repaying that we learn lessons of indescribable value to us. It is by pain and suffering that ultimately we grow strong and wise. In the inmost of the inmost of us there is an inner god who is deathless, immortal, unstainable, and ever

unstained: one of the spiritual collaborators, as I have said, with the highest gods who rule our home-universe.

What a sublime conception! What visions these theosophical ideas give to us of man's origin and of his future destiny, as he advances along his evolutionary pathway! Think, I pray, over these matters. Taste the joy that understanding of them will bring to you when you realize the religious and philosophical and scientific reach of them: immense hope, unspeakable peace, a sense of the boundless love which infills the universe and actually holds it together.

Man is not a "worm of the dust." He is a collaborator with the gods. Like the gods, he has choice, free will, intellect, love, compassion, pity, sympathy, mercy, power: all of these being godlike qualities. Man is a fallen god, it is true, sunken from his high estate; but he is one day destined, by and through the very urging of the spiritual powers within his breast, to become again what once he was, but grown greater, a nobler god even than he was in the beginning.

"What has theosophy to offer in place of the loving and merciful Father in Heaven, who listens to the cry of his children, answers their prayers, and finally takes them to dwell with Him in everlasting joy and felicity?"

What a picture! It is pretty and touching, but oh, how glad I am it isn't true! I want to be somebody in this universe of ours. I am a man. I have a sublime duty to perform. Wrongs that I have done I must undo. Wrongs that have been done unto me in the aeons of the past I shall receive the recompense of. As a collaborator-to-be in the future, of the gods who rule the universe, I feel my kinship with the Divine; and not only my duty do I feel, but the unspeakably holy privilege of collaborating in the divine work.

What sentimental, medieval, dark-age ideas of a loving Father who creates some of his children unto eternal damnation, and others of his children he creates unto eternal salvation! Merciful gods! If this were true, what is the use of striving? What is the use of morals and ethics? What is the use of anything that is worth while, if this so-called merciful Father in Heaven creates us 'a worm of the dust, whether we will or whether we nill; and whether we will or whether we nill finally takes us unto his bosom for nothing that we have earned; and him whom I loved better than myself for his outstanding and grand spiritual qualities, this "merciful Father" damns eternally! Who can believe such horrors!

No! Theosophy has nothing equivalent to that, thank the immortal gods! Nothing! And I think that you will find very few modern clergymen teaching this doctrine today. The clergy too have evolved in understanding; they too have heard the whisperings of the Christ-spirit in their hearts, and even they are beginning to understand the wonderful spirit of the Buddha, typically theosophical, who said: I will not attain nirvana, unspeakable bliss, for myself as long as one soul suffers in ignorance and pain. I will remain and work and help. Oh, what spiritual and moral grandeur is there in this! Don't you see it? And that is also the teaching of theosophy.

"Is it correct to interpret the Bible saying 'In my Father's House are many mansions,' as an aspect of reincarnation, because in *The Secret Doctrine*, Volume I, on page 257, it says that this saying may be contrasted with the occult saying: 'In our Mother's house there are seven mansions, or planes, the lowest of which is above and around us — the Astral Light?'"

It is true, turning to a more technical teaching of theosophy, that this Christian saying could have its application to the doctrine of



rebirth in human flesh. But that is not its fundamental meaning. The saying is a reference by a Christian sage and seer to the age-old mystical teaching of the Mystery Schools that the universe is formed of many planes, realms, worlds, spheres — give to them what name you like — of which only one is visible, the one that our physical sense apparatus tells us a little of; and all the others in consequence are invisible to us; further, that these realms or worlds or spheres or planes are filled full of beings, inhabitants, creatures, entities, appropriate in every case to these spheres of life, these entities or inhabitants possessing intelligence, sentience, natural consciousness, and bodies after their own types and kinds, even as we humans on earth have all these qualities and attributes appropriate to and fit for our own present plane of physical existence.

Yes, these invisible worlds are filled full with these beings, and there are hosts and hosts and hosts of these inner and invisible planes and worlds; and uncountable multitudes of conscious, sentient beings live in them, and these invisible planes and worlds are the mansions of which the great Syrian sage and initiate spoke when he said: In my Father's House are innumerable mansions of life.

This is, however, an old idea which did not originate with Jesus. You will find the same saying, almost word for word, in others of the Oriental scriptures, and I have given you the meaning of the idea. It is a beautiful meaning, very suggestive, philosophical, religious, and also, so far as we can see, it is scientific; it is also appealing, because it is logical and coherent. It has every qualification for acceptance by reasonable men.

My next question is a curious one. Sometimes I get very interesting questions — sometimes. The ones that are not interesting, I don't know what to do with. Honestly, if I ignore

them, it seems unfair. It seems unfair, on the other hand, to bring an absolutely uninteresting question before you, and to take up your time in answering it; but all the questions that I have today I think are very interesting. Of these, here is one of the most interesting, in a way.

"Are there any female "masters"? Thus far they appear to be all masculine; or are they sexless?"

Well, they certainly are not sexless. If they were, they would be minerals, or the lower kinds of plants. They are men. And the reason that most of them are men, and not the stronger sex, is involved in a number of reasons which it would take too much time to discuss this afternoon. It may be briefly stated, however, that a Seer and Sage, in other words a Great Soul, can work to better purpose in the world in a man's body.

But sex has nothing to do with inner, spiritual, and intellectual qualifications at all. There have been great women seers and sages, and there are a few today. But usually these great Masters of Life, who can choose the bodies into which they are to be reborn, prefer, for obvious reasons, to be reborn as men, as boy children.

I can imagine a lady-Jesus, a lady-Christ, or a woman-Buddha. I can imagine it. I can understand and I sympathize very deeply with the feeling that the work that these great ones have to do is more easily accomplished as men. That is all there is to it. Sex *per se* has nothing to do with it whatsoever. Sex is a mere evolutionary event; and I might as well say here that it is our theosophical teaching that the human race, in the course of its future evolution — a number of aeons hence in the future — shall have bodies which shall no longer be afflicted with sex. It was so in the far distant past; and that blessed time is coming again in the distant future. Sex, I repeat, is a mere event, a passing

biological phase, of the destiny of the human race.

"The commercial bondage will in a few years become the greatest bondage of all. If it goes on at the rate it is now progressing, it will dominate man, soul and body, and it cannot do otherwise than consume itself and those interested in it."

"Do you consider the above to be true?"

I consider it to be a true statement of a temporary phase of our racial evolution. We are in a commercial age whose qualities are growing stronger all the time; but this age will pass. If you study the lessons of history, you will find that the course of human advancement is marked by ups and downs, as the race endures: and these ups and downs are what the great Greek philosopher Plato called periods of spiritual fertility and periods of spiritual barrenness. We are in one of the latter periods at the present time.

In one age, men are fascinated by the great questions of religion and philosophy. In another age, it is politics and commerce which interest them; and such is our age. These psychological phenomena are produced from causes which spring forth from the heart and mind of men, and hence men follow psychological procedures — ups and downs of progress. Our commercial age will pass — the seeds of its disintegration are in it even today — and it will be followed by an age for which we theosophists are at present preparing, now sowing the seed — an age of philosophical and religious light which in its turn, after aeons shall have passed, will sink and give way to other things.

Such is the course of human destiny. Change is the method by which men learn; and those who learn the lessons best are they who keep a level head and a stout heart, who command

themselves, and therefore command religion, and philosophy, and science, and commerce, and anything else, rather than become enslaved by their own periodic thoughts and psychological emotions.

Which, therefore, will you be? Above or beneath? A leader of men, or one of the human sheep?

"Please give the theosophical meaning of *forgiveness*. The interpretation, by the western world, has so colored it with 'the blood of Christ' that a difficulty often arises in trying to clear it from this, and from some mistaken sentimental views as to its application to everyday life."

If forgiveness means that things can be expunged from the record of natural being, then we believe not in it. We most positively reject it. But if the forgiveness of sins means what all antiquity taught it to be, and what our own hearts and intellects tell us it is, it must be the restoring of the broken equilibrium for which we ourselves are responsible — restitution for wrongs done, the doing of duties undone. Then, if forgiveness means that, we believe in it. We accept it, and it is the doctrine of karma: that as ye sow, ye shall reap. Sow tears in the hearts of others, and ye shall reap tears in the field where formerly ye sowed. Sow happiness and joy, justice and peace, in the hearts of others, and ye shall reap happiness and joy, justice and peace. The only forgiveness is restitution, in this or in another existence; for nature is not mocked.

It is a crazy notion that a man can do things in one life, and go scot-free thereafter. What a lunatic universe it must be if that is true! What a monster the universe must be if that is the truth, a very hell of injustice — and who believe it? We theosophists do not!

Another question:

"Why are we? What is existence?"

These are two questions which men have often asked. Why are we? What does it all mean? What is the sense in life, anyway? The most pathetic thing that I know of in my studies has been the fact that since the downfall of the Greco-Roman civilization, there has been no spiritual light in the West. I am sorry to say that. I don't mean it unkindly. There has been a consoling religion for those who could accept it, and who preferred words of consolation rather than the stimulating and awakening ray of light.

We are here, and are what we are, because things could not be otherwise. We have made ourselves what we are. We are now making ourselves what we shall in the future be — and this is the law of karma again, cause and effect. And all existence is the same, whether that existence is spiritual or physical. That is all there is to it. And what a consoling doctrine it is, and how suggestive!

"What is the theosophical explanation of comets? You say that the universe is full of consciousness. Accepting this, then a comet must be the expression or manifestation or embodiment of a certain grade of consciousnesses or lives. What part do these lives, *i. e.*, what part do comets, play in our universe?"

This is an exceedingly interesting question from many standpoints, outside of the astronomical. There is the religious, the scientific, the philosophical standpoint. There is the mystical standpoint. Do you know what comets are? They play a very important part in the universe. Comets are worlds in the making: a comet is the first stage of evolution in the making of a world so

far as visible space is concerned, filled full with groups or grades of consciousnesses or lives — monads, spiritual atoms, call them what you like; and these comets, after passing through many and various grades of evolution in increasing materiality, ultimately become the globes that fill the stellar spaces, suns and planets.

First a nebula appears, visible or invisible, as the case may be. Then this nebula, through increasing stages of materialization, becomes a comet, of substance much more material than the invisible nebula from which it sprang; it is attracted by a universe or a solar system, and thus becomes a wanderer in space, a long-haired radical, attracted to some sun, its former chief in another previous universe which had preceded the one now in being; and around that sun the comet finally settles and pursues a regular orbit; and through still other and succeeding degrees of materialization the comet finally becomes a planet — first in an ethereal, then in a gaseous, then in a gross state of physical matter, like our Earth. Comets are the beginnings of worlds.

Oh, if I could take the time to elucidate this theosophical teaching for you! You would find it fascinating. There is a mystery behind this, more than I can here in public deal with; and the wonderful part of it all is that our modern scientists, the greatest among them, those who know the most — not the mere camp-followers or the writers of the scientific sections of the Sunday newspapers — but the great men of science, are telling us that the nebula, the beginning of a comet, is a portion of cosmic matter — or, as we theosophists say, the lowest portion of ethereal matter — in which and through which energies, and astral matter itself, are pouring from an invisible world into ours. This is just our own theosophical teaching, a teaching which we have been enunciating for forty years or perhaps fifty years; and now it is the last word in ultramodern astronomy.

However, a comet is not only an aggregate of hosts of lives in all stages of evolution. It is also ensouled with a larger life, because behind and within every celestial body there is a superior life — call it a soul, if you like — just as is the case with man. This aggregate of energies and powers working through the visible body is popularly called a soul. A planet, a sun, a comet, a nebula, all are ensouled; and through them all pour into this physical universe of ours the energies, the matters, the substances, the qualities, and the characteristics which make our physical universe what it is.

Read the findings of ultramodern science, read the findings of ultramodern astronomy, and you will find that what I have told you is truth.

"Where does thought originate?"

In the ego. May I vary this question and ask: Where do thoughts originate? In the brain-mind, most of them. It is a pitiful thing that so many of us pass our lives, from birth to death, in thinking vain, useless thoughts, doing no good either to us or to our fellow men.

I have the time to answer one more question this afternoon. This is it:

"If the universe is run by law and order, whence came crime?"

What a curious association of ideas — the cosmos and human crime! I do not know of any crime outside of men. I have never heard of a criminal star or a criminal planet. But the idea seems to be that if the whole universe is founded on law and order, how can men go wrong?

Now, look at the implication here. This seems to be a very deep and profound question; the questioner seems to think that men

ought to have been created perfect. What a barren outlook for men that would have been! I don't want to be perfect; I want to grow, to grow ever greater, than I am — to grow from manhood into godhood — to follow the destiny before me, and from godhood to grow to something still more sublime, and so forth *ad infinitum*.

Human crime is the offspring of imperfection. Ignorance most often is the cause, and often insanity. Actually, I think that crime is more often the product of insanity, hid or open, evident or unknown, than it is of any really evil heart. Crime is imperfection and arises in the fact that men have free will; they can choose — a godlike attribute, one of the attributes of the gods; and the very fact that we call it crime, that it produces disturbance, pain, suffering, and the anguish of remorse, shows that it is an act contrary to the law and order of the universe, an act done by one who has the divine faculty of free will and has misused it and abused it; and he will reap the consequences.

Has it ever occurred to you to pause a moment in thought over the ancient teaching — which all educated men today know or at least heard somewhat of — that the Central Fire of the universe, of which all the great poets have sung and all the great philosophers have taught, is resident in you, and is you as a spark of that Central Fire; that this divine entity, which is the inmost of the inmost of you, is what the Christians of mystical tendency have called the Christ within, the Christ immanent within every human being, which the mystics of other ages and which we theosophists speak of as the inner god?

There is the source of all inspiration, of all wisdom, of all knowledge, of all power, of all capacity, yea, and the fountain of impersonal love, the noblest attribute both of gods and men. Ye are gods, as the Christian scripture in common with all other



ancient scriptures tells you, and it is a very truth. The only reason why men as a rule do not know their own power, their own spiritual reaches, is the enshrouding veils of ordinary selfhood which becloud the splendor of the inner sun.

This is the teaching and the message of the seers and sages of all the ages to men: Ye are gods! Ally yourself with your own self, the glorious sun of your own spiritual being!

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[Vol 1, No 25](#)

[Contents](#)

**No. 25 (March 18, 1930)**

**QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK**

(Lecture delivered December 1, 1929)

It seems a shame to talk after hearing music such as we have just heard. I dislike to spoil the atmosphere by speaking. Sometimes when one hears music, one does not feel like talking at all. All that could have been said, the music has already told us; and I have a notion that people sitting as an audience and listening to beautiful harmonies, ask questions which only the music can answer.

However, I am here to answer questions. I have a number of questions here, not one of which is very solemn; all are profound, all are interesting. And I now take up the first (and in this question you will hear somewhat of the music of the heart, the voice of the soul of a poet, speaking):

"Why is theosophy so complicated? Truth in its essence is gloriously, delightfully, superbly and devoutly, simple. I wonder if it is the simplicity of the flowers that gives them their beauty and fragrance; their innate strength which, despite their apparent frailty, reveals them, at sunrise, after a night of storm, smiling through glistening raindrops that hang like pendant jewels from leaf and blossom?"

What a beautiful question! And yet, a man with a heart like that can ask why theosophy is so "complicated," and why a flower is so "simple"! Where is the simplicity in the flower? I look into the heart of a flower, and what do I see? I see beauty, harmony, grace, impersonality, selflessness, and the workings of almighty love. I see infinitude in the bosom of a flower. Are all these things

simple?

I tell you that a flower, or indeed any other thing, if seen with seeing eyes, holds the secrets of eternity in itself. Only the poet sees these at first, but even the pragmatism-minded scientist realizes the wondrous mystery in the bosom of a flower — in its shape, in its fragrance, in its grace, in its impersonality; and he wonders how it all came about, and he searches with his inquiring mind, seeking the solution of the mystery of it all. The deeper he goes into what he sees, the more does he realize how vast are the horizons of the unknown. And yet you talk about the simplicity of a flower! Look into the eye of a fellow human being, you who have a percipient mind and an understanding heart: can you understand the mystery in the limpid depths of the human eye?

Why, we humans take things too much for granted! We don't realize that all nature is full of mystery and wonder; and then this kind heart, this poetic soul, comes to me and asks: "Why is theosophy so complicated?" You yourselves know what the answer is, do you not? Theosophy is the formulation of the laws of the universe in human tongue, and how can such formulation be otherwise than vast in its reaches and intricate in its structure? It is complicated indeed to the beginner, yet its principles are very simple: so simple that, as Mr. William Q. Judge, the second Leader of the Theosophical Movement, said: the study of its fundamental principles will not overwhelm the understanding of a child.

Theosophy is complicated only to those who have not penetrated beyond the frontiers of the teaching as it is given in the exoteric books. But with the study of it comes a realization that its complexity so called is really its profundity; and that you never can reach an ultimate in its study, for there is always something

more to learn, something more to see and to find; and that the seeing and finding will come to you as you grow in understanding of it. How happy this makes the student's heart, that he never can reach an ultimate where he must stop and say: I now know it all!

Remember that the difference between a flower with all its wondrous mystery, and the human being with his still more wondrous mysteries, is simply one of evolution. Theosophy in its elements is very simple indeed, but its field of thought grows under the perceiving eye as that eye penetrates beneath the superficial teachings; and soon the student realizes that here at last, after the heart-burnings and searchings of years, perhaps, he has found the key unlocking the riddles of the universe.

Great sages, great seers, of the past, have sent their spirit behind the veil, behind the veils, of material existence — beyond and behind the seeming, into the deeps of great Mother Nature — and have brought back what they have seen, and have put it into human formulations, into human language. And this is the ancient wisdom-religion of the archaic ages, today called theosophy. The greater you are, the more you will find in theosophy. That is a statement of fact.

Some people do not like the name theosophy. I don't know why. Perhaps they think that some English name should have been given to it; but had that been done, I suppose that Frenchmen, or Germans, or Italians, or others, would have found material for argumentation. Why should it not have been given a German or a French or an Italian or a Swedish name? "Theosophy" is as good a name as any other. It is a Greek word, and it means 'the Wisdom of the Gods,' divine wisdom, and it was well selected as a name by which to call the teachings of The Theosophical Society. It might indeed have been christened in modern times with a Sanskrit name; but it would have been the same philosophy. Yet it would

not have sounded quite so well to Occidental ears on account of unfamiliarity.

"Pat said: 'Have ye christened the new baby yet?'

"Mike: 'We have.'

"Pat: 'An' phwat did ye call it?'

"Mike: 'Hazel.'

"Pat: 'Sure, bad cess to ye! With 233 Saints to name the kid afther, ye had to go and name it afther a nut!' "

However, this is by way of humor. The Theosophical Society was not named "afther a nut."

Here is another question. It begins with a quotation from Walt Whitman:

" 'I never walk under great trees but large and melodious thoughts descend upon me.' Question: Does the planting of a tree, tending it and 'mothering' it until it be sturdy enough to make its own way upwards, also aid one's spiritual unfoldment?"

Yes; not only a tree, but a flower; anything that will take you away from your animal selves, that will cause you to forget your personal beings and take you out into the great breadth of nature and give you thoughts in compassionate, impersonal service, will aid you in your spiritual growth. What comfort, what hope, what solace, what peace, in forgetting oneself! Anything that takes you away from yourself with its small circle of personal limitations, selfish ideas and idiosyncrasies, egoistic thoughts and emotions, into impersonal service, into tending something, "mothering" something if you like, in self-forgetful work for others, greatly helps you spiritually.

Is it not obvious? Tending a tree, tending a flower, looking after the interests of some human being, busy with your book, with your writing, with your machine, with your tools, whatever it may be — anything that will cause you to forget the personal self — helps you in spiritual growth, self-forgetfulness. What reward does there not come to the man or woman who does this! That is the secret of the call of the religions. It enables a man or a woman to forget the lower personal self. And you can achieve exactly the same results by giving full field to the spiritual powers within your breast in any kind of impersonal work.

Just as one instance: I tell you that the astronomer with his eye at the eyepiece of his telescope studying the wonders of interstellar space, is a more religious man than the money-grabber on his knees in church praying for the forgiveness of his sins — a million times more religious; for his whole soul, the whole soul of the man, is raised; and the other prays from fear — and to what?

"Sir Oliver Lodge says he has proofs that the individuality of a person survives intact after death and can be communicated with. Is this so?"

A theosophists would answer this, Yes and No: it is a fact that the individuality of the human being survives intact after death, but it cannot be communicated with. The individuality is the spirit, its realm is the spiritual world; and once death releases it from its enchainment in the body, once the golden cord of life is snapped, like a winged spark of divinity it takes its rise into the spaces and has no more contact with earth — particularly not with the sensuous minds of human beings — than it had before it entered a human body in the last incarnation, drawn back by what we call karma.

All that survives the physical body and that can be communicated with is what we call the spook, the astral remnants of the man

that was: all the lower part of his intermediate constitution, all that is material and sensuous and small and materialistic, remains in the atmosphere of the earth, where it undergoes slow decay, just as the body in the grave does, unless it be cremated.

But the spirit wherein resides the individuality is deathless, is immortal, is unstained and cannot be touched. There is the outline of our theosophical teaching, and you can have the whole matter developed, if you are interested in this point of study, by reading our theosophical books.

I do not want to hurt anybody's feelings — I have had many good friends among the spiritists — but I am not here to refrain from telling you what the theosophical teaching is; that is my present duty. Communications occasionally do come from something. Read them; and if you think that any eternal, immortal, deathless spirit can give utterance to such claptrap, then in my opinion you certainly lack in judgment. Most of it is plain piffle that would shame the average human incarnated being to duplicate. Read these so-called communications; mark their lack of intellectual force, their utter lack of spiritual impersonality: they are simply like squirrel wheels, so to say, going the rounds over and over again of everything that the human did and knew on earth, which remain impressed on the astral eidolon or image as astral impulses. These poor astral remnants are automatic; they can do nothing else than to repeat like phonographs that which was impressed on the astral substance of the astral being which remains in the astral world.

It is blasphemous to suppose that the deathless individuality, the spiritual man of us, is subject to the call and interference of human beings after this individuality has left our sphere. Think the matter over; think of the philosophic, think of the ethical, aspect of the thing.

Now, our spiritistic friends are in most cases sincere and kindhearted people, earnestly and devoutly believing that they have the truth. But, immortal gods! sincerity and devotion and an aching heart are not enough to insure proofs of *post-mortem* communication. People are all too ready to accept what they want to believe. We love the memory of our dead, and in the cases of many lonely human hearts, when words come to us and claims reach us from somewhere (we know not where) that so-and-so is "on the line," unless we know better and have time to think and to analyze, how the heart of us jumps, leaps in gladness, and we say: Proofs of immortality!

Immortality? Immortal gods! Give me annihilation if such stuff comes from an immortal being! Liefer to pass out in utter annihilation as a man than to live, after the physical body is dead and broken up, uttering such unspeakable trash! Never has a thing of value been so communicated. Sometimes there are not even the first elements of grammar in these communications thus received. The mental squirrel wheel of the man that was, the lower, personal brain-mind impressions in these communications, are run like a phonographic record.

Forgive me if my words seem a bit strong. You know that I don't want to hurt any heart that believes it has the truth. But I am here to do my duty, friends, to tell what my own studies have shown me to be the truth, and I here leave the matter with you.

Examine the matter along the lines that I have pointed out, and if you are satisfied, it is your choice. As regards proofs, what is proof? Proof exists according to the faculty of your own intelligence, its power of weighing evidence and its ability to abide by a preponderance thereof; but another man will take the same factors in the equation that you have studied, and will withdraw therefrom an utterly different answer. In the one case



it is proof to you; in the other case the diametrically opposite deduction is proof to him.

Proof is merely what you believe to be a preponderance of evidence, as you interpret it. What we theosophists want is not proof: we want truth: something which does not depend upon the judgment of the brain-mind resting on a so-called preponderance of evidence, but that quick and instant intuition of the human soul, of the human heart, that this or that is truth, and having this, then we test it by the experience of time.

"Who originated the idea of a few moments of silent meditation at the end of your services? Was it Katherine Tingley, or does it come from some religion of the East? I used to belong to the Christian Church, but though we had times of silent prayer, I never got the inspiration out of it that I do out of your silent moments here."

These few moments of silent thought, of quiet meditation, with which we close our services in our Temple of Peace, were introduced by my great-hearted predecessor Katherine Tingley, but were not originated in any religion of either East or West. It is something taken out of what we theosophists call our esoteric meetings, where the deeper teachings of theosophy are taught. We close all such meetings in quiet thought, and we do so because this has been the habit and custom of the great seers and sages of the ages. We are not copyists, friends, we are originators, and we claim — non-understandable perhaps as it may sound to you at first — we claim that all the great religions of the past, and all the great world philosophies, originated in the Theosophical Societies of those respective times of the far distant past. The teachings of these Theosophical Societies became mere religions when they had degenerated from being theosophical.

You can prove this by studying our theosophical literature and

comparing it with the literatures of these world religions and world philosophies, and you will find that while these religions and philosophies vary in form, in ceremonial, in ritual, nevertheless at the heart of them all, back of them all, as their essence, is one great system of truth, one great system of teachings, if you like. And this system is identical with the theosophical teachings that are given today.

"Why is it that the duty of another is full of danger? When I was young I was told that if I was too curious about other people's business I would grow a very long nose. But I had my childish doubts about the matter, because I had observed that the African race had short noses; and our colored servant, who had an *extra* short nose, was consumed by curiosity. But if the danger does not lie in the extension of one's nose, where does it lie?"

Well, the common idea, you know, all over the world, apparently is that long-nosed folk are rather given to prying into other people's affairs. I don't think that this idea is quite fair or true. When I read this question I began squinting down my own nose to see if I had a long nose. When I found I had not, I was immediately consumed with curiosity to see if another person whom I knew to be interested in things that did not belong to him, had a long nose. I began to study him, and I found that he did not have a long nose! I don't think a long nose is necessarily indicative of improper curiosity.

The duty of another is full of danger, as is obvious, because it is not something that belongs to you to do. You are meddling with something that does not concern you; and that is always a dangerous, as well as an unfair, thing to do.

If you were theosophists I would tell you that there is a reason, a stronger reason, for the saying quoted by the questioner, and it is

this: that whatever you do you become responsible for, in so far as the results flowing out of your acts have to be accounted for. What you sow, you shall reap. And if you meddle with other people's affairs, you are tying yourself up with those other people, you are involving your own karma with theirs, and you will have to work it out — that is to say, pay for it — to the utmost farthing, for nature is just, and we are creatures of our own destiny.

We are collaborators with the divinities which ensoul, and therefore guide, the Universe. We have choice; we have creative power, both of will and of mind; and if we misuse or abuse our native facilities, we make an effect, unfortunate for us, on the universe. We alter the direction of destiny in accordance with our own powers and our own strength — not only the destiny of ourselves, but of others; and we become responsible, and therefore we shall pay. In other words, we have to re-establish the equilibrium which we have disturbed. Don't meddle in other people's affairs. It is dangerous. The duty of another is indeed full of danger!

Theosophists have another saying which Katherine Tingle gave: "Helping and sharing is what brotherhood means"; but there is no contradiction between these two. It is our duty to help others where we see that they are in danger or in pain or need help. It is our duty to share what we have of the beautiful and of the good with others. This is simply decently human; we follow simply our higher human instincts in doing this, but that is not meddling. That is not forcing ourselves into the affairs of other people, often against the will of these others.

"In answer to a question pertaining to crime during your lecture on Sunday the 24th ult., you stated that you 'do not know of any criminal planets.' Why is the planet Earth referred to so frequently in occult literature as the 'dark

planet'?"

I do not know that our earth is referred to very frequently under that term. It is sometimes called the planet of sorrow. It truly is a dark planet. Occasionally I have heard this term dark used. But there are other planets which could also be called dark. Our planet is not the only one; but darkness is not necessarily criminal. It refers to the fact that darkness is used as a synonym of substantial existence, of material existence, as contrasted with existence in the light of the spirit. Our planet is very material. Therefore could it be, and indeed it is, sometimes called the dark planet.

Now, friends, my illusion to the fact that I know of no criminal planets, meant that I know of no planets which, as planets, have deliberately chosen a course of evil-doing. I do not know of a criminal sun, or of a criminal planet, or of a criminal comet, or of a criminal nebula. The word does not apply to these things.

Crime is human, or applies to beings possessing the same status, spiritual and intellectual, that humans have, such status as pertains to the inhabitants of some of the other planets. But I have never known of a planet, or I have never heard of a planet, which could be called a criminal planet, one that had become bad as a planet.

There are planets — such is the teaching of theosophy — vastly more material than is our earth, existing in realms and worlds of matter far more gross than our own physical realm or sphere or world or plane. But even these planets darker than ours could not be called criminal. Crime implies an act or a series of acts dictated by a distorted or perverted mind.

I could tell you much more about this, and I will if you will undertake to pursue a certain course of study. I would be

delighted to tell you much more, things that would fascinate you. Knock, and it will be opened to you.

"Please interpret the following quotation:

Comets importing change of times and states,  
Brandish your crystal tresses in the sky,  
And with them scourge the bad revolting stars  
That have consented unto Henry's death!

This is from Shakespeare, from *King Henry the Sixth, I*, Act 1, Scene 1. The quotation of course has reference to the general astrological ideas of the time when Shakespeare wrote this. The stars had "consented unto King Henry's death," and the poet makes one of his characters ask the comets to scourge the bad, revolting stars. This is a figure of speech, but it does not tell an astronomical truth. It is a beautiful poetical passage, but it is very bad astronomy, and very bad astrology.

But yet, in spite of Shakespeare's astrological inaccuracy and imperfection of astronomical knowledge, there is some truth behind it all. The wonderful science of astrology, as taught by theosophy, explains what this modicum of truth is. This does not mean that the tattered remnants of archaic astrology that pass under that name today are in any sense a real science; but I refer here to the real astrology of the ancients, which then meant the science of the souls of the stars.

According to this, as interpreted by theosophy, everything that happens in the world happens according to law — everything that is interlocked, interrelated, bound up, with every other happening — nothing exists unto itself and absolutely apart from other things; but the universe in its lowest or physical aspect is a most wondrously constructed mechanism, with spiritual mechanics guiding and controlling it; and these spiritual

mechanicians are gods, semi-gods, angels, call them what you will. Consequently, everything that takes place, takes place because it is, so to say — to use a mechanical metaphor — a cogwheel event in the march of events along the course of destiny.

Therefore, the appearance of a comet is one of these cogwheel events marking time on the dial-face of the cosmic clock. It comes at its appointed times, and signifies the concurrence of other events in making, in doing, in preparing — about to take place: not that the influence of the comets themselves is such that they can sway the worlds or the destinies of nations and men: but that the comets are markers on the timepiece of the universe.

There is a great deal of interesting thought that I might develop for you here, had I the time to do so.

"There must have been a time in the infinitude of the past when the present man functioned as does the mineral kingdom now. That is, he had the universal consciousness flowing through him, but not the consciousness of selfhood. What then gave him or exerted upon him the particular pressure or leaning with his first glimmering of self-consciousness to progress in particular directions — one man as a genius, another a dolt, that which we all know constitutes the diversity in men, the differentiation of one man from another, the differences of character, and so gave each man as you theosophists say, his particular karma? I trust that I have not hopelessly entangled this query."

In other words, the questioner seems to ask: When did individuality and development of character begin? The answer is obvious: it began at the beginning. Now, when was the beginning? When would you want it to begin? Nothing has been created; nothing has sprung like Athena from the brain of Zeus,

full-fledged. There is no beginning of evolution, for such is the inherent law of the universe acting in eternity, which is beginningless and endless.

But *things* began, so far as they are events: shapes, conditions, qualities. All these are temporary: they begin, reach their climax, and pass, and are succeeded by some other events. It is the teaching of theosophy that, so far as man's evolution is concerned, he came as a life-host to this planet out of the infinitude of the past, bearing with him a karmic load formed of all that he did in the past: his character in other words, what he was builded to be by himself in the past. He came to this planet, which was then in its formative stage, bearing this load of karmic tendencies. Karma, you understand, means cause and effect — that what you sow you reap. But he did come as a man, he came as a monad or spiritual life out of the past.

This earth being a new planet, the monad began at the beginning of this new earth-event; but this karmic load, which is the character within, which the monad brought over from some past life-cycle, that monad has ever since been working off or out from itself, and it is still working out, and it manifests today in humanity as human character; and this working off or out of that karma and the forming of new will continue in the future.

Humanity began its life course on this planet in a lowly way, and grew through evolution to be what now it is; and through evolution, or by means of evolution, humanity will grow to be something much greater than now it is. Mankind thus began in a simple and lowly way of life, but will grow to be grand, and will then grow in a grand way.

From an unself-conscious god-spark, the individual human monad during the course of its evolutionary development reached this planet, began its evolution in lowly habitats of life,

evolved forth from within itself its native faculties and powers, improving the vehicles or bodies in which it worked and lived, until manhood was reached; and this process of evolution, which means unrolling, unwrapping, unfolding, what is within — the innate powers and faculties, or character in other words — will continue forever; but before humanity leaves this planet as a life-host, it shall have attained human godhood or divinity.

Remember that evolution as taught in theosophy is not Darwinism nor Lamarckism, nor neo-Darwinism nor neo-Lamarckism. Evolution, in theosophy is the unfolding, the unwrapping, the bringing forth, of what is within — in other words, the evolving entity itself. Evolution, therefore, is self-expression, growth. That is evolution as we theosophists teach it — a logical, complete, and satisfying, doctrine, comprehending all human faculties: explaining the past, prophesying the future.

"It has been stated that from the very earliest times known to us, all the important developments in world history — Christianity included — have originated in the meeting, friendly or hostile, of Orient and Occident. However that may be, the interpenetration of East and West that is now taking place is profoundly altering the attitude and relations of nations to one another the world over. What light does theosophy throw upon these momentous changes; and do you not think that they are favorable to the spread of theosophy?"

Yes, I do, indeed, and theosophy throws a brilliant light upon these matters, this light showing that human events move in cyclic courses. Everything in nature has a beginning, if it be an event — which all things human are — reaches its culmination or its climax, descends with the wheel of change until the lowest point of the cycle is reached, then rises again on a larger round; and so on forever — and this is the famous theosophical doctrine



of cycles.

Things move in cycles, human events as well as other things. The march of civilization is from East to West, and from West the civilizing wave returns to the East. These happenings are not chanceful, they are not fortuitous; they don't "just happen"; they have a cause and a reason. But the procedure is cyclical.

Instead of saying that "Westward the course of empire takes its way," we should say with much more truth, that westward the course of life pursues its path. The Orient gave us light, so that it has become a proverb in the Occident: *Ex oriente lux* — "out of the East, light."

But now, when the Orient for ages past has been resting in the lowest part of its cyclical round, and we Occidentals have been coming to the climax of our own material civilization, we are rising along the more spiritual arc and are returning to the Orient the light that once we received therefrom; and the Orient in its turn is beginning to stir uneasily in its age-long sleep. Men and women living today will see marvels come to pass before they die.

China, hoary with age and experience, has but begun to awaken from an age of rest; and I tell you, Heaven help the pink-skinned man, who calls himself the white man, when once the Orient is on its feet, if we Occidentals at present having the responsibility in our hands do not change the courses of our action. The time has now come for us to instill into the Orient the light that once we took therefrom — lessons of self-forgetfulness, of forgiveness, of love, of peace, of justice; or, having sown the wind, we shall reap the whirlwind. I tell you this as a truth.

There is a curious and interesting teaching in theosophy, and it is to this effect: that not only does the course of civilization pass continuously and endlessly round the earth from East to West,

but also that the reincarnating egos follow that wave; that is to say, that the highest class of reincarnating egos, the most advanced, incarnate in countries wherein the climax of spiritual civilization is reached.

All men are brothers ultimately. If we go far back enough in time, we shall find that the same blood, the same life fluid, flows in the veins of all of us; and it is high time that we began teaching the truth that is in our hearts. I warn you again: we have sown the wind in the East, and at present, as things now stand, we are marching forward to reap the whirlwind.

My time to close for today has come. There is one question more that I desire to answer briefly before we part this afternoon. It is this:

"Who or what is the object of worship among theosophists, and what do they understand by worship?"

We have no object of worship. In order to make my meaning clear, let me briefly explain two words: "adoration" and "worship." Worship is an old English word originally having the form "worthship," things held as of worth, things considered worthy, valuable, worthy of reverence. *Adoration* is a Latin word signifying "prayer to." This questioner has in his mind confused these two words, but the meaning of his question is clear.

We theosophists adore nothing and no one. We never pray in that sense. Such prayer is a selfish petition, and usually takes the form "I want, I want; give me, give me." The theosophist raises his heart constantly, continuously — raises his mind towards those things, entities, realities, truth, which he considers worthy of reverence and devotion.

There is no more devoted and spiritually-minded body of people in the world than theosophical students. But we never utter any

selfish petitions to an outside, cosmic power. In other words, we never "adore." We worship indeed, if that means, as it once rightfully did, to hold certain ideals as worthy of reverence. To the great cosmic mystery beyond all human imagination, beyond all human conception, beyond the utmost reaches of even the thought of the gods, which cosmic mystery we reverentially call That, not attempting even to give to it a name, to belittle it by naming it: the theosophist gives the worthship of a devoted and reverent heart.

And to this mystery of the universal life-consciousness, if we may presume so to call it, towards this the theosophist's attitude is one of reference day and night, unceasingly; for out of its cosmic bosom we came as sparks of the Central Fire, and back into its bosom we shall return, but then no longer as unself-conscious god-sparks, but as fully self-conscious gods. Ye are gods in your inmost parts. Remember it. Dream, think, aspire, to be your own divine self.

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[Vol 1, No 26](#)

[Contents](#)

**No. 26 (March 25, 1930)**

**QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK**

(Lecture delivered December 8, 1929)

One of our most beautiful theosophical teachings is that concerning the existence of the inner god in man: the fountain of illumination, of love, of the sense of inner beauty, of harmony, and of all the other things which ennoble and make human life grand.

On every Sunday here I have called your attention to the existence within you of this sublime reality, and have challenged the brain-minds of you, the argumentative minds of you, to find and see the source of such life as even this imperfect brain-mind possesses.

Some people do not like the idea that within and above the human vehicle there lives a divinity. These people evidently prefer to believe that they are but worms of the dust or, if not worms of the dust, that they are merely an up-grown ape.

Human nature has curious contrasts, and I get some very interesting communications illustrating this statement. Sometimes clippings from newspapers come to me, which are editorial comments upon what I have said on this platform; and sometimes these communications come in the form of a written argument, of which the thesis usually seems to be: "Why don't you tell us something practical?" Can you believe it? Practical! Tell a man that he is a god — that he has all the fountains of divinity within his heart — point to the source of his inspiration, point to the fountain of inspiration whence flows everything that makes men men, and then they say: "Why don't you tell us

something practical?" Therefore I say: Can you believe it?

It is thus that people understand and also misunderstand things. Now, just for the humor of it, I am going to read to you something that was clipped from a San Diego journal. I myself enjoyed reading it.

"Dr. de Purucker always wanted to be a god — that aspiration was breathed by him many times before Madame Katherine Tingley was removed from this scene of temporal sorrow. Without inquiring into his logic, we could commend his ambition. He was not very definite about the kind of god he wanted to be — apparently he would have been satisfied with any seat, even the lowest, at Olympus. But with his elevation to the place formerly held by Madame Tingley, his ambition has grown beyond bounds — and now he says we are all going to be gods, and then we are going to be more than gods, and so on — as he remarked Monday morning — 'ad infinitum.'

"We wish that de Purucker would tell us what we should call a man who has got to be a god and then has got to be more than a god. What will he be called when he gets even farther, and is a super-God? When does he quit this chase after divine honors? When does he sit down by the waters of Nepenthe and forget his ambitions and begin an enjoyment of simple rest?

" 'I don't want to be created perfect,' de Purucker says. Well, he's got his wish. [I am glad someone recognizes me for what I am!] 'I want to grow, to grow greater, to grow bigger than I am, to grow from manhood to godhood, follow the destiny before me, and from godhood grow to something still more sublime, and so on *ad infinitum*.' It will be interesting to watch his progress, and it will be exceedingly interesting to know where he winds up!"

Now this is clever, very clever. But the trouble is that this kind friend — and he is really friendly, for if he had felt otherwise, he doubtless would have written to me some complimentary things that I might not have liked at all — does not seem to see that there are two ways of looking at a thing. There may in fact be even more than two ways of seeing things — his way and my way — and this writer does not look at the matter in my way, because he does not understand me; but yet in his heart there is an intuition that what I said was true, and that intuition irritated his brain-mind so that he had to take his pen — I beg your pardon, sit down at his typewriter — and give vent to his feelings in the delightfully humorous effusion that I have just read to you.

There was sent in to me a story in this morning's mail that seems to apply to this case. I have never been able to tell a story properly, but I can always read one:

"Little Johnny was quite perplexed over a certain situation one day, and came to his mother with it. 'Aw, heck, Ma — I don't know what to make of this: in Sunday School this morning, we sang, "Stand up, stand up for Jesus," and at the baseball game this afternoon, they shouted, "For Christ's sake, sit down." ' "

Aren't some people funny! And yet some people reason and argue — just like little Johnny.

Here is a thoughtful question:

"One of your questioners of December 1st spoke of the inspiration of the silent moments in the Temple. Will you explain why theosophists stand during these moments instead of taking the customary kneeling position with bowed head?"

Certainly I will explain it. In the first place, theosophists do not believe in a personal god, somebody to be prayed to. Not

believing in a personal divinity who is to be propitiated, we do not believe in assuming the attitude of petition — that of a petitioner who has to go down on his marrowbones and sink his head, and, at least in gesture and position, deny his spiritual manhood. Instead, we stand upright on our feet like free men, sons of the Sun, children of the universe, and in these moments of silent meditation, we endeavor to raise our inner souls into communion with the cosmic spirit, which is equivalent to saying into communion with our own inner god. That is why we do not kneel. We never make petitions by prayer. We do not believe in the attitude of prostration. We stand erect, and with fearless eyes we look to the stars, our own kin; and all wise antiquity was with us, and I venture to say that all the future will be with us also.

If a man came to you and fell on his knees, and bowed his head, and put up his hands, and began to beg for something, what would be your first reaction — a favorable one? Or, contrariwise, if he came to you like a man, standing on his feet and looking you in the eye and speaking out his heart, what would be your reaction to that?

There is the reason — one of the reasons at least, possibly several of the reasons — why we do not kneel and bow our heads and clasp our hands, gestures which in themselves mean nothing at all, but are indeed significant of the different attitude that the heart and mind of the Theosophist assumes with regard to his standing in the universe, and with regard to his own responsibility as a collaborator with the gods who have the universe in their governance. Man is a child of the gods, and his mind should be godlike, his thoughts aspiring, his heart constantly opening in love ever more; and therefore his attitudes should be godlike also.

"Why do most humans sooner or later make an idol of an

ideal? The ideal submerges — forgotten — while the idol emerges, triumphant."

It is so. But why? Simply because most human beings, because of a sort of mental inertia and a spiritual indifference, concentrate their attention on the exterior, on the idol, instead of ever looking to the ideal beyond it. And where is the beyond? Not outside, but within! Your ideal does not exist outside of you; it is within. You have no knowledge of any ideal whatsoever which is not yourself — a part of your own being. Be your ideal and you will forget the idol.

Here is the meaning of the precept, a teaching of the sages of all the ages: Man, look within; know thyself. Oh! how full of wonderful beauty, how full of truth, these words are! There is infinitude within you. You never can reach the frontiers of yourself, your divine self, never; for the innermost parts of you are the very spiritual universe in which you live and move and have your being. Know yourself; know the inner beauty and harmony within, and your ideals will be forever with you.

This knowing of your inner self, of your inner god, is an expansion of your own consciousness; it is growth; it is evolution; it is coming to an understanding of all that exists. And when you have even some adumbration of this vision — some inkling of it, some hint of it — then such a thing as fear vanishes. Death loses all its terrors, for you know that you are one with the All, inseparable; that you are in fact that All itself; and therefore you are in your utmost reaches frontierless, because in very truth there are no utmost reaches: never can you reach an end. Oh! what inspiration this thought is, what help does it give! Think it over. Realize what is within you and you will never more worship an idol — physical, mental, spiritual, or of any kind. You will never lose your ideals.



"Has there ever been a Golden Age on our earth? If so, how does it compare with the present gold age?"

I should say that there is no comparison at all between these two. But with all deference to this kindly friend, I think it just a bit unfair to say that the present age is an age in which alone lucre — Mammon — is worshiped, and that other ages have known naught thereof.

On the contrary, our age is not so bad as most people think. The very fact that our age is a materialistic one, as in fact it is; the very fact that our age is in a sense groveling in the dust, and that we have lost hold of the vision of spiritual realities, shows that we are on the turn of the cycle. And more: if you study the men of today and read the literature of today, you will find that men are anhungered of reality as they have not been in historic times. There is a hunger of the human heart today which will be satisfied with naught less than what men call reality — something real, fundamental, beyond the disputes of the brain-mind.

There are signs of this spirit everywhere. Men are thinking of serious subjects as they have not thought for many, many hundreds of years. It is all a natural reaction from this so-called gold age.

Has there ever been a Golden Age — an era of Saturnian peace, and bliss? In a small way there have been many such Saturnian ages. But I will tell you a little secret of the religion of the Greeks, who spoke of the Age of Saturn, the Golden Age, when men were happy, where sin was unknown, and where misery, human and other, prevailed not. It is this: that the Golden Age lies on the horizons of the future, the Age of Saturn is before us, and we are marching steadily forward toward that blessed time, when men shall have become conscious of the god within. Then shall they become more or less consciously allied with what they are in

their inmost parts; and then nature will respond sympathetically, magnetically.

And even now (and here is a theosophical secret: listen carefully) even now those who have the ears to hear and the eyes to see, who have the vision of the Life Beautiful, know that the Golden Age is with us even at present. Happiness is within, not without; vision is within, not without; and any one of you, as I have so often pointed out, who will look into the heart of a flower, or into the limpid deeps of the eye of someone whom you love, will see all beauty, will see many mysteries, will realize that the Golden Age is not dependent upon the march of time, but is here and now, if you will see it and live it. This is another sidelight on the ancient teaching: Man, know thyself to be the god that you are within.

This universe of ours is full of mysteries. Our modern scientists are but beginning to penetrate slightly beneath the superficial material universe, and what wonders are they beginning to see with their mind's eye! Strange realms of mystery, wonderful kingdoms of nature — wonders not so much of new thought, but wonderful kingdoms of reality.

Have the understanding heart, and vision will come; and when you have this heart, this understanding heart, and obtain this vision, then never will you do anything that will hurt your fellows. Never will you lift your hand against a brother, nor your mind in competitive struggle. But all the instincts of your nature will be towards fraternity, to brotherhood, to companionship, to union, to peace, to happiness. The Kingdom of the Spirit is within, and this is the message of the sages of all the ages; and until theosophy brought the keys to modern men and explained how to unlock these wonderful mysteries of truth, men repeated parrotlike what they had heard or read in books, but did not yet

understand.

This is what we are working for: to bring understanding to the hearts of our fellows, to bring peace to tortured lives, to bring happiness where misery is, to give light where at present there is darkness — or at the best, obscured vision. So strongly do we theosophists feel our responsibilities in these respects that in a short time from this, from Lomaland we shall send out students who have studied here for years, in order to carry the blessed message of theosophy all over the world, in order to build up theosophical lodges in the world; and these students will be backed by the training and experience that they have received here at our International Headquarters.

Oh, what a godlike work is ours! As the great Buddha sent forth his disciples, two by two, occasionally singly, and told them: Go ye forth into the world and carry the message of liberation and of truth; tell men of love, of forgiveness — of love without bounds, all-encompassing, magical, mystical, illuminating, inspiring — so also shall we send out theosophical missionaries to carry the same sublime message to our fellowmen.

"In a review of Sir James Jeans's latest book, *The Universe Around Us*, referring to the light from the remotest nebula known to our telescopes, which light takes 140,000,000 years to reach us, Sir James is quoted as saying:

"For all but a 500th part of its long journey the light by which we see this remotest of visible nebulae traveled towards an earth uninhabited by man. Just as it was about to arrive, man sprang into being on earth, and built telescopes to receive it.'

"This makes the time for man to have been on earth some 300,000 years. Is this in accordance with the theosophical teachings?"

No, it is not. Our teaching is that man, as a thinking entity, has been on this earth for tens of millions of years. But this eminent scientific luminary, in his computations, already has advanced far beyond the six thousand-odd years given as the age of our earth as supposedly taught in the religious book formerly so highly respected in the Occident, for he says that man has existed on our planet for some three hundred thousand years.

I wonder how man "sprang into existence"? It is easy enough to use phrases like this, but what do they mean? They do not mean anything. Nothing definite and real is said in such phrases; nothing is explained; no actual natural truth is given by them. And "he built a telescope to receive it," reminds me of a story that we have read in the Jewish Bible about a man who built a tower to reach up to heaven. As a matter of fact, Sir James Jeans knows no more about it than anyone else. But he is a great scientific man, and he has done his best to precipitate his scientific cogitations into some more or less coherent form, and the result of it is the statement ascribed to him in this question.

But actually, as a matter of plain truth, Sir James Jeans knows no more about it than anybody else. That is a fact. I don't know how to prove to you our theosophical statement that man has existed on the earth for tens of millions of years. Nevertheless, if you would go with me on an astral journey into the invisible realms, I could show you records, proving to you how long man has lived on this earth; but you would not be willing to go with me. You would be afraid, get cold feet at the start. I mean it, too.

Nevertheless, such is the theosophical doctrine, that man, as a thinking, self-conscious entity, the very vehicle and temple of an immortal god, has lived on this earth for tens of millions of years; and that he has had his habitat as humanity on different continents, four of which have disappeared under the waters of

the oceans, after having pursued each one its evolutionary course, one after the other, from the dimmest and remotest ages of antiquity: one continent after the other growing in size, reaching its culmination of physical magnitude, bearing its civilizations of its own kind, and then sinking beneath the waters of the ocean, only to re-emerge again to bear its new burden of human civilizations, after the passage of many millions of years.

Five different and separate races of men, if one can include under the term "man" the first three races, five different races of humanity, considered as a vital, evolutionary stream, have lived on this earth; and we are the fifth and last thus far. Two more great races are coming in the future, each one to bring forth in civilization and in perfected mankind the expression of faculty and power inherent even at present in the human entity, but not yet evolved. These two civilizations of the future will be such as the world has never yet seen. All this will come to pass because as men grow greater, as they evolve, they will bring forth from within themselves the treasures locked up in their own inner natures — for that is what evolution is, in our theosophical teachings — the unrolling, the unwrapping, the unfolding, the expanding, of what is within; and that within is infinitude, really.

"General A. W. Greeley, alluding to Commander Byrd's recent exploit of flying over the South Pole, used the following epigrammatic words: 'Man may soar where once he plodded.' Have not these words their application to man's destiny quite apart from airplanes?"

Why of course they might have. I don't know what General Greeley may have had in mind when using the words ascribed to him; but, taken as a mere statement of future fact, they most emphatically have an application to man's destiny. Man indeed is going to soar where now he walks. Let me tell you something, if

you want to know somewhat of what theosophists believe in. The theosophical doctrines that we have professed and taught for nearly half a century are now spreading rapidly in the world. We are slowly interesting all the best thinkers, the most brilliant minds: they are slowly coming over to our doctrines; and if nothing else demonstrates the truth of our doctrines, at least the marvelous way in which modern scientific thought, experiment, and research is proving what we have been teaching for the last forty or fifty years, about the physical world alone, does so.

This is what I was going to tell you: Men now walk, but at the end of the seventh or last great root-race on this earth, before the human host leaves this earth, men are going to fly — soar, as one may say. Flying will be the means of locomotion then, but it will be at will.

I remember that when I was a little boy, I had a constant daydream which my friends thought a perfectly astonishing and fantastic exercise of my imaginative faculty. I said: Before I die, I am going to see flying machines passing in the air over my head; and my friends looked upon me as just a little erratic. Why, they said, men have been trying to fly for ages. Look into the encyclopedias, and you will see the experiments that men have made in the past, and nobody has ever succeeded in flying; and now you, who are nothing but a boy, say that before you die you are going to see flying machines passing in the air over your head! And I said: Yes, I know it is coming. Then my friends reminded me of the story of the Greek who tried to fly and who fell; and I was deeply impressed — with the notion that I was right!

Now, who was right: the boy who dreamed, the lad who saw a vision in the future, as undoubtedly the rest of you have; or the old mossbacks and wiseacres who know everything and whose

task in life seems to be to try to crush imagination, the soaring imaginative spirit of youth? I have learned one thing: I never laugh at any dream that others may tell as to what is coming to pass. I have learned enough to say: Well, that is interesting. I hope you are right.

So then I tell you that men, before the human race leaves this planet for another planet, when this our present Mother Earth goes into obscurity, as theosophists say, men will then fly over the earth at will, or they will walk at will.

The earliest race of mankind in this our present great round or tidal wave of life, what theosophists call the first root-race, did so fly over the earth. Their form was likewise very different from ours. It was shaped like a globe of translucent mist, of thin opalescent substance, ovoid in shape, like an egg. Their method of locomotion was such that they floated like thistledown; but after long ages, their bodily substance became less tenuous, and more material in type; and as the ages passed and the next race, followed by the great third root-race, came into being, the individuals of these races finally lost the power that they originally had had, and began to walk; and men have been walking ever since.

But the old method of locomotion will return because nature repeats herself. Nature works in cycles. Nature always takes the line of least resistance; and consequently, whatever has been once is a promise that it will be again, but improved. Think the matter over. So then, man will soar where once he walked.

"I have often heard theosophists quote the text: 'Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.' From this I naturally inferred that the ambition of all good theosophists was to sow as much good seed as possible, that their harvest might be correspondingly great; but I am told this is not so. Will you

kindly elucidate this point."

I don't know who gave this kind inquirer the information about a theosophist's ambition to sow good seed in order to reap good seed in order to reap good fruits. Such is not our ambition, considered as a bald declaration. On the other hand, it is common sense to sow good seed. Who would want to sow bad seed, to sow tares? But the proposition that theosophists live in order to reap better karma by being good at present has too strong an atmosphere of selfishness about it to please. The main thing is to make men realize what kind of seed they are sowing into themselves, what kind of character they are building in themselves. Every act that you do, every thought that you think, every emotion that you have, is building your character, making your destiny; and if you want a shapely destiny, one of happiness, then build your character accordingly.

Build thee more stately mansions, O my Soul!

As the swift seasons roll.

But there is something more to say about this particular aspect of karma. I think I understand what must have been told to this inquirer. He probably was told: Well, in a general way, it is true that it is wise to sow good seed; but please do not understand, my dear sir, that the theosophist tries to sow good karma, good seed, merely in order to reap it as a selfish profit. And the questioner probably did not understand the wise philosophy behind this answer.

If you sow for yourself, for purely selfish ends only, you will reap accordingly. What you sow, you shall reap; and the man who has such small love for the intrinsic beauty of right action as to say to himself: I am going to be good merely in order that I will get something — a better fortune, a better future, a better body — has his good sowing already spoiled with a whole handful of tares, his



selfish desire.

On the other hand, the man or woman who is fascinated by harmony, by beauty, by sympathy, by almighty love, who sees the vision of the Life Beautiful, whose whole soul is enchanted with what he sees, so that he sows his character and reaps his destiny, finds that that destiny will be shapely and sublime. There is nothing so belittling as personality, nothing will so diminish your soul in its strength as concentration on your own selfish personal affairs and a forgetting of the welfare of others.

A man whose whole life has been passed in a selfish struggle to overcome others, and to reap benefits out of them — in other words, in the desperate battle for purely selfish ends — lies down on his deathbed — almighty gods, how can I phrase it? — not only a broken soul, but a character which has become mean, small, petty; and his destiny therefore will be small, mean, petty.

Sow an act, and you will reap a habit. Sow a habit, and you will reap a destiny, because our habits build our character. This is the sequence: an act, a habit, a character, and a destiny. You are the creators of yourselves. What you make yourselves to be now, you will be in the future. What you are now, is precisely what you have made yourselves to be in the past. Be not deceived, divinity is not mocked. What ye sow, ye shall reap.

Therefore, no true theosophist likes the idea that he is doing good merely in order to get something for himself — sowing good seeds merely in order to reap a selfish reward. He is spoiling his reward by the selfish motive behind his act. On the other hand — and I enlarge upon this because it is important — the man who thinks of others before himself is already great. The man who gives up his life that others may live is already great. The man who forgets himself in impersonal service to humanity is the greatest of all, and such a man reaps a destiny — because he has builded a

corresponding character — which is godlike.

These last are the human beings who reincarnate as the great sages and seers: the Buddhas, the Christs, the Pythagorases, the Platos, the Empedoclezes, the Lao-tses, and all the other great luminaries of the human race; and you can be like them. It is in you so to be. You don't know what capacities and powers and faculties you have within you. Simply let these come out, unfold themselves, evolve themselves; and help this process with all your will and with all your intelligence. "Help Nature and work on with her, and Nature will regard thee as one of her creators, and make obeisance."

"On a previous Sunday you stated in the Temple Service that at the commencement of a new incarnation, man takes up the new life at the point (more or less) where he left off the old one. How is this done? What laws operate in enabling this continuity to be effected?"

This is done under the operation of what theosophists call the law of karma: that what ye sow ye shall reap. Reincarnation, considered as a process, is merely taking up the old life-thread just where it was laid down before. You can take it up at no other point when you begin active physical existence again.

A man lays him down in bed at night and goes to sleep and rests; and in the morning, when he awakens and takes up his duties and pleasures again, at what point does he do so? Ten years from the time when he laid himself down to sleep? No, just at the point where he was in evolution the night before. Nature is so exact in her processes that when the soul excarnates, all the memories of the last life, all the karmic resultants of the last life, remain inhering in the fabric of the excarnate soul now going into its peace and rest, and are, so to say, fixed at that point of development, from which exact point everything in the next

incarnation will begin to work anew, exactly like a clock which, when stopped, will resume its course from the same point when wound again and set to going anew.

There is no break in the continuity of destiny. There can be none. Death is but a sleep and a rest, and a temporary forgetting; otherwise how could there be rest and peace and repose? And when you have had your rest and your peace, you come back to earth, and, considered as a character, you are exactly the same character that you were at the instant of death in the last life; and you begin anew to weave the web of destiny where you laid it down before. The clock begins to run again from the point whereat it stopped.

Karma is the law of cause and effect: that what ye sow, ye reap, that nothing can come to you except what you have made yourself to be, that you can be nothing except what you made yourself to be, that there is no chance outside or within, that all is governed by immutable law.

You see, this makes of man a creator. It makes of him a creator of himself; and this is a divine faculty, power, quality, call it what you like.

"When a man's life is cut short by accident, what happens to the various principles of his nature thus roughly torn apart before the natural term of bodily existence comes?"

This is a very profound question indeed, one that I hesitate to answer, because I cannot do it adequately in the short time that I have at my disposal this afternoon. You see, death is not just death, so to say. There is not one kind of death. Actually there are as many kinds of death as there are dying entities, as there are entities who die. The general process is identical for all, but the details in each case differ.

When a man has lived a long life and has reached a good old age, and his time to sleep has come, the passing is very quiet; it is as simple and peaceful as sleep, as the coming of sleep. It is a beautiful thing, truly a beautiful thing! But let us take the case of a young man, or of a child, dying before his time. What happens then? Or take the case of an accident, a railroad accident, or an automobile accident, whatnot. Now, the circumstances in these cases are not the same. Obviously death is not peaceful, it may be violent. The man has not reached his natural term, the energies within are unexhausted. In the first case the engine simply runs down naturally and quietly and comes to rest. In the other case, there is an explosion of energies, so to speak.

The following is what takes place in the latter case. Speaking in a general way, and not going into particulars which vary with the individuals, the lowest triad of the human being, composed of the physical body, the vital power, and the inner model- or astral body so-called, all three decay. The center of emotions and of the ordinary brain-mind — that is, what is popularly called the human soul — remains in the astral world in a state at first of somnolence, or quasi-sleep, and later its condition is as if it were in a quasi-dream.

The cause of this quasi-sleep and later of this quasi-dream is the unexhausted forces mechanically working in the astral entity in much the same way as they would naturally work if the being were still in physical existence; being unexhausted they must express themselves, however feebly. This causes the quasi-sleep and quasi-dream condition.

But nature is kindly. She is symmetrical in her operations: she is harmonious in all her works; and if, mark well, the violent death be not a suicide, in a little while these unexhausted forces are naturally dissipated; and this progressive dissipation of the

unexhausted energies is followed by a progressive separation taking place between the higher part of the man, the spiritual part, and the dregs of the emotions and the brain-mind mentality which is the lower part of the mind that was.

When this separation becomes complete, the spiritual part of the human being is withdrawn into the spiritual monad, which is the god within, and there the spiritual part rests in peace and bliss until reincarnation takes place; while the dregs of the human soul, as above described, simply disintegrate into their component astral atoms. In other words, the various kinds of atoms which compose the intermediate part of man, and which are all astral atoms, simply fall apart, as the separation above spoken of takes place; and this falling apart of the atoms is very similar to what occurred to the atoms of the physical body some years before.

All this procedure is not a conscious process, but this disintegration of the intermediate part is as natural as is the disintegration of the food which you have taken into your body. The excarnate entity has no conscious realization of what takes place. Just as the average human being has no particular pain caused by his growth from childhood to manhood, and no particular pains caused by manhood advancing in years, if his life has been carefully lived, just so has the dormant consciousness of the excarnate entity no self-conscious realization of this process of post-mortem disintegration.

Nature in this case works painlessly with the average human being. There is really nothing to fear, nothing to be afraid of. There is a certain similarity between this and our existence on earth at present. The average man cannot tell how he came into physical being on earth. To the average man, life on earth is more or less of a mystery. He comes out of what is to him the unsolved

past; he steers into the unknown future with perhaps fear, in any case with wonder, and says: what is it all? What does it all mean? But he had no pain in coming into earth-life, no self-conscious realization of sorrow or danger.

There is one exception, however, an exception which includes, alas, not a few human beings; and under this exception must be classed, among others, the cases of suicide. I mean here those human beings who have deliberately chosen the path of evil-doing, whose hearts have lacked the sense of beauty and harmony, who have not had the Vision Beautiful; who are men and women who have concentrated their consciousness on thoughts and acts of selfish doing; who have lived for themselves alone, without a thought for others; who have been egoistic, unkind, cruel mayhap, whose tendencies are low: with these nature is — still merciful indeed, but their cases or condition or state remind us of what occurs on earth to men who are physically diseased. Disease is a painful retribution for evil-doing in this or in a former life; nevertheless it is a reminder to us to do better, and therefore is it a good friend. Consequently those human beings who have deliberately chosen to do evil in the world of physical existence, or who have violently, by their own acts, snapped the golden cord of life, must suffer conscious pain in the invisible realms for a while. This is simply nature's law of adjustment and purification, and has nothing to do with the former Occidental orthodox ideas of Hell.

Nevertheless, even for these there come ultimate happiness and peace in so far as their spiritual and higher human parts are concerned. The evil that they have done on earth, they will have to pay for by way of recompensing those whom they have injured; but this will take place in a future life on earth, in a future incarnation. For here on earth they sowed the tares, and here on earth they will reap the weeds. They formerly sowed the

wind, and in the future they will reap the whirlwind where it was sown.

This brief and imperfect exposition will show you how difficult it is to explain these things in a few short moments of time; but if you are interested, then study our theosophical books, and in them you will find real mines of illuminating thought and teaching on this and collateral subjects.

I will answer one more question this afternoon, and then I shall have to leave you for today.

"What is the difference between prayer and meditation? Are they synonymous, one and the same modus, evocative of like results; that is, communion with one's higher nature, the 'inner god' as you have termed it? Does the Christian praying to his Christ, the Hindu to his Krishna, the Mohammedan to Allah, tread the same path, effect the same result, as does the theosophist who knows the enlightenment that comes in communion with one's inner god? Kindly elucidate."

Prayer and meditation are very different things. Prayer is an asking for something: it is a petition to "God Almighty" to give you something that God Almighty evidently thinks you do not deserve to get — otherwise you would have it. That is essentially what is meant by prayer; and we theosophists do not believe in it.

But meditation: this is a very different thing. It is a raising of the soul within you, of all the center of human consciousness within you, to a realization of the fact that it is fundamentally at one with the divine core of your being. Meditation also is taking a subject for thought and dwelling upon it in thought in an impersonal way, meanwhile searching within yourself for the answer, for more light upon it; and if this method of meditation be faithfully followed, finally light will come. Such is meditation.

Exercise makes it so easy, habit endows it with such attractiveness, that finally the time will come when you will be meditating all day long, even though your hands may be busy with your daily tasks. Inexpressible happiness and peace are in it.

Spiritual consciousness is streaming at full flood in you and through you all the time, day and night, and foolish men have spoken of this portion of man's inner constitution as the subconscious mind. Immortal gods! What I here speak of should rather be called the super-conscious mind, the mind above not beneath the ordinary mentality.

Meditate. Learn to find the beauty in it, and the help that will come to you from its practice. But do not pray — unless you want to!

Before parting, friends, I want to tell you once more that every man and woman alive is an incarnate divinity: literally, not metaphorically. And the only reason why you don't know it yourselves, the only reason why you don't exercise godlike powers, the only reason why you don't feel within yourselves the faculties divine at work, is because, in the first place, you won't recognize it. Recognition of the fact is the first step in spiritual development: and all later degrees of progress follow as simply and as automatically as is the case in any kind of growth.

Ye are gods, and the scriptures of antiquity all tell you the same thing. This fact is the inner burden of the teaching of the greatest intellects that the world has known. This is the doctrine of the most illuminated spiritual seers that the world has ever known. It is a teaching which has come to man from the gods, who in former ages were men as we now are men, but who long since have outgrown manhood and have achieved divinity as individual gods. Ye are gods in your inmost parts. Know then yourselves, and receive illumination and a peace which indeed



passeth all understanding of your brain-mind.

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Vol 1, No 27

Contents

**No. 27 (April 1, 1930)**

**QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK**

(Lecture delivered December 15, 1929)

I wish that I could see myself as you see me. I think that it would be an interesting thing to do. Some people very evidently do not see me as I really am. On Sunday last I read to you an extract from an editorial which appeared in a San Diego newspaper, and the writer of this editorial took me to task for having divine ambitions. He said that I wanted to become a god — and it is true. I do! And by the immortal powers that rule the universe, which is a sign manual of divinity, why should I set my ambitions lower than my divine parents?

Yes, I want to become divine, to evolve the divinity in my own heart of hearts, in the core of me; and if anyone else wants to be a groveling worm, a creeping worm of the dust, or to take pride in his derivation from an over-grown ape — I won't object! As for me, I prefer divinity to apehood. In the ape theory I have never seen anything that was substantially real: it was a lovely theory in what seemed to be its symmetrical relations as concerns the imaginative facility of scientific speculators; but it became a most ugly theory when later researchers tried to put it all square with the facts of nature as the latter became better known.

For fifty years more or less, theosophists — a strange people, queer folk, folk who want to become gods — have been teaching certain things; and only recently have the scientific researchers found that we are right! When Dr. Henry Fairfield Osborn, perhaps the greatest American biologist today, states, announces, and declares his abandonment of the old ape theory, and comes out square for the fact that man as man has always been man as

far as human research can carry us back into the records of the past, this is an instance where we see a corroboration of our theosophical teachings. And Osborn is not the only one to take this view today, but he is nevertheless one of the most courageous men of modern times in his own line of study. In a little while, from having been proud of being an over-grown ape, he may be saying with us theosophists: "I expect to become a god!"

However, when a man says things that people like in their hearts, but cannot reconcile with their brain-mind beliefs, he is apt to be criticized a little bit; and personally I like to be criticized. I like to know what people think about me as an official exponent of the age-old teachings of the wisdom-religion.

Here is what another San Diegan has written. As the other article was funny, so is this likewise funny. This article was brought to my attention this afternoon just before I entered our Temple of Peace. It was handed to me with a note from a friend. The friend writes to me:

"Happened to see a copy of —— magazine. I was surprised to note that the editor of same felt he must write something about theosophy and you. We never see anything of this kind until the shoe begins to pinch, but some day they will all see the light."

They will, and this paper — do not mention its name, whisper it not abroad — is a paper which has on one side of its title the fine word 'Truth,' and on the other side of its title the splendid word Light — which beautiful ideals are likewise thoroughly theosophical.

"With a flourish of trumpets and a half-column of space in the morning paper, Dr. de Purucker, successor to the late Madame Tingley as lord high commissioner and boss of the

Theosophical Institute on Point Loma, has announced his voluntary surrender of many of his prerogatives and the giving of a form of self-government to Theosophical Societies in other parts of the world."

Well, I suppose that if I said anything particularly pointed at present, this writer would break loose again in his newspaper and say that instead of speaking with a flourish of trumpets, I was blowing Gabriel's horn.

I want to say this, friends: The Theosophical Society, since its foundation by the great heart of H. P. Blavatsky and others in New York in 1875, has never been deprived of its prerogatives of self-government by any leader and teacher, and consequently I cannot renounce what I never have possessed. There has been one policy in The Theosophical Society, first enunciated by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, continued after her by her successor William Quan Judge, carried on in a more esoteric form by my predecessor Katherine Tingley, and now continued openly by me.

There has been no renouncement of official prerogatives, because I never had any that amounted to anything. But there has been an attempt to bring the training of the ancient Mystery Schools into the modern life of the Occident; and a part of this training was to make the members of The Theosophical Society realize that they are incarnate gods, reflections of an inner divinity in their inmost core of being; and consequently that being such, they are collaborators in the cosmic labor; and that being such collaborators, here on earth as men they have a right to stand and walk the earth as incarnate gods, and therefore to take a part in all noble things which interest them, such as our beloved Theosophical Society.

I have not renounced any prerogatives whatsoever that are of any real importance. I have gained enormously by what power I

have voluntarily refused to wield; for instead of trusting to the man-made sanctions embodied in a written constitution, my work — as was that of my great-hearted predecessor Katherine Tingley — but especially my work, is based on the love and trust of my fellow theosophists. There you are. Isn't that fine?

Tell men that they are but more or less improved copies of an over-grown ape, and they will blink at you with a little astonishment, and inwardly have contempt for you in their hearts, because they know that such statements explain nothing at all about origins, and that they are mere theories. Their instinct, their intuition, tell them differently; but tell men, on the other hand, that the divine faculties which they feel to be working in their own breasts — intuition, love, compassion, pity, mercy, illumination of the mind — come from the divine soul within, from the inner god; and you immediately strike a responsive chord in their hearts.

I tell you, friends, that the strongest feeling in the human breast is that of religion. But men must have real religion, the religion of natural truth, not dogmata, not fine-spun theological theories which are, as has recently been said in one part of the world, but the opium of the soul. And it is true. But truth, glorious truth — that is what men really long for.

So not only am I proud of the fact that I want to become my inmost self, as the great Plato said — to become the god within me, knowing that I am kindred with the gods — but also am I proud of the fact that my position permits me to make the same appeal to the hearts of all who will listen to me with sympathetic ear and understanding heart.

The questions that I have before me this afternoon are quite numerous, dealing with many phases of thought, touching upon different subjects, interesting and profound. Here is the first, or

rather here are the first two questions; but they are so much alike that I am going to treat them together, briefly:

"In what way does the theosophical interpretation of psychology differ from the modern explanation given in the textbooks? What light does theosophy throw on psychoanalysis?"

I would phrase that question a bit differently. I think that I would say: "In what way does theosophical psychology differ from the modern systems carrying that name as these are given in the popular text-books?" Then my answer would be: Enormously. Modern psychology as taught in our university lecture halls is a relatively new thing. It is changing from day to day. It did not exist one hundred and fifty years ago; or at least if it did, there was then but an adumbration of what modern psychology has since come to be. It is at present a system of theories; an attempt to balance what is known of the workings of the human mind with the activities of the emotional apparatus working in and through the human breast.

Now, I never could be satisfied with a bunch of theories. I must have something that appeals to my sense of symmetry and harmony before I can accept it. I must have something, if I accept it at all, which when I study or hear of it touches something within me which answers with instant response: That is true; for within me lie all the grounds of proof.

Actually, modern psychology, especially the psychoanalytical aspect of it, is little more than a sublimated physiology. Actually it has naught to do with the higher nature of the human being, and therefore it explains nothing whatsoever in a directly definite and symmetrical manner. It is a system of methodization, combined with a collection of facts; from which facts the attempt is made to withdraw some truth, some rule rather, that will work fairly well

in all cases.

But let me tell you something: psychology in itself or per se is nothing new. The study of the nature and of the constitution of man, of the workings of what is called in the Occident his soul, and in the Orient his Self — the nature of his emotional disturbances, the character and the working of his mentality, and the source and origin of inspiration, of illumination, of compassion, of almighty love that has its lodgment in the human breast — these things were known and studied for immemorial ages in the past.

In the Orient, psychology is one of the usual studies of the disciples of every philosophical teacher. But in the Orient it is true psychology. Physiology in connection with it is barely referred to; and when it is referred to, it is considered to be merely as a minor aspect or reflection of the manner in which the feverish and restless activity of the human mentality works through the body. This true psychology, based on a complete understanding of the entire inner constitution of man, is called by the name of *yoga* in the Orient, *yoga* being a Sanskrit word which literally means "union" — signifying union with the god within. Many methods of *yoga* are there. But outside of the meaning of the word, the fact remains that psychology — the study of the intermediate nature of man — has been a favorite study, a necessary study, in Oriental countries from immemorial time.

Further, there stand the records, to be investigated by anyone who has an open mind and who can see, who has brains enough to judge according to the preponderance of evidence, showing that the great seers and sages of the ages (and by them I mean the great illuminated intellects and spiritual leaders of mankind) have penetrated behind and beyond the veil of the seeming, of appearances; have gone behind that veil to the roots of things,

have sent their souls deep into the womb of being, and have brought back knowledge therefrom. Wonderful indeed are the systems of thought that these great seers and sages of the ages have formulated in human language, touching every phase of the human being: systems which are so symmetrical, so profound in philosophical and scientific reach, that every fact that exists in human psychology finds its proper niche, its proper pigeonhole, so to say, its exact lodgment, where it belongs.

Now, a few words about psychoanalysis. You know something, I take it, of what that is. I won't refer to it beyond saying this much: that I consider it to be a mean and often a nasty study. Any man or woman who wants to believe that the ultimate thoughts and emotions of his inner nature are no better than those of a nasty little boy — who is willing to believe that therein lies all that there is of the human being, deliberately forgetting the splendor of the high spiritual activities and facilities of which every act of self-sacrifice is in outstanding proof — anyone who is willing to believe that may do so. I positively refuse to do so, because I know better.

It is a monstrous thing to teach the ideas and notions that pass today under the name of psychoanalysis to the responsive and sensitive minds of little children. It is a moral crime.

Here is another kind of question:

"In an interview with Henry Ford published on last Sunday morning, December 8, 1929, in *The San Diego Union*, Elizabeth Breuer quotes the great industrialist as saying:

" 'We don't quite realize that good thoughts are intelligent entities — "intelligent entities"; that is a favorite phrase of mine.'

"To most people in the Occident that is a most startling



statement. What has theosophy to teach on the subject?"

This: that man, considered as an aggregate of substances and energies, is a focus of creative activity; that his thoughts are as much things as are the atoms of his body, for in actual fact thoughts are merely movements of the astral substance of his intermediate nature, as there are movements of his physical body; and both are under the control of the dominating will and consciousness. Thoughts are things; they are entities; they spring forth from mind; they are the children of mind. Mind is substantial, not physical matter, but ethereal substance; and everything, therefore, that issues from mind must be of its own character, of its own nature.

Apples, oranges, cherries, roses, lilies, whatnot: grow only from their respective trees or plants. From the mind in a similar way comes mind-stuff, for the mind itself is mind-stuff, and thoughts are mind-stuff. Therefore, thoughts are things. Mind is the organ of consciousness, and in fact is concentered energy, therefore concentered consciousness, so to speak. Thoughts, therefore, are consciousness points, consciousness-centers. Therefore are they entities; therefore are they things.

Mr. Ford in this report speaks of good thoughts only as being intelligent entities. A theosophist says that every thought, good or bad, is an animate portion of mind-stuff, and therefore an entity. Thoughts are things; and I tell you to beware of your thoughts, for they will come home to you, their parent, to roost some day.

Henry Ford is right, however, as far as he goes; he is a most remarkable man. Good thoughts are indeed intelligent entities, though I, as a theosophist, would rather say conscious entities. Thoughts are entities still very young in evolutionary progress; nevertheless not only good thoughts but all thoughts are conscious entities. That statement may seem startling in the

Occident, but that does not mean anything in particular. A thing may be startling, and yet it may be true. The time was when the heliocentric system was a most startling and wicked innovation in human thinking, and yet the heliocentric system is true.

Don't be afraid of a thing because it is new and startling. Rather be interested; be willing to study it a bit, to try to understand it. It is a very foolish thing to turn your face away when a new subject of thought is presented to you. You don't know what you may be missing. You may miss entertaining Zeus and Mercury as guests.

Here is a question somewhat along the same line. It is very abstract, but interesting:

"To what extent do mind creations become realities? I mean those projections emanating from the storehouse of the imagination, after they are given the matter-form of visibility or audibility, such as the picture on canvass, the sculptured form, the melody, all spun from the gossamer that comes from that same mysterious supply. Do such creations take on some kind of bodies other than the representational imbodiments, and would they forever after go on evolving?"

Yes; yes. "Thought-forms," to use a term popular among some modern theosophical mystics, are thoughts which find representational imbodiment in physical matter, such as a lovely picture, a beautiful sculpture, soul-entrancing music; or, on the other hand, may take a repulsive and ugly form. Such form is the body of them as represented in physical substance.

But what about the thoughts which produce these noble creations? I tell you that thoughts are animate entities. Man gives birth to thoughts on the mental plane much as he gives birth to children on the physical plane. Both are functions of productive or creative activity; although thoughts of course emanate from

man in a constant stream. A man thinks untold billions of thoughts in a year. Nevertheless the rule of nature is the same in principle, whether in the thought-world or in the case of physical procreation. Being consciousness-centers these thoughts begin to grow: they came into his mind as impulses of energy; they leave it as thoughts.

I am going to leave that thought with you: leave it in your minds to grow. I hesitate to say more here at the present time. Thoughts can be powerful things, and produce widespread and profound effects; and one class of thoughts which Plato, the great Greek philosopher referred to as Ideas, are the mightiest things in human life, for it is ideas that rule the world, and it is ideas that rule men. It is ideas that make and unmake civilizations. It is an idea, or a collection of ideas, which differentiates one human being from another human being, making one noble, the other ignoble. Ideas rule the world, and the ideas of the gods rule in the cosmic spaces; and the stars, the nebulae, the comets, the planets — such is our glorious theosophical teaching — are but the physical imbodiments of thought-energies manifesting as these differentiated parts of physical material existence.

"When I hammer my thumb instead of the nail I am driving, I am very much inclined to relieve my feelings by using theological words in a non-theological way. Is this merely a trivial offense against good manners, or is it morally wrong?"

Well, I do not think that there is anything wicked about it at all. I think it is a very natural thing to do. It is bad manners, perhaps, if we are in company with others who hear us using profane language; but if you happen to crush your thumb with a hammer with which you are trying to drive a nail, I should certainly say that you are perfectly justified to use theological language in a non-theological way. I know that I would use very strong

theological language!

"Some of us women would like to know why the Deity is always referred to as 'He.' If, by Deity, we mean the universal principle of life which animates and sustains both the sexes, why use the masculine pronoun? We are sometimes inclined to think that this habit is simply an unwarrantable assumption on the part of theologians, who are always of the male sex. Does theosophy support this usage?"

It does not. Our objection is not based on the fact that "we are women, don't you know," and object to the masculine pronoun as such, because actually many ancient nations have had a supreme female deity, and they referred to it as She. But as the theosophist does not accept, cannot accept, finds it impossible to believe in, the existence of a Great Big Man up there, or down there, a Personal God in other words, naturally we do not speak of something we don't believe in as a He. This reference to divinity as a Cosmic Male, and as a He, is merely a historical relic of the popular mythologies of the ancient peoples. Zeus or Jupiter or Vishnu or Siva or Ormazd or Ahriman or Osiris or Jehovah, are merely instances of mythological national deities, and it should be remembered that the popular mythologies of the ancient nations do not represent the belief of the profound philosophers of the times. While it is true that all the ancient mythologies are based on esoteric truths, this does not mean that the theosophist accepts the exoteric presentation or beliefs, although he does accept the esoteric truths, because he understands them.

I have tried to explain on other occasions that we theosophists are godless men. Now, don't be frightened at these words. Pray wait a moment and let me explain before you judge me from the preconceptions of centuries of mistraining that all Occidentals have received. But while we are godless, we are not atheists, that

is to say, people having no belief in a divine source of the universe and of man.

Furthermore, you won't find a more reverent, a more thoughtfully-reverent, body of people in the world than is the theosophical body. You won't find any man, I do believe, whose heart is filled with a deeper awe of the unspeakable mystery of the eternal and of the infinite. So deeply do we feel this, that we use a phrase common in the old Indian Vedas, and we refer to the unspeakable mystery simply is That.

"Will civilizations always have to decay, and then rebuild upon their own ruins in order to rise upward? Must they ever repeat the same follies, go through the same devastations, slaughters, and ghastly horrors through the coming ages, as they have in the past? Why cannot nations and races hold on to their best attainments? Will they eventually come to a point where steady progression will be possible? Else the economy of life offers a strange and vexing impulse in its work. Kindly explain."

A kindly heart has asked this question without giving it sufficient thought. Let me in turn ask a question. How would you like to be forever "you"? How would you like things to remain forever as they are with but minor evolutionary modifications that ensue with the passage of time? Suppose that the civilization of Rome, for instance, still existed as the civilization of Rome, constantly improving somewhat, it is true, but remaining always the civilization of Rome. How would you like that? Suppose that the European Middle Ages had never changed, and still existed, somewhat improved, it is true, but still with all the imperfections and limited outlooks, although slightly expanded, as formerly these things were? Were either of these cases the fact, we should not be as we are now — the human host in a passing phase of

evolutionary development, but laying the foundations of a more brilliant civilization in the future. Obviously such a state of things would be the reverse of attractive.

No, I want to grow; I want to change; I want to pass from manhood into godhood. I want to evolve forth the divinity in my own breast, of which my breast tells me the existence. I tell you that nature's merciful laws so control, guide, and direct the affairs of the universe, and therefore of man of course, that everything has its birth, its period of growth, its state of maturity, and ultimately the fine florescence of all that is within; and then ensues its period of decay, of senescence, and death — to be succeeded by something greater. That is evolution. Change following change, and always for the better. Thank the immortal gods that things do change. Civilizations, like men, like our planet Earth, like a solar system, like our own home-universe, like everything in fact, have their beginnings, their period of growth, their period or time of full blooming; then ensues decay, then comes death — but to make way for something still better.

Furthermore, you see that this conception makes us charitable in our dealings with others. It explains to us somewhat of the philosophy of history. One of the greatest producers of human sorrow and pain, one of the most fruitful agents in the bringing upon men agony of heart and suffering, is the idea that my nation is better than your nation, and you are not going to change for the better; you will be there, unchanged and stupid, forever and a day, until I accept the "white man's burden," and take you under my wing, or kill you off. If men knew that whatever is, will pass, to be succeeded by something better, and that all is cared for under the laws which govern both human and cosmic activities, then the divine virtue of patience and enlarged understanding will bring their forces into play, and instead of horrors and troubles and bloodshed, we shall see peace, mutual agreement,

and helpfulness. Many, indeed most, of the horrors of our modern civilization would never come to pass. Men would then know that change, gentle change — which is growth, which is evolution — and all-healing time, will put an end to things that are imperfect, undeveloped, unsymmetrical.

Change: change is evolution, because it is growth. Let us then be thankful that civilizations do decay, that they do pass, in order to give way to something better and higher; and even though it so happens, and it does happen frequently, that certain changes bring in their train misery and human troubles of many and various kinds, these, in the very nature of things, are contrary to natural law, and therefore their term of existence will be shorter than any other. Things which are lovely, which are symmetrical, which are harmonious, endure; but nevertheless even these are subject to change, because everything that is, as it grows, throws out more fully and ever more fully, a larger measure of the harmony, of the love, of the natural symmetry, of the powers latent within it. This is evolution.

"I understand that geography, and even the most elementary facts of human anatomy, were taught by the ancients only under the seal of the Mysteries. What is the danger of giving general publicity to such apparently harmless subjects?"

No danger at all. That is not the idea. The questioner forgets here, of course, the character of the ancient Mysteries: that the ancients were an exceedingly religious people, to whatever nation or race they might have belonged — exceedingly religious people they were. The questioner perhaps, in addition to overlooking this fact, does not know that these Mysteries of antiquity were founded in each instance by one of the great seers and sages of past times, great initiates in natural wisdom, the wisdom of the workings of invisible nature in the spiritual, intermediate, and astral realms;

and consequently that all the teaching given in the Mysteries was interconnected; so that the giving out of knowledge concerning any one part of it was like giving a key to other parts; and as many of the teachings in the ancient Mysteries were connected with the sublime secrets of the universe, and fraught with danger if communicated indiscriminately to men, all initiates in the ancient Mysteries were sworn to utmost secrecy.

Let me illustrate what I mean. There is a method known to the sages by which the inner man may leave the physical body and send his spirit-soul roaming through the spaces of space, spaces exterior and spaces interior. As it was taught in the Mysteries, giving this knowledge to the public would have given the key to still greater and more dangerous facts of nature being to unworthy men, to anyone, to all and sundry. You may ask: Well, why not? Isn't truth sacred, fit for anybody? I tell you no. It is not. There are truths that I never would put in the mind of a little child. There are facts of nature and of being that I never would put into the mind of an unworthy man.

Now, think it over. Giving the keys to nature's secrets to men who perhaps were not evil, but grossly ignorant and without self-control, would have brought about heaven knows what psychical as well as physical and social catastrophes, while the individual practitioner, ignorant and without self-control, would possibly, at the very best, have killed himself in practicing what he had learned.

It was from compassion, from great wisdom, that the secrets of nature were held under lock and key and given out only to those who had proved themselves worthy of receiving them. To them, indeed, the doors of the Mysteries stood wide open.

As you see, this idea is so contrary to our Occidental ways of



thinking that perhaps I should have to talk to you for half an hour in order to give you the full reach of the meaning for the reticence of the ancients; but I think that I have shown you somewhat of the reason why the knowledge taught in the Mysteries was so carefully guarded.

I might add, in conclusion, that were so simple a thing as human anatomy taught in modern times as it was taught in the ancient Mysteries, the key to unlocking the vital chains binding the inner man to the outer man would likewise be given.

So well is the necessity of prudence and care recognized even in our arrogant and conceited Occident that although men say that everything in the way of knowledge should be given out to everybody, what actually happens? We each of us carry a bunch of keys with us, and we carefully put our securities in the vaults of banks, and we lock our laboratories with still more care. Yes! *Verbum sapienti satis.*

"Thousands of people are leading noble lives of unselfish service, yet they seem to know no more of theosophy or the great teachers you have spoken of here than the ordinary man of lower ideals. Evidently something more is needed to find the path to wisdom than the virtues shown by the good man. What is this higher qualification?"

This is a noble question — thoughtful, kindly, humane. I should say that two things are required: first, a spirit of kindness. A man may be a good man and practice the cardinal virtues and yet not have that full-blown spirit of gentleness and kindness in his heart which I have so often spoken of as the Christ-light innate in man. And the second requirement is, I believe, a divine hunger for Truth, a hunger so deep that nothing will fill the aching void in mind and heart except light, illumination.

It is this hunger, it is this desire forever unsatisfied for more light, which I believe to be the divinest thing in the human soul, for it is the working in the breast of the divinity within, the inner god. And if there existed nothing but it, it would so pain and drive the man in whose heart it lodges that he never could find satisfaction or peace until he had followed that still small pathway to the gods spoken of by the Indian Upanishads, leading ever higher and higher; until in time, having set his feet on this pathway, he finds that he has "entered the Sun." "Son of the Sun" himself, he shall then have returned home.

Ye are gods, incarnate divinities, each one of you a spark of the cosmic life; and if you only knew what is within you, latent or partially active, as the case may be, nothing else could satisfy you. There would be a hunger in your soul that nothing could satisfy except light, light, and more light!

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[Vol 1, No 28](#)

[Contents](#)

**No. 28 (April 8, 1930)**

**QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK**

(Lecture delivered December 22, 1929)

Christmastide! I am going to tell you something about Christmas before we part this afternoon, friends, not talking to you so much of the Christian idea of the Christ child, but giving you the view of the ancient wisdom regarding the midwinter legend of which the Christian Christ myth was a later development; and I shall leave it with you to form your own judgment as to which is the nobler, the better, and the more comforting view to take — not merely a view to take but an ideal to live up to: an ideal based on the natural mystical order of the universe, or one based on human dogmas. Meanwhile, I am going to answer some questions for you. I beg of you to understand, once for all, that in answering these questions, I do not do so merely as the results of my own personal study in human nature and of human life; but in answering these many questions that come in to me, of such wide and varied character, I am enabled to give to you in an easy and conversational fashion a great many teachings of the ancient wisdom, today called theosophy, that otherwise could not be so easily dealt with. I do my best to keep my own personal viewpoints entirely in the background, and to speak to you solely from the standpoint of an exponent or teacher of that archaic wisdom of olden days; and I can do this because back of me and within me flows the strong current of knowledge derived from the teachings of the ancient wisdom.

The ancient wisdom is that ancient body of doctrine which was formulated into human language by the greatest seers of the human race, after they had sent their spirit, their inquiring

intelligence, to use modern words, underneath, back of, behind, and beyond, the veil of the outward seeming, and had brought back from the heart of Mother Nature, Reality. Reality — that is theosophy.

The first question is introduced with a little preamble.

"The following is from in editorial an *The San Diego Union*, October 26th:

" 'With all our boasted progress, we have no solution for even the strictly material phase of China's recurrent tragedy. How, then, shall we persuade ourselves and the ancient world of the East that we have a civilization fit to supplant any other? Confronted with a vast and unyielding barrier to our improving efforts, might we not conclude that our endeavors ought to be confined — for a space, at least — to our own side of the barrier? Perhaps our ability to penetrate this new Great Wall of China will come to us after we shall have won the right to do it.'

"What treatment would a theosophist accord to China? What remedy, if any, would he apply to the present situation?"

Why should the theosophist attempt to apply any remedy to the present situation in China? Who are we, youngsters of the Occident, men whose civilization is scarcely fifteen hundred years — and in fact much less than that if we look at our own present era, only a few hundred years old — to attempt to dictate to a people some four hundred millions strong, who have lived in the Orient since immemorial time and have kept the flame of civilization burning there for heaven knows how many millennia?

I tell you truth! We are infected with a superstition that we have what some people are wont to call the white man's burden.

Immortal gods! The white man's burden: the pink-skinned man who cannot keep his own house in order, and who presumes to think that he is fit to dictate to his spiritual and intellectual peers and forebears of the Orient! Look at home, look in your own homes, before you attempt to dictate to others what is what, and what other folks should do in order to carry their own life's burden better!

I do not know what another theosophist would apply in the form of a remedy to China's present situation. I know, however, what I would do. I would keep my hands off. I would try to set my own house in order before I tried to go behind the locked doors of a neighbor, in order to dictate to him what, following my views, he should do. The fact is that you cannot legislate men into being good; and no nation is great enough or wise enough to dictate to other peoples how they should be good.

You exclaim: Look at the recurrent tragedy! Yes, for, let us say less than a generation; and look at the recurrent tragedy in European countries, lasting for many hundreds of years. Look at your seas spattered with war fleets. Look at our lands shaken with the tramp of marching armies. What remedy should the Chinese apply to us, if you please? — A people, these Chinese, which has lived in civilization, carrying the torch of Light and intellectual progress for thousands of years. Could that people not truthfully say to us: Turn your eyes to the East, and there you will find peace! Leave us in our own temporary agony until we have solved our own problems, and meanwhile put your own disorderly house in order.

Here is the second question that I have before me:

"Defining the word universe as the totality of all that exists, does there ever come a time when the entire universe dissolves and becomes one with That from which it evolved?"

In other words, is even the maha-pralaya only a cosmically regional occurrence?"

Yes, everything that *is* has its beginning, has its period of growth, reaches the culmination of its powers, the flower of its strength; then ensues senescence, then comes decay, then come sweet death and peace, rest and bliss; and then out of the womb of the invisible comes the stream of life again into the visible, and runs a new course based on its actions in the former period of existence, it runs the gamut of its life cycle, and then disappears anew for another period of rest; and so on forever. Life is eternal, and, strictly speaking, there are no dead.

In the case of man, the cycle is called reincarnation, rebirth. In the case of worlds, it is called reimpodiment; for everything that *is* pursues the same fundamental course, follows the same general line of destiny. We humans are not exceptions to the general line prevailing in the universe in which we live and move and have our being, and of which we are inseparables, spiritual derivatives of that universe. We cannot leave it ever. We belong to it, and therefore everything that is in the universe is in us, either in manifestation or in germ, and we humans merely exemplify in the small what the universe is in the great. One common life, one common law, one common origin, one common destiny, belong to everything.

Interpreting this question, whether all that exists in an infinite sense passes away, then I ask: How can infinitude pass away? The questioner has put his question wrongly. He should have said: All that we can think of as existing — worlds, solar system, home-universe, series of universes, making the scale of magnitude as large as you please — does this ever dissolve and finally pass away into rest before beginning a new cycle of manifestation? Then the answer is simply, Yes; for each such entity or thing or

aggregate of things has its birth, its growth, its florescence, its senescence, its decay and death, to reappear anew after its cycle of rest; but to speak of the totality of all that exists as passing away, as if it were to say that infinitude passes away, is sheer nonsense.

Such a question takes no account of the meaning of the word infinitude. Infinitude is boundless, has no beginning, has no end. But anything that can be conceived of as existing, however large or however small, considered as an entity, of course passes away, whether that entity be an atom or a universe; and the so-called maya-pralaya, the great period of dissolution, is a name given to the existence, post-mortem, of our own home-universe, which universe includes everything within the encircling zone of the Milky Way.

Here is a curious question:

"Assuming that the mahatmas [these are the wise men, the great seers and sages of which theosophy teaches us, who were the founders and are the guides of the Theosophical Movement] have long been acquainted with anesthetics, can you explain why they did not give out their knowledge at an early date in the history of the world, for the benefit of suffering humanity?"

Why is it supposed that they did not? Do you think that anesthetics are a modern invention? Then you know little of medical history. The ancients knew about anesthetics and narcotics fully as well as we, though by no means of necessity did they employ those particular chemical combinations which are recognized today, and in common use, and which will be succeeded by something better in the course of time, something less dangerous than what is known and used today.

For instance, hemp, opium, the mandragora plant or mandrake, have been known from immemorial time in various parts of the world, and have been used as narcotics and anesthetics; and if you will study the ancient literatures, such as those of Greece and Rome, and read Dioscorides the Greek and Pliny the Roman, you will find that they speak of the narcotic and anesthetic effects of such plants as these; and these plants were used in the treatment of pain, of wounds, and in other manners.

The ancients also knew of antiseptics and employed them, one of the simplest and least dangerous of such antiseptics being pure oil and wine, used either singly or together.

I wonder if any particular benefits accrued to mankind from the use of certain very dangerous chemical compounds which are commonly employed today for anesthesia. Go into our insane asylums and into our hospitals. Ask some searching questions about the results of the use of modern anesthetics, and you will learn something. Modern anesthetics are by no means an unmixed heaven-sent blessing. Drug fiends, insane people, murderers: all the horrible tale of human ignominy, crime and pain, are touched everywhere with the trail of the modern anesthetic user.

How lovely that the great Masters of Wisdom and Compassion should make a point of giving out dangerous drugs to all and sundry, in order to bring about the ruin, the wreck, of human homes and human lives! Think a moment or two before you ask such questions as this.

I tell you that if there is one thing that we must learn, it is to take the idea out of our minds that all knowledge is good for everybody. It is a lie; and if you don't believe it, then throw away your bunches of keys; take your securities out of the bank vaults and put them on your tables; open wide your secret laboratories;



put drugs within the reach of your little children — if everything is good for everybody.

No, I would consider myself to be a criminal if I put certain knowledge into the minds of certain men. That idea is simply a faddist theory, and it is amazing that the common sense of mankind has not bursted that theoretic bubble. Why, even in religious and philosophical matters, there are certain teachings that never should be given to the public at large, never!

You say: Isn't truth holy? Yes, the holiest thing that there is, in the eyes of a theosophist. Shouldn't it then be given to everybody? No, because everybody is not fit to receive it. Those who have proved themselves worthy, yes, they should receive it: those who have proved themselves morally and intellectually capable of receiving, are entitled to receive, irrespective of race, creed, color, sex, and educational qualifications; because morals, ethics, the feeling that right is right and that wrong is wrong, do not always go with a fine intellectual equipment. I have known men highly gifted, intellectually, in whose hands I would not put anything of a dangerous character. They lacked moral stamina; and, on the other hand, I have known men whose grammar was faulty, who could hardly write their names, in whose hands I would have put the secrets of my heart, had occasion arisen to do so, because their moral and spiritual nature was developed, and I knew that I could trust them.

Here is a question about bats!

"I once heard a theosophist classify bats as belonging to the night side of nature. Is there anything about a bat to justify that artistic convention by which devils are always represented as having the wings of a bat?"

Well, I think it is an artistic convention. I have never had the

pleasure of meeting a devil, so I cannot tell you whether I would call him a bat or by some other name. But I don't see why bats should be so much feared. I don't see why they should be thought of as being Satanic creatures. They are very pretty, the most wonderful fliers, and they are harmless as a rule.

But I think, as in artistic convention, symbolizing secrecy and quasi-invisibility, the figure of the bat is rather well chosen: their flight is so quick and still; they fly by night; and the association of quickness and silence, of speed and stillness with darkness, in the medieval times doubtless gave birth to the superstition that bats were "birds of the black magicians," and therefore were Satan's imps. I think that this is all there is to the idea. I have never heard any theosophist classify bats as belonging to the underworld.

"All the great intellects of classical times seem to have believed that the course of human affairs might be predicted by careful observations of the flight of birds, and the behavior of various animals. Had they any good grounds for their belief?"

I think they had. In fact I know that they had. I am a believer in omens, and for the following reasons. Like the entire ancient world, I look upon the universe as an organism, a consistent entity, one living thing. I don't believe that one part somewhere is separate from another part elsewhere. I believe that things hang together, that there is one law for all, and that all follow that fundamental law. I believe that things which are like to each other are drawn together. Just as love is an attractive power, so do I believe that beings who belong together come together, that they are attracted to meet; and I believe that if I went into a barnyard in the ancient fashion, into a chicken yard, and chose some unfortunate hen or cock, and slaughtered it and examined the entrails, if I found certain abnormalities there, I would instinctively feel that because all nature is an organism, every

cogwheel fitting into every other cogwheel, consequently that chicken tells me something. And the reason is that all things in nature are interlinked and interlocked, that all forces blend, and that everything that happens is under the sway of one common universal, all-permeant law. Pray think about this before you judge in the easy manner so popular in quarters where the ancient thought is not at all understood.

Do you imagine for a moment that the greatest intellects of the olden days, the mightiest minds, the most developed spiritual characters, believed in childish tales, and followed them, and rested the destinies of nations and races of men on childish theories? I do not. I know myself. I have examined myself within, and I know that when I can raise myself into the higher part of me, I have spiritual vision; I can then see, because I have come, to some extent at least, in communion with the god within me; and you can do the same thing exactly. Any human being is the vehicle of an indwelling divinity, his inner god; and if he come in touch with this inner god, he receives light. His mind becomes splendid, brilliant; and these ancient Seers read the 'books' — Nature's events or happenings — which Nature unfolded before them. Actually what took place in these ancient practices of reading omens was a combination of the clear-reading intuition, and the physical event which was interpreted, which thus brought that intuition into play. I wonder if you understand me.

Yes, I believe in omens. I do not believe that things merely happen by chance. I do not believe that if I go down the street one day, and see a warning sign, that that fact is just chance, that it just happens so. Chance and fortuity in their modern interpretation have absolutely no logical meaning to my mind. I do not recognize chance anywhere. I see nothing but the reign of law, of orderliness, in the universe, and I believe that as everything is connected together, and that event follows event,

and that effect follows cause, this is the case everywhere and it all times. The difficulty is to read the warnings aright, and because men do not know how to read the warnings aright, therefore they talk about the superstitions of the ancients because they do not understand the archaic philosophy upon which the ancients based their convictions.

The ancients believed in a universe ruled by law. They believed in the beauty of the universe as a consistent, self-contained, and coherent body. Consequently, everything that took place was to them the manifestation of law, which in their understanding was the manifestation of consciousness, of the consciousness of the gods, the rulers and governors of the universe. This thought is important. Think it over. It is an open door to many mysterious secrets of nature, as well as to an understanding of the real meaning of the ancient philosophers.

"When will the whole world at large become theosophy-minded?"

I think this will happen when the whole world becomes theosophy-hearted. When will that be? I don't know. I am not an oracle, I am just a man; but I think that it will be when the greater men of the world recognize the beauty of our majestic theosophical thought.

To become theosophy-minded means to recognize first, that you are a child of the gods, an offspring of divine beings, inseparable from the universe in which you live: that it is a heresy against almighty truth to think that you are different from the universe in any particular whatsoever — spiritually, intellectually, psychically, astrally, it matters not. All beings and things are one, ultimately, all rooted in the one Life, and please remember this: that through us all flows the steady, uninterrupted current of almighty love, which is the very cement of the universe. Ally

yourselves with the nobler side of your being, and attain peace and happiness that no words can describe.

"Can a theosophist really live up to the spirit and letter of his belief — which I find truly high and ennobling — and still keep his head above water in the rapid current of today's business life?"

Why, most certainly he can, and I should be awfully sorry for him if he did not; because if he did not, he would be a most wretched failure in life. What are the ethics of theosophy? To live decently; to treat your fellow men properly; to have brotherliness, kindness, fellow-feeling; never to cheat; never to lie; always to tell the truth, but to be kindly when you speak; to be frank; to be impersonal; to be honest. Is there anything very terrible about all that? Does the practice of these virtues make for loss, bankruptcy, failure? What do you think?

I think that a man would succeed in business if he practiced the theosophic virtues, because I think that even in material life, real success depends fundamentally upon ethical action. The idea that because a man is a man and wins the confidence of his fellow men, his head will go beneath the water of the business life of today, and he will drown, is an absurdity.

Here is a question that keeps recurring constantly. I really don't see why people want to know what I think about the boys and girls of today. I have answered that question already a number of times from this platform.

"Have you lost faith, as so many have, in the youth of today?"

No, why should I? I think that they are stupid chumps sometimes, but, on the other hand, I think that they have some qualities too. They are just folks, as folks always have been. They think that they know more than daddy, and more than mother. But so did

we when you and I were boys and girls.

I have not lost faith in modern youth. I will tell you why I have not lost faith. Because in the core of the core of every human being lie divine qualities. These divine qualities are there, because every human being is a part of the universe, inseparable from that universe; and the very core of the universe is consciousness, harmony, and beauty; and you see its manifestation everywhere in law and order.

I think that the youth of today are, on the whole, just about like the youth of the last generation and of a thousand years ago, and are pretty much the same as the youth of a thousand years to come will be. Some things about modern youth I do not like. I think that they are a little too sure of their own views, but after all, that defect is just a mark of immaturity, of youthful misjudgment. So were we also inflicted with the same defect.

Now, here is a very pointed question:

"Is your liberal policy proving a success; or is it too soon to be able to tell?"

Now, isn't that funny! Why should people accuse me of having a liberal policy? They probably think that it is a compliment. But is it? I just don't know how to answer that question properly. If I say that I am liberal then doubtless I will do something tomorrow, and people will say: Well, I don't think that is a liberal-minded thing to do — and they will say this because the action perhaps will not be agreeable to some folks.

On the other hand, if I say that I am an ultraconservative, then perhaps I shall do something tomorrow, which will disappoint somebody because I will appear too liberal.

Let me tell you the truth: my policy is the policy of the Masters of

Wisdom and Compassion, as theosophical leaders have been taught it. To some it may seem liberal. To others it may seem conservative. But that policy does not vary. Yet the ways of applying the policy are bound to vary frequently; yet it is to be remembered that the policy, and the ways of applying it, are two different things.

Any growing institution, such as our Society is, must of course change its ways of meeting changing circumstances, as those circumstances arise. But the policy of the Society has not varied one iota from the time the Society was founded in our age; and please the immortal gods, it will not change! If the policy of the Society, apart from the ways of applying it, if the fundamental policy of the Theosophical Society, were to change five hundred years from now, do you know what would happen? I would haunt you! I would come again and bring you back into the right track. I mean this too! I would come right to the fore. I am sworn to this work, soul and spirit.

I think that this is very liberal on my part, because there are some very difficult problems to meet sometimes — and one has to be liberal in order to meet them successfully. But I do not like anybody to ask me: Are you as liberal as you used to be? It makes me feel that they have no conception of what I am trying to do.

Furthermore, let me say here, that I could not do anything of real value if I were not backed up by the splendid body of theosophical workers that I have. That is holy truth. I should have to begin the theosophical work all over again; but at present I have a corps of splendid workers — trained, ready, alert, understanding, and devoted; and I am proud of them. They are men and women of a high class.

"You say that you and your followers are 'fishers of men' — 'fishers for men's souls.' In what way do you, then, differ from

orthodox ecclesiasticism? What are you going to do with them when you have 'caught' them, to carry on the figure! I ask in entire seriousness, please understand."

Well, I will do with them just what was done with me. I am 'caught,' and here I am! Do I look unhappy?

Yes indeed, I am a fisher for men, and I am proud of it. I want to bring truth to men, to bring happiness to my fellow human beings. I want to give them the great love, the great light, that fill my own mind and heart. My bait is truth, the ancient wisdom-religion of all times; and my hooks with which I am going to catch you all, are the presentations of those truths so that once they enter into your minds, you too are caught.

Thanks be to the immortal gods that I can stand here before you and say that I am proud of being a fisher of and for men, proud of what I stand for, because I can give to you treasures of inestimable value. I simply ask you to look, and looking to study, because if you can go that far, then you too are caught.

*Truth!* There is nothing so beautiful in the world as Truth. The facts of reality are based on no man's say-so, on the dicta of nobody at all; they are the same now as they were in the beginning of time, and as they will be in all future aeons — always the same.

Is there anything so beautiful, so high, as bringing comfort to broken hearts, light to obscure minds, the teaching of men how to love and to forgive? Those are my hooks, and the greatest of them is love; and another one almost equally great is forgiveness — honest, sincere, and real. We theosophists are fishers for men, as Jesus rightly also is reported to have said, for every great seer and sage is a fisher for men.

I have many more questions with me this afternoon which I shall



not be able to answer because the time has almost arrived for us to part; but here is a question which, on account of its being the Christmastide, I will answer briefly.

"Will you tell us something about Christmas from a theosophical standpoint? I understand that you always celebrate Christmas at Point Loma Headquarters. As the Christmas festival is essentially a Christian one, how do the members of your Society (which is said to include many non-Christians in the Orient and elsewhere) regard it?"

They regard it as theosophists regard it. The Christmas festival is in one sense only, a Christian festival. It is based upon something belonging to the Greek and Roman paganism, which the Christians took over. It is therefore older than Christianity. It is pagan, to use the popular word. The Christians themselves up to the fifth century of the Christian era did not know (I am speaking of the mass of Christians) exactly when to celebrate the birthday of Jesus called the Christ.

There were at least three dates when commemorative festivals were held in the early Christian era: on December 25th, on January 6th called the Epiphany, and on the 25th of March — practically the time of the spring equinox. Now, all these dates were based upon astronomical data and facts; and the Christians of about the fifth or sixth century of the Christian era finally chose the date which had been in use for the celebration of the birthday of the Persian god, Mithras — December 25th. Why?

Whether Jesus the Syrian lived or not has nothing to do with the question. If he lived, it matters not on what day of the year he was born, for the commemorative celebration of that birth is really the celebration of a mystical birth, the birth of the god in man, literally. I will tell you what I mean.

The Mysteries of antiquity were celebrated at various times of the year — in the spring, in the summertime, in the autumn, and at the winter solstice, on December 21st or 22nd. But the greatest of these mystical celebrations, the greatest of the Mysteries, was that which was celebrated in the wintertime, when the sun had reached his southernmost point and, turning, began his return journey northwards.

Beginning with the winter solstice, on December 21st, these most sacred of the ancient Mysteries began. Therein were initiated certain men who had been chosen on account of having perfected a certain preliminary period of training: chosen to go through initiatory trials for the purpose of bringing out into manifestation in the man the divine faculties and powers of the inner god.

Two weeks were passed in this cycle of training or of initiation; and on the 6th of January, later called Epiphany (a Greek word which means "the appearance of a god"), celebrated even today in the Christian Church, on that day came the supreme moment in the ancient crypts of initiation, when the aspirant, having successfully passed through the preliminary trials, was brought face to face with his own inner god.

If he withstood successfully the supreme test, he was suddenly suffused with splendor, with light which shone from him, so that he stood there radiating light like the sun. His face shone brilliantly; back of his head was an aureole of splendor, and he was said to be "clothed with the sun." This splendor is the Christ-light, called in the Orient the buddhic splendor, and is simply the concentrated spiritual vitality of the human being pouring forth in irradiation. The Christ-sun was born.

Oh, what could I not tell you about these things! I could bring to you proofs from the Greek and Latin literatures — proofs of many kinds — showing you what took place at this most sacred time of

the pagan initiatory cycle. On that day was born the Christ, to use the mystical phraseology of the primitive Christians; and using the phraseology of the Greeks and Romans, from whom the Christians adopted and, alas! adapted, the ideas: on that supreme day was born the mystical Apollo — to give the mystical name given to the man so raised; and in the Orient it was said that a Buddha was born.

I cannot here tell you openly why the midwinter season was chosen. I can merely tell you now that it depended upon certain conjunctions of the celestial bodies. It would take me too long a time, and I should be going into matters that I have no right to speak of in the open, were I to develop this theme at greater length; but remember this, that theosophists commemorate the Christmas festival on account of the facts that I have briefly outlined; and furthermore, that these initiations take place today.

The theosophist looks upon this season with reverence and awe, for he knows that in the proper quarter some human being is undergoing the supreme test, and that if successful, if he is "raised," if he can raise his own personal being into communion with his inner god and hold it there, so that he becomes suffused with the divine splendor, a new Christ is born to the world, a teacher of forgiveness, of compassion, of almighty love to all that is; and as I, being a theosophist, would phrase it, a Buddha is born into the world. Hail and revere!

No. 29 (April 15, 1930)

## QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK

(Lecture delivered December 29, 1929)

I was asked an odd question the other day. Someone, a good friend living in San Diego, who knows something about us theosophists, but not much of us, who has heard about us but does not know what we are, or what we stand for, said to me: "You people out there are just wonderful. You say the most lovely things. But has it ever struck you that life is something more than preaching?" I wonder what he thought of me! And he continued: "Don't you realize that life is serious? Don't you realize that it is a man's duty to go out into the world and play his part as a man?"

"You folks up there on the Hill pass your years from youth to manhood and from manhood you sink into senile decrepitude, preaching!" And I looked at him! I said to him: "Friend, will you tell me why you look so heart-hungry?" I said: "Are you a searcher for truth?" He said: "I am, most certainly I am. Don't I look like it?" I said: "You most certainly do!" I continued: "Did you ever hear of an old saying that has been ascribed to Jesus the Syrian Sage: 'What profiteth a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?' " He said: "Do you think I am losing my soul?" "No," I said: "I don't think you are, because you have begun to ask me questions."

As soon as a man begins to feel something stirring within himself, to feel the hunger for truth, the yearning for something more than what ordinary life can bring to him; as soon as he begins to realize that there is something deeper, grander, finer, in human existence than the strife and struggle of making a living at the least, and of laying by a fat bank account at the most, then that

man is beginning to live, is beginning to know something of the realities of life. His soul is beginning to awaken within his being, and he begins to realize: "After all, what am I here for? Is it merely to make a few gestures on the stage of life, to work and slave day after day, and month after month, and year after year, and finally, whether successful or not, at the end to be caught in my bed by the Great Visitor, and then to feel that I have lived a useless life — doing no real good to my fellow human beings, and not even advancing my own soul? I have been asleep. Almighty God! Had I had the wisdom in the days of my youth and in the flower of my manhood to follow the call of duty, to realize that in order to live human life as a man should live it, the great thing is to cultivate the facilities and powers of manhood, not running every morning to one's office, spending the entire day there, and returning to a more or less happy home at night, fagged out and tired, and nothing worthwhile done; repeating the same round of futile gestures on the stage of life year after year, and to lay me down on my deathbed, a failure!"

I tell you that Pythagoras, the great Greek sage, was right: men, until they have awakened, until they are awake to the great things of life, lead a living death; and that is why he called them the living dead. Physical life — what is it? How is it different from the life of the beasts? Do you call that the life of a being awakened? Eat, sleep, propagate your kind? The beasts do it. Material life? The beasts have it, and so have the plants.

No! We theosophists are striving to give light to our fellowmen, to show them the grand old way to peace and happiness, to show them that the inmost of the inmost of every human being is a veritable divinity whence flow into the human mind all the faculties and powers that make men men. We are striving to show our fellow human beings that there is a wisdom of the ages, which anyone may have for the asking. We are not asleep; we are

awake; and it is our duty to awaken our fellowmen.

How are you going to pass your life? Look at the broken hearts around you. Go into the streets of our towns and great towns and cities and look at the empty faces: vacant, hungry, yearning, striving for something they know not what, finding comfort nowhere, in despair, agonizing for something real. They are asleep; and all the frenzied hurly-burly of the marketplace is but an evil nightmare; it is a dream to a man whose soul is awakened.

In what way does physical life with all its frenzied activity give you anything of permanent value? Look how men haunt the libraries, searching after all the newfangled religions — this system and that system — how they go to the philosophers, turn to science, go to the churches. Why? Because they are soul-hungry. They turn from the fevered activities of the marketplace with souls anhungered for something real. They are in very truth "the living dead." They are asleep; and when you come to your last hour you will realize it. So we say: Awaken! Be a man now! Cultivate the faculties within you! Don't be damn fools! (This is not swearing, it is just emphasis; and I mean it).

"I notice that most of you theosophists have acquired a certain quiet poise of manner and of mind. What is there in your teachings that brings this about?"

I have just told you in part. But there is something more to say. We theosophists have peace of mind and a quiet heart; and this inner peace, this sense of having found, reflects itself in our faces and in our poise, which this questioner speaks of. We have conviction, and to have conviction is one of the finest things in human life. A man without a spiritual and intellectual sheet anchor: what is he like? Like a bark drifting on the stormy waters of life. A conviction! Yes, and enthusiasm. When a man is fully convinced, convinced at least for himself; when he can say for

himself: Thank the immortal gods, I have found what is to me truth, then his manner reflects the inner peace and he is strong.

Here is a really beautiful question, three questions in fact, and the second and third questions are a running commentary on the first, and they are beautifully phrased, these three:

"What is the basic and ultimate definition of music? Is it the life-wave of the monad expressing itself through matter from the lowest to its highest aspect, beyond and beyond, through the vibrations of sound? Should we therefore hear all planes or grades of life sing in the course of their being, up to man and beyond, if we were adequately attuned to such sound?"

Yes; but what is music? Is it simply a euphonious concurrence of pleasing noises, whether made by strings or winds or skins, or all combined; or is music inner harmony, the harmony within, expressing itself through physical instruments? To most men it is only the latter, and in a sense they are right, for music in itself is soundless. Music is harmony; but wherever there is a movement of material things, that movement is accompanied by sound. You cannot move a material thing, or cause any material thing to move, without producing sound, whether it be heard or whether it be not heard. Our ears are very imperfect instruments of report, attuned to catch but a small range of the infinite gamut of possible sounds. Very imperfectly evolved is our auditory facility.

But everything that is, is in movement, constant, unremitting movement, movement which ceases never, for life is movement, movement is life. The atoms therefore sing, each one its own song. Every movement of physical substance, no matter how small the particle may be, no matter how large, is musical, because the particle is vibrating at a certain rate; and had we the auditory sense to catch these sounds, we should hear them as musical sounds.

Hence the Pythagoreans in their ancient wisdom spoke of the Music of the Spheres, and said: "The celestial bodies, as they run their courses, sing in their orbits"; and it is true. But the sound is so great that our imperfect instruments of sensation cannot take it in. Why, your very bodies are a harmony, could you but hear it. Every atom in your body is singing its own note. You are concremented music, so to say. Every bit of stone or wood, every celestial body, every atom, every being anywhere, is a musical harmony. This is a literal fact.

Why is it we hear it all? When you hear the scraping of the violin bow over the string, why is it that that scraping produces sound? Because it is a movement of material particles producing certain rates of vibration which our ears, being attuned to hear, translate to our consciousness. I tell you that all life is music, because music is in everything. It is but one of the manifestations of movement; but its essence is harmony, and harmony is but another name for that love which is the very heart of the universe, the cement of the universe, that stupendous fact and essence of being which keeps things in order, in symmetry, in poise, in place.

Yes, everything sings, and human beings in their so-called music — the composers, the auditors of inaudible sounds — try to translate these sounds to other human beings by means of physical instruments.

Such, then, is music, as we view it, when described by a series of physical facts and interpretations such as I have just given. What I have just told you is extremely scientific, very scientific indeed, in view of the latest pronouncements of ultramodern scientific theory. And this is but another case where the teachings of the archaic wisdom-religion, today called theosophy, have been corroborated by the latest researches of the investigators into



physical nature.

Here is a question of quite a different type. This question comes from the Atlantic coast.

"What becomes of the inner ego of an insane person, an idiot, or a person who loses his mind and reason after middle life? Is it the karma of a person to become thus afflicted?"

Why, of course it is. Karma means the doctrine of cause and effect, of consequences: that what ye sow, ye shall reap; that whatever you are, or whatever happens to you, is what we theosophists call the consequence of your former merit or demerit, and is what you have reaped, or what you are now reaping. Ye have made yourselves what you now are in other times on earth, and you are now making yourselves what you will be in the future.

But what becomes, to follow the language of this questioner, of the ego of one who goes insane? Where is the ego of the idiot? This questioner of course asks his question according to the ideas of the modern Occidental, having the idea in the back of his mind that the body is the man, and that the ego is something which lives inside the body, and that something happens to it in such cases, and that the man then becomes insane or an idiot.

Theosophists have a different viewpoint. We say that the body is but a reflection of what you are inwardly, that it merely mirrors what you are within. Now, what are you? You are a bundle of energies, a collection of powers, faculties, and characteristics, and the body is the vehicle through which these work on this physical plane. This bundle of inner energies, this collection of facilities, becomes dislocated as it were, or out of tune with its vehicle, and therefore cannot work properly through that physical vehicle, due, perhaps, to some accident; and hence disease results, or

insanity, or idiocy.

A physical body which is an idiot furnishes an example where the reincarnating ego did not find full expression through, so to speak, full entrance into, the physical vehicle. An idiot, an insane person — irrevocably insane I mean — is one whose inner ego is more or less absent in function, linked to the physical body nevertheless by chains of vitality, but not functioning fully and smoothly. The ego in such cases as it were overshadows the brain, but does not illuminate it.

Of course such cases are always results of what you have been and done in the past. You yourselves are responsible for the conditions in which you find yourselves existing. Do you want to blame 'God'? Or, if you don't believe in God, do you want to say that it is chance? What is chance? I tell you that there isn't any such thing. When a man does not know the proper explanation of the riddles of life, he says chance, or it happened so. Why, of course it happened so. Is that an explanation? Chance is no explanation; and to say that a thing happened so, is merely repeating the problem in other words. What is it that caused the happening?

No, theosophists believe in a universe of unalterable law and eternal order. We believe that human beings, as well as every other entity everywhere, are collaborators in the cosmic great work, collaborators with the gods, playing our part in the universe, and therefore responsible for the part that we play. Please think the matter over, and you will see how reasonable this is.

But if you prefer to throw the causes and consequences of your sins upon the overburdened shoulders of some Savior, then remember that nevertheless nature is not mocked; that what you choose to do in your mind will not relieve you either of ethical or

physical responsibility. It is like a man who breaks into a bank, or who murders some fellow human being, and then pleads, when he is brought to trial: I didn't do it; God created me that way. Is he going to evade the penitentiary on such a flimsy excuse as that?

Therefore, an insane person, or an idiot, or a person who loses his reason at any time, suffers thus because he himself has prepared what he is now receiving: he has sown the seeds which are now fruiting, bringing forth their fruit. You see, this is a manly doctrine, it is a doctrine of orderliness, of law, of justice. That is what theosophists believe in.

Now, what is the result of our belief? One result is that we are very careful what we do. We realize that if we sow good seeds, we reap happiness and peace, and if we sow the wind, we shall reap the whirlwind.

"Does a drug or liquor fiend become a mental wreck in his next incarnation?"

I think that such a man is a mental wreck in this incarnation. I think that nobody except one whose mental capacity is a wreck now would allow himself to become a drug fiend or a drunkard. What such a weak and unfortunate human being may do in his next birth, I cannot say, but my belief is that he will go from bad to worse, until he uses his will and his innate power of moral resistance, and finally says: I will not continue so. I will be a man. Then he begins to walk the path towards recovery and true manhood.

I made the remark once to a man who called himself a theosophist that I felt that the duty of every true theosophist was the saving of the souls of other human beings, not of his own soul, for that would take care of itself automatically if the man does right. He said: I don't like that expression "saving of souls"; it

makes me think of the churches. I said: Yes, it does, and I don't like the expression either, but it is true in a sense. I don't know a nobler work than that of teaching men how to think, to awaken, to make them truly human, which is in fact a saving of their souls from worse things, from soul degeneracy in fact.

Show a man the causes of things; teach him the nature of the universe in which he lives. You will then have changed the whole course of his destiny. That is what I meant by saving his soul. But you know that the old Christian idea was: I want to save my own soul. It is true that many fanatic religionists, earnest and sincere men despite their fanaticism, also desire to save the souls of their fellows, and much cruelty and moral wickedness have resulted from their misguided enthusiasm; but obviously that is not what I referred to.

"You invite all who are interested in high thinking and clean living to join your society. Would you admit a Mohammedan with several wives, or is the moral code of theosophy opposed to the practice of polygamy?"

Do you know, I think that I would go out and drag that poor Mohammedan in, in order to give him some peace and to give him some help. He needs it badly. If a man thinks that one wife isn't enough, and that he has to have more, I admire his courage, but I want to help him.

Now, I am not a Mohammedan; I have not several wives — I have no wife at all. But why should we close the theosophical doors to any human being who comes hunting for truth, whether he has one wife, or ten, or none? Truth does not depend upon how many wives you have, nor upon how many children you have. The reception of truth depends upon the appeal you make to the givers of almighty truth — not to us theosophists, but to the immortal gods who guide the universe; and I can tell you that

whenever a sincere cry for help and light goes up from any human heart, the very gods in highest heaven bend down a listening ear, so to speak. In other words, you strike vibrations which reach to the very heart of the universe, for such a vibration is a spiritual one, and it finds its echoing in spiritual realms. Do you get the thought? And by that appeal you have established a psychomagnetic connection with your own inner divinity, and you will receive, along the intellectual currents, along the inner and invisible lines of communication, help and light.

What a wretched example of a theosophist would I not be if I refused a man entrance into The Theosophical Society who came to me and said: I am a searcher for truth. Call you help me? And I were to ask him: "How many wives have you?" Do you see the point? Theosophists emphatically do not teach polygamy, they do not teach monogamy, they do not teach polyandry. All these things are human customs: good, bad, or indifferent as the case may be; but the duty of a theosophist is to teach the archaic wisdom-religion, scientific, religious, and philosophical truths, which he holds as the most sacred thing in the universe, to all and sundry who come with open ears and open heart.

We put up no bars against any seeker for truth, no matter what his beliefs may be, no matter what his past record is. I would teach my bitterest enemy the holy truth. It would be my duty, even if I knew that the next moment he would plunge a dagger into my heart. That is a duty.

"Does not man's power of shifting, at will, his consciousness up and down the gamut of his being, from the level of the beast up to that of a son of God, prove that he is possessed of free will and is responsible for his own thoughts and acts?"

I think that it most decidedly does; but it proves more. It proves that man has these inner faculties within him. In other words,

that he is in incarnate god, manifesting, oh so feebly and badly, his own transcendent spiritual powers; but they are there. Look at the great spiritual titans of the human race, the great seers and sages of the ages, all the works of mighty genius — where do they come from? From within.

Men do not know what they have within themselves. A god is locked up within each one of you, chained to you by karmic chains of destiny; and all evolution is the bringing forth of these transcendent powers within you: unfolding, unwrapping, unrolling, the letting out of what is within — growth. Evolution is the self-expression of the divinity within; and when a man once knows this, and from knowing it begins to realize it, when it captures heart and mind, and his imagination is swayed, then he has conviction, and from that moment he grows rapidly. He develops rapidly. And I wonder if there is a man or a woman in this Temple this afternoon who has never heard the whisperings within his or her heart of something nobler and higher, far more beautiful, than the ordinary thoughts of daily life — in other words, just little inklings, just a breath from the divinity within, a spark of that supernal light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

That is what the ancient sages meant when they said: Man, know thyself. Know what you have within you, your inner powers. All the Mystery Schools of the past, all the methods of initiation, of which you have doubtless heard much, all of them were founded with one object in view, to bring forth from within the spiritual powers of those who were prepared, the facilities divine of the god within.

But let me add a word here: these initiations are not alone of the past. Let me tell you in all solemnity of holy truth that they continue today, for those who are found worthy and ready and

prepared. Knock, and it will be opened unto you.

"You say that the soul, absolutely free from the body, realizes that there is, in the divine economy, another chance upon this plane of life, etc. If you sincerely believe in this, how would you account for this wicked mass of humanity? This world is centuries old. Why hasn't it gradually corrected itself? Why, in taking up the old threads of life, hasn't man corrected the old failures? It is inspiring to hope for another chance in life; but why live the same old mistakes over?"

Now, that is just what I want to ask you. Why live the old mistakes over again and again and again? That is the very question that theosophists are asking. This kind friend has a very limited view in thinking of this world as merely centuries old. I wonder if the questioner can be a Christian.

Why hasn't the world gradually corrected itself in these few hundred years?

Well, ask yourself. Why haven't you corrected yourself in this one lifetime? You have not wanted to do so. You have preferred to sleep, to be one of the living dead, rather than to look within and drink of the Pierian fountains of light and life within you. Give men time. What are a few hundred years in comparison with the age-long evolution of the human soul? A little while ago it was popular in the Christian Occident to say that the earth is now some six thousand years old, and that the human race is something less than that old. Then the scientists added a few more thousands of years, and at that time man was supposed to be an over-grown ape, having reached incipient manhood some twelve or twenty thousand years ago. Some time after that, it was supposed that man might be a hundred thousand years old; and now our scientists are talking about the human race possibly being fifty millions of years old.

Let me tell you why men don't improve more rapidly than they do. Just examine your own hearts. Do you know of anything more refractory, stubbornly hard, than the human heart? Now, just think of it. We are the most extraordinary creatures, we human beings; we are either as weak as water, swayed by every passing emotion, unstable, or we are harder than adamant; and we are always the latter when it comes to our own particular failings.

The hardest thing to change in the universe is the adamant, refractory nature of the human soul. It takes centuries multiplied by millions to work a radical change. But we have been millions of centuries at it, and we are improving! I know I am! And I take it for granted that you are too. Man hasn't yet corrected the old failures because he has not really wanted to. He prefers the gutter of his passions, sleeping in the gutter, to the sunlighted peaks of the Mystic East. Oh, but when conviction comes, when you see the light: never, never, never can you forget the moment when the light breaks in through your hardened hearts.

The world, then, changes, as if by the mysterious magic of the gods, for then you see, and you will never be the same man again. You see; and from that moment you begin to grow. Other human beings you begin to read, and they tell you their story of pathos and pain, and you become charitable and kindly to others. You learn to forgive, you learn to be an exemplar of the almighty love which fills the universe. You become truly a man.

It will come to all in time, for the destiny of the human race in the future is a sublime one. The time is coming when evolution will have worn away the shackles and chains of the lower selfhood which bind us on the Procrustean bed of our lower egoism, and then we shall be free; and in the aeons of the aeons of the future, I tell you in all solemnity of truth, we shall be human gods walking this earth; and pain and sorrow will be a nightmare of the past.



Disease will vanish; happiness and peace will brood over the earth; for in those future happy days, the god within each human being will have begun to manifest its sublime powers, and all men will recognize all men as brothers. Verily we shall be incarnate gods, human gods.

Here is something which I have found. I do not know the author of it. I don't know whence it came. It is called The Unalterable Man:

"There was once a man who, after he had been some time in this highly mysterious world, wrapped himself about with certain opinions, placed upon himself a certain design of mental hat, and took in his hand a particular type of intellectual umbrella. Thereafter he steadfastly refused to modify his opinions, to learn anything new, or to change his mental clothes in any way whatsoever. And so, alas, he ended as a scarecrow in the midst of a growing field."

Now, don't be a scarecrow. Don't let the current of evolution of your fellowmen leave you behind. Don't be afraid to change. Change is growth. Change is evolution. Do you think that I am teaching a dangerous doctrine? No, because I know the human heart. The human heart will never give up a thing of beauty; the human heart will never renounce a truth. Beauty and truth never change. Paradox! But learning hearts change continuously, advancing ever from the less to the greater, from the inferior to the superior, advancing ever steadily towards that light which grows ever larger with the passage of time, at light which you can never attain in its fullness because it is the very light of the universe; and soon you will find it to be not ahead of you but everywhere, shining with transcendent splendor in your own heart.

See the picture. Oh, how beautiful is truth. Truth has no dogmas.

You don't have to enforce it. If the mind be only a little awakened, it catches the rays of truth, and thereafter something stirs in a man's heart. Nothing will satisfy him henceforth except more light; for light, illumination, is food and drink to the soul.

And finally, today, friends, may I in closing tell you something that is very near and dear to me? It is this: Have you ever loved? Have you ever tasted of the sweet fruits of self-forgetfulness? — the complete oblivion of your personality in something so beautiful and impersonal that human tongue cannot describe it? A faint reflection of this love is the love of one human being for another human being — very faint it is, but it is at least the beginning of self-forgetfulness; and therein, in a sense, lies its danger; because only too often this human love is so beautiful that it blinds the eyes of those who should have more.

But if you have the key and know the truth, know that love is the very cement of the universe, that compassion, pity, self-forgetfulness, and peace, that all these are the fruits of the cosmic harmony, which is the very heart of the universe; when you begin to realize, I say, this fact, then within your soul there begins the growth of something which is indescribable, which cannot be expressed in words, but which is at once light, and life, and peace, and wisdom, and almighty love — impersonal, universal, so that everything that is, everywhere, has a fascination for you, for you love it. This is divine; it is also human. Follow it.

**No. 30 (April 22, 1930)**

**QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK**

(Lecture delivered January 12, 1930)

I have a large bundle of questions before me — an accumulation of two or three weeks. I shall take them and try to answer them in the order in which I have received them; therefore if any kind friend finds that his or her questions are not answered this afternoon, please be assured that they will be answered at some later date.

In answering questions after this manner, the speaker often wonders just how near he comes successfully to responding to the questions that have been asked him, and this is particularly true as regards a theosophical speaker because he is able to draw not only upon the general exoteric or popular teachings of theosophy which in themselves furnish adequate answers, but also he has more secret teachings which are held secret simply because they are so profound, so difficult, that it would be impossible to draw upon these inner, deeper teachings, except in very small degree.

Here is my point: I cannot adequately answer any question that is asked me without going at least in part to this fountain of the ancient wisdom which these inner secret teachings are. Were I to limit my answers to the exoteric teachings, as you will find them in our literature, I should merely tell you, from this platform, what you could find in our books. But neither you nor I would feel fully satisfied with this, and therefore in some degree, as I have just said, I am obliged to turn to the esoteric side of our philosophy; and this I can do only in very limited degree, and do so under very heavy restrictions. In this situation lies the difficulty.

What can a speaker do under conditions, in circumstances, such as these? I tell you what I do. I go inside of my own being, and I seek the inspiration and illumination that every human being has in the core of his essence. I go within, I look within, I follow the still small pathway towards the spiritual self which all the great sages and seers of the human race have taught us of; and the wisdom and knowledge stored up in the spiritual self I draw upon, mayhap but a little, mayhap on occasion in larger degree, and take from this storehouse of wisdom and knowledge which every human being is in the core of the core of himself — his inner god; for that is what each and every one of you is: an incarnate divinity.

Now please look at the lesson that we may learn in following this process. This process of looking within is the heart of all religion, the secret of all philosophy, and the explanation of all science. When men know that they have within themselves this fountain of spiritual being, this Pierian spring at which they may drink, they know that therein lies the explanation of everything, because this inner nature contains an understanding of everything. Your self is not separated from the universe in which you live and move and have your being, for it is an integral part of that universe. You are, each one of you, an inseparable part of the universe in which you are. You are it. It is you, and you are it.

So consequently, by this penetrating within, by this following ever more inwards towards the inner light which ever recedes the farther you advance, and which ever broadens into a still greater splendor, you come to realize what you are — the very essence of the universe — and also that as your essential nature is spiritual understanding, therefore you can draw upon this fountain of understanding, and if you do so successfully and in large degree, you become a very oracle of the gods.

These are not poetic words; they are not mere poetical phrases; they are actual facts of being. Man, know thyself, and thou shalt know the universe, for the spirit of the universe is your spirit. You are a spark of the Central Fire which is all-permeant, permeates everything. Think! See the inspiration, see the dignity, which this truth gives to humankind, for a realization of this noble fact makes man akin to a god who walks the earth.

Whence come human intelligence, human consciousness, and this godlike faculty of understanding? How can you understand anything, if essentially you are not it? You would be alien to it, out of tuneful vibration with it, if you were not essentially the same. You could not interpret it if you were radically different from it; but being it radically, and because you know yourself, therefore can you know everything. Hence human intelligence, human consciousness, and the godlike faculty of understanding, come from within yourself, because they are there, and fundamentally the essence of man is intelligence, consciousness, and understanding.

Here is my first question:

"A materialist, brought face to face with the more subtle, more vital, issues of the spirit, is like a lost child.' Why?"

This question springs from a thoughtful mind. The materialist is like a lost child because he has lost his way in life and in thought. His consciousness of things of the spirit is not awakened, or rather his brain-mind does not know what he himself is within. He has taught himself and brought himself to live merely in the manifold phenomena of material existence, so that all his consciousness is separated into particulars — scattered, diffused — and he thus has no self-conscious realization of the inner god, of what he is in his inmost being. Naturally he is thus lost in consciousness; he does not understand. I tell you that you will get

in this universe just what you desire, just what you want, just what you aim for, and nothing else.

If you are a materialist, you will be one of the laggards in the evolutionary race, remaining such for age after age until you awaken and "take the kingdom of heaven by violence," in other words, take your spiritual heritage. Willful ignorance blinds you; and the materialist is willfully ignorant, willfully blind, for he will not recognize the facilities within himself. He looks without instead of within. That is why he is blind.

The childish talk that we hear sometimes about the value of material things! Why, friends, things of matter are for use, not that man should subject himself to them. Why not live in the noblest part of your being, in your own noblest facilities: in your understanding, in your spiritual will, in the illumination springing from this Pierian fount within? Why be subject to things of a merely transitory character? Do you want to be all body, all vehicle; or the intelligence and understanding directing it? Take your choice. You will get just what you aim at; and towards that point whither man's soul is most strongly attracted will he travel the evolutionary course.

If your instincts and your thoughts and your desires be earthwards, earthward will you go, for earthwards is your attraction; and if your instincts and your will and your understanding and your aspiration are upwards towards the stars and the immortal suns, thither will you travel in the evolutionary course. These are facts; the same rule applies even in the common affairs of life. The things upon which a man sets his heart he struggles for, and gets them; and precisely the same rule holds man in nature's unerring balance of justice. In the pan of the balance into which you have thrown the strongest elements and affections of your character will you be found yourself when

you are weighed in life's balance. That is the meaning of the ancient Egyptian symbolic picture of the man's heart being weighed in the balance.

Question two: "Is there such a thing as 'The Music of the Spheres,' or is the phrase a poetic figure of speech?"

I think that I answered a question very closely alike to this one two weeks ago. There is indeed such a thing as the Music of the Spheres, a very real thing. Every motion of material substance, among other phenomena accompanying that motion, is accompanied with a sound. That sound may be too great for our imperfect ears to sense, or to take note of; or it may come within the limited gamut of sound that evolution has brought our auditory sense to understand or to take in. In the latter case we are aware of the physical sound, in the former case not, but the sound is there just the same.

The musical harmonies throughout nature are going on all the time. Everything that moves, sings as it moves; and all things are moving. Nothing is absolutely inert, consequently everything sings, and the stars in their majestic cyclical motions, and the planets in their orbits, sing the song of the spheres; but our senses are not attuned to take it in. Therefore we don't hear it. Do you know how Shakespeare beautifully describes this in a passage in his *Merchant of Venice*, Act 5, Scene 1?

"There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st  
But in his motion like an angel sings,  
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins;  
Such harmony is in immortal souls;  
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay  
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it."

Shakespeare in this passage was merely repeating the teachings

of the ancient Greek Pythagoreans, which teachings had come down to his time through the writings of the earlier Christian theologians and mainly in the teachings of the pseudo-Dionysius, called the Areopagite. The Pythagorean doctrine is our theosophical teaching also, and the matter is now becoming somewhat understood even by the ultramodern scientific researchers, to the effect that every material thing in movement produces, among other phenomena, sound.

What a beautiful thought it is! Our very bodies sing, had we the ears to hear the combined harmony of the atoms composing that sound. Every particle of matter which seems to be to the physical vision, to the physical ear, so still and so inert, sings its song, and so do the celestial bodies chant their heavenly hymns, not, as Shakespeare says — making a mistake in his Hebrew grammar — "to the young-eyed Cherubins," but to the immortal gods; but the meaning is the same.

Yes, verily there is not only a Music of the Spheres, but there is music everywhere, and man's poor interpretative facility attempts to seize some of these celestial harmonies, and the result is that we have what we call human music, beautiful in its way indeed, but oh, how imperfect, as compared with nature's natural harmonies.

The next time when you pass a fellow human being on the street, no longer look upon him as an imperfect fellow, no longer let your eyes rest upon him as a being of mere flesh and blood and bones; but remember that you have just passed an imbodyed god in his higher being, full of mysteries, so that his very body is singing a hymn, had you the ears to hear it. Love your fellow human beings. Love is a magical open sesame to some of nature's most mystic secrets.

"Who are the composers of the Music of the Spheres?"



Isn't that question human! Who did it? Oh, friends, the music IS! You as human beings are it itself. Who makes the atom sing? They sing, all these entities, from the music in their own spirit-souls; they can do naught else but sing. They are harmony in their inmost being, and this harmony wells up as from a fountain and comes out and expresses itself in song.

"What is enthusiasm? Is it merely an unaccustomed influx of the higher life-forces?"

I think that it is a good deal more, unless, indeed, the phrase, higher life-forces is intended to include the spiritual and intellectual faculties of man. Enthusiasm is in part a vision, imperfect it may be, partial it certainly is, but a vision of reality. And when man sees, he knows what he sees, and he sees what he knows. He therefore has conviction; and conviction and vision combined, produce enthusiasm. The ancient peoples, you know, thought that enthusiasm was inspiration, a form of inspiration from the gods. So it is. The ancient philosophers thought that it was from the god within.

Of course there are various kinds of enthusiasm. Some people confuse enthusiasm with mere physical vitality, animal magnetism, animal spirits; but that is not enthusiasm. Enthusiasm is the infilling of the soul with a conviction that such or another is so, or such or another thing is thus; and this conviction leads to an inner vision of it — and these two combined produce enthusiasm which makes men great. Enthusiasm produces tremendous effects in the world. It makes civilizations and unmakes them. It is the inspiration behind genius, and it is one of the qualities which make men different from beasts. The beasts have latent in them all that man has, but they are not awakened to self-conscious realization of it all. Man is a little more awakened. Therefore he has enthusiasms; he has consciously the

feeling of the inspiration that comes with almighty love; and he also has compassion, pity, fellow-feeling, and how divine these things are! How harmonious! Love is the root of them all — not ordinary human love, but impersonal love which is the very cement of the universe, harmony.

"When my brother was a little boy, his mother gave him a book with pictures of angels in it. After studying them intently for some time, he said: 'Mother, how do the angels get their nighties on over their wings?' Can you answer that one? Are there any such creatures as angels with wings?"

Why should this kind questioner ask me this question? I don't think angels have wings. I don't think that angels wear such night garments. I don't think that they need them. If I were to tell you that I thought that there were such spiritual entities in the vast spaces of infinitude as angels, you would immediately think that I meant beings resembling those familiar Christian pictures of angels; and perhaps you might imagine that I had in mind some of those bodiless heads with wings, flying around in the air.

Now, in the first place, why should it be supposed that an angel has a man's body, or rather, has a body copied in shape after a man's physical body? A man's physical body is an exceedingly imperfect vehicle.

"Angel" is an interesting word. It is a word of Greek origin, having the meaning of "Messenger," one who carries a message, an intermediary. Using the word in that sense, as belonging to the class of intermediary spiritual beings, then I most decidedly do believe in 'angels,' but I don't call them angels. I don't like the word. That word has been ruined by misconceptions which have produced various kinds of foolish pictorial representations; the word has been spoiled in our mental vision. I call these spiritual intermediaries gods, and demigods, which words come much

nearer to the truth than does the Orthodox Christian conception of angels.

Why on earth, or rather in heaven or in the spaces, should these spiritual intermediaries be given human bodies or bodies resembling human physical frames? Such pictorial representations as exist in Christian art originated in the human egoism of the early Christian artists. Uninitiated men have always been given to representing spiritual beings after their own pattern. Men have looked upon themselves as the lords of creation, etc., and consequently thought that spiritual beings more or less resembled in shape their own human physical bodies. If men knew the truth, they would never use that phrase — lords of creation — again.

There are beings in the cosmos, in the universe, so much higher than men, that could we see them and understand them, we should seem utterly insignificant in our own vision; and most certainly we would not give to the gods bodies fashioned after our own: after that human body which an English philosopher once very neatly called a "forked radish," having two arms and two legs, and a very ugly face, and a still more ugly head, and possessing five toes and five fingers, and other appendages. The present human form is merely a transitory evolutionary production, and the human race is going to change its form entirely in the distant future.

Why not think of these intermediary beings as having other forms or shapes of a spiritual type and character? Why could they not be a flame of glory, or a sphere of splendor? Why give to them wings like gross physical beings of earth? Why give to them wings like those possessed by birds, eagles, vultures, dragonflies? Don't you see how ridiculous the idea is?

But I will tell you why the ancients sometimes put wings on

human bodies. It was because birds, to these early symbologists, whose ideas were copied by the Christians, were recognized to be speedy fliers. Wings therefore were used symbolically in artistic representations as meaning speedy movement, and the ability to rise above the material earth into clearer and more ethereal atmospheres. The entire idea was merely symbolic.

Do I believe in angels? Yes, I believe in the gods — call them gods, or angels, or devas, or spirits of the universe. It matters not by what name you call them. In the beings themselves I believe, because I myself am a self-conscious man. I have a logical faculty; I have intellectual power; I have an understanding heart; I have used the faculties of my mind, and from all this I know that the human race is not the only tribe of self-conscious, sentient, and intelligent beings in all the spaces of boundless infinitude; and as these other races of spiritual entities exist, they must likewise exist in all grades of evolution. If not, then you are faced with the unsolvable problem why they should exist in one evolutionary grade alone.

But, on the other hand, theosophists fill the universe full with conscious intelligences: with bright flames of intelligence — call them gods, or devas, or cosmic spirits, or by whatever other name you may please. Then our human race is explained as being merely one family of this vast hierarchy of bright intelligences.

No, I don't think that angels have wings, and I don't think that they use nighties. But in order to make my answer more complete, I will merely hint at a certain fact, to wit: in considering the numberless hierarchies of conscious and self-conscious and quasi-conscious beings existing in all grades, which infill the universe, I have no doubt that some of them are winged, or possess means of locomotion similar to wings such as our birds have.

Even in far past times on earth there were physical creatures who flew and who were not birds, but who possessed a reptilian character. I may remind you of one class only, the pterodactyls.

"I understand from your lectures that none of the planets are peopled with what we call our dead. Will you tell me where they spend the time of their rest between reincarnations?"

This question was sent in to me by a friend. It comes from the Atlantic Coast. This friend presumably has studied and thought over what I have said on other occasions about death. But unfortunately I am not quoted correctly. There are no dead. As Katherine Tingley said: 'Spiritual man is eternal, there are no dead.' People talk of a dead man, but they really mean a dead body. A dead flower, a dead horse, goat, pig, cow, cat, sparrow, whatnot, even a dead world. But I have never heard of a dead energy. I have never heard of a dead spirit. Remember that all of man's interior constitution is a complex of energies, an aggregate of energies. To talk about a dead energy, therefore, is something new to me.

I have said — and I now repeat it — that the average Occidental knows nothing whatsoever of the mystery of death; and this lack of knowledge accounts for the great heartache that Occidentals have when their beloved pass.

Why are we here on this particular planet? It is our theosophical teaching that some of the other planets in our solar system, just as in other solar systems where other planets exist, have inhabitants, each planet having inhabitants of its own kind and type, and of its own degree of evolutionary advancement, some being more advanced than are we men, and some less advanced.

It is likewise our theosophical teaching that when the monadic essence, the spiritual part of the human being, breaks its

connection with the physical body, leaving that body to disintegrate into the chemical elements which compose it, then this monadic essence enters upon another pathway of evolutionary progress in other spheres in the ethereal and spiritual realms, during the course of which it also passes through certain minor turns, cyclical turns, these turns being on and through some of the other physical planets of our solar system, just as one phase of that evolutionary journey of the monadic essence is here on earth where it manifests itself as a man.

Our earth is but one of the stages of the evolutionary journey of the inner god, and it expresses itself here on earth as a man. But to say that I said, or that any other theosophical teacher has ever said, that some of our other planets are peopled with our dead — never! Our dead are here. Dust to the dust. Man's inner constitution is a bright and lovely fire, a deathless energy. It dies not ever, nor does it ever taste of decay. It is a spark of the Central Fire, and its pilgrimage is throughout eternity. It passes from mansion to mansion of experiences in what the Christians call "My Father's House" — the universe — and this earth is one such mansion.

If I had the time and could obtain the permission, I would tell you some of the secrets of what men call death. Nor are these secrets selfishly kept forever from you. You may receive them if you will. Every honest heart which comes to our theosophical Temple and gives the right knock, will find the portals of truth swinging open at his knock. "Knock and it shall be opened unto you; ask and ye shall receive." This is a promise which I repeat, as being the statement and promise of all the sages of all the ages. There is truth in the universe. That truth is to be obtained, but you will never get it until you yourself so long for it that by instinct you will knock and knock aright, and then your knock will be heard. You will then know where to go to find truth.

As a little hint for you, let me tell you that The Theosophical Society was founded by the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion in order to form, as it were, a Temple of cosmic truth, where all who might apply, and apply aright, with clean heart and open mind and unveiled and eager spiritual perception might be given the wisdom of the gods — theosophy. Great words, those of you may say who don't know what theosophy is; and I answer: Yes, but true ones. Here is a challenge for you: Study theosophy, study it, and I promise that if you are a normal man or woman, you will find that I tell you truth. You will receive what your soul longs for.

The monadic essences pass their time, between reincarnations on this earth, in following this evolutionary pilgrimage, in this peregrination of the spiritual splendor within, called the monad, from sphere to sphere, from life to life; and so far as the human soul is concerned, the ordinary human I — not the monadic essence which is divine, godlike — but that which makes you a man, the human soul: this human soul is gathered back into the bosom of its Father, to use the language of the Hebrews; and its Father is the monadic essence, the parent Fire. There the indrawn spark, the human soul, rests in bliss unspeakable, until nature's laws draw the monadic essence again towards this earth. Then there reissues forth from the monad the human soul of the man that was, now attracted by familiar scenes, familiar vibrations, drawn earthwards by familiar attractions; and thus a little child is born on earth.

"Aside from the significance that theosophists, and also people of other religions, attach to the New Year cycle, do you attach a particular significance to the opening of the new decade, 1930?"

Yes and no. The situation is this: If the questioner means our

modern method of reckoning time, our modern chronology, 1910-20-30-40, and so forth, then there is no particular importance that we attach to it, because our era, the so-called Christian era in the Occident, is supposed to date from the birth of Jesus; but as nobody knows when Jesus was born, can a chronology of that kind have any esoteric value?

But the theosophist, in common with all thinking men of the great past, attaches enormous importance to every decade or period of ten years, as such, outside of chronology, because such decade, as a time factor, is parallel with, and actually is the same as, the ten or eleven year period of the solar spots. That solar cycle controls more things on earth than men realize; and it is only within the last twenty or thirty, it may be forty, years, that modern astronomers are beginning to check off the human statistics connected with the solar spots cycle.

Very little they know as yet; but they are beginning to take cognizance of the fact that there is some connection between the cycle of the solar spots and affairs in human history, and with those other matters connected with human history which influence men's life greatly, such as agriculture, horticulture, storm periods, cycles of disease, and what not. To this decade or solar spot cycle theosophists attach very great importance indeed.

I might say as a rider to what I have just observed, that during the next ten years those who observe the progress of The Theosophical Society will find something wonderful taking place: an expansion, a growth, a spreading of its power and influence, such as it has never before experienced. It is my most earnest prayer and hope that we may be able (and I verily believe we shall be able) to carry the same impetus, the same power, into the ten-year period following the one now opening, and possibly into the third ten-year period following the second. Whether I be here



or not matters nothing at all. Katherine Tingley did a marvelous work when she held the reins of administration of The Theosophical Society. The lines were wisely and strongly laid by her. The theosophical train (to use a common human figure of speech) is gathering speed; and (in order not to be too solemn) I will say that it will be an express train before I disappear from among men. You may ask: "Who will then be the engineer?" You will see!

"I understand that during sleep the soul leaves the body and goes through various experiences. What happens in the case of a person suffering from insomnia, or of a person who wakes frequently during the night? Does such a person's soul suffer from being dragged back continually?"

No, for the reason that the person's soul, to use the phraseology of the questioner, has not gone. Obviously. Were it gone, there would be no awakening. There would be no insomnia. But it is true that during sleep, the soul, to use the ordinary word, does depart from the body, and goes through various experiences; and, let me tell you, some of the most wonderful experiences of human existence are passed behind the veil of invisibility. Have you ever thought how mysterious a thing sleep is? That we lay ourselves down at night in our beds in peace and comfort, and with the assurance that we shall be there again in the morning? But just think what happens. Is it suspended animation? It is not. The body is very much alive, but something is different. The body moves, stirs, breathes, snores, may groan, may talk. All these things are reflex actions, nervous reflexes or whatnot; but do you ever see or hear of a sleeping body writing a noble poem, or delivering a lecture on religion or philosophy, or doing an act of magnanimous duty or compassion?

And yet, in the morning something happens. The eyes twitch and

open, the man is again there. I will tell you what happens. Sleep — and this case is that of the average man, and of course barring accidental cases, because there are always exceptions to every rule — sleep, as the ancient Greeks said, is the twin brother of death. *Hypnos kai thanatos*, "sleep and death", are *adelphoi*, "brothers". Sleep is imperfect death. Death is perfect sleep.

In these words you have the key to what sleep is. The human monadic essence, while the body is resting in peace and quiet, recuperating its forces, is off on rapid peregrinations through the spaces of space — spaces inner and invisible, spaces outer and visible — going through, on a smaller scale, and in minor reaches, what the monadic essence does when the body is finally cast aside at the event that men call death.

In sleep you go to other planets; in sleep you go to the sun mayhap, or even to some star. And alas, listen: in some cases, and thank the immortal gods that they be so very few, the peregrinating entity goes to places of experience whither no human intelligence would willingly go. And I will tell you why: Like attracts like. As ye receive after death what ye have sown, what ye have won and earned, so in sleep for and by the same reason of overmastering attraction, you are drawn thither whither your desires impel you. Take heed. Nature is not mocked. Things do not happen haphazard. What ye sow, ye shall reap; and ye are now reaping what ye have sown. The law of consequences is the same whether in sleep or in death or in life.

If your thoughts are low and vile, to conditions and states which are vile and low will you go. And if your thoughts turn towards the sun, and your vision is set upon the stars, when ye are awake, and your heart is filled with aspiration and almighty love, thither go ye likewise. Overmastering love, attraction, draws you. Death and sleep are twins, for sleep is an imperfect death, and death is a

perfect sleeping. I mean every word that I now say, and mean it literally.

In the case of insomniacs, the inner fire is not freed, it is not free, winging its way from earth. But it is held within the spheres of attraction of the body, and thus cannot pass on. Consequently there is a backward and forward movement, pendulum-like, into temporary unconsciousness, and return to the consciousness of the brain-mind — wakefulness; and this is insomnia.

"What is the connection between noise and a soul's re-entrance into the body? Generally the way to wake a person, thus bringing the soul back, is by making a noise. Has this thought any relation to the fact that quiet should reign around the body of a dead person, so that the soul be not interrupted in its separation from the body?"

Generally speaking, yes. But I will tell you a little fact which it may be wise to bear in mind. Throughout the great Orient, throughout most of the world, there is a belief that a sudden and violent awakening of a sleeping person is fraught with danger; and I will tell you that it is so. It is very dangerous. It so happens that nature protects human beings even against the consequences of their own folly and stupidity. But nevertheless it is dangerous. Awaken a sleeping person by making a gentle noise. Increase the noise if needs be. More rarely touch the sleeping body. That is somewhat worse. But under no circumstances ever shake a sleeping man. Be careful — for the reason that when the moment of a man's term on earth comes, the golden chord of life is snapped; and it is similar in violent awakening from sleep. Cases have been known where either death or insanity have supervened.

Death is a blessed release; and there ensues, passing through the brain-mind, even when the body is already becoming rigid, a

panorama of all that the entity in and of the body just dead, ever did or thought: of every act it did, of every thought it had, from the earliest day of conscious existence to the last before unconsciousness intervened, there passes a panoramic picture from and across the tablets of memory; and every noise disturbs this. Be still at the bedside of those who have just passed out. Be quiet.

Much the same thing happens, but in minor degree, in the case of a normal, healthy, sleeping person. The mind, although the dreams may not be remembered, is active, constantly making pictures of all kinds: fantastic, truthful it may be, photographic records so to speak, of all that it felt or did in the day or days that have passed; and there is the constant vibrating, like the picture on a screen, of the fabric of the astral brain-mind; and the sudden and violent interruption of this natural process is fraught with grave danger, as I have told you.

Never awaken a person with violence, but always gently, and preferably by speaking. There are mysteries connected with the human being which the wisdom of the Occident has not yet solved, but which the wisdom of the Orient, because so much older, solved aeons and aeons ago. And this wisdom, formulated into human language, is called Brahma-vidya, the "knowledge of the Brahman", the universe; and sometimes atma-vidya, the "knowledge of the self", the spiritual self, of which the human self is a reflection. And this ancient wisdom, tested for innumerable generations in the past, is today called theosophy.

One of the greatest teachings of theosophy is this — and I leave this teaching with you as a parting thought, as I have done so often before — that you are your own creators and makers. None else has made you, god or demon. Ye have made yourselves, and ye are making yourselves for the future; and at the core of the

core of each one of you, in the heart of the heart of each one of you, there is a splendid being, a god, a divinity, whence issue into your mind, into your brain-mind and daily life, all the highest faculties that you have, such as understanding and intelligence, compassion, pity, almighty love.

Why not be your inner self? Why not enjoy these faculties? Be them. They are you, and your ordinary brain-mind and brain-mind life, with all its pitiful strife and the suffering and pain that accompany it, are because men will not see the truth.

Those who desire to live in the gutter, let them so live. But for me, give me the stars, for I feel my kinship with my parent, the sun, and I owe allegiance to nothing else. I, like you, am a son of the sun, and the spirit of the cosmic divinity dwells, stainless and deathless, in my soul forever.

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[Vol 1, No 31](#)  
[Contents](#)

**No. 31 (April 29, 1930)**

**QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK**

(Lecture delivered January 19, 1930)

"In the beautiful land of sleep!" It was an exquisitely rendered musical number that we have just heard, containing this refrain. While I was listening to it, a thought passed through my mind, and the thought was this: How about the beautiful land of the waking world?

"The beautiful land of sleep!" How about the land of sleep being likewise the land of nightmares? The waking life is not necessarily all a nightmare, as some pessimists think. Why should human beings draw this distinction between what they call the beauties of the afterlife, or the beauties of the land into which the consciousness goes at what men call sleep, and the life of the waking world?

How beautiful is the world that surrounds us! The sunrise over the eastern mountain-tops is one of the most exquisitely beautiful things that I know; and it is so beautiful to me because it calls forth from within myself a harmony of understanding akin to the natural beauty which we see painted on the eastern sky. All beauty is in the consciousness of the perceiver therefore, where, in a very true sense, all things that we cognize are.

You cannot see beauty outside unless you have beauty within you. You cannot understand beauty unless you yourself are beautiful inside. You cannot understand harmony unless you yourself in your inner parts are harmony. Otherwise a stock or a block or a so-called insensate stone would have an appreciation of beauty and of harmony as we human beings have it. Do you

see what I mean? I mean that all things of value are within yourself, and the outside world merely offers you the stimulus, the stimulation, of and to the exercise of the understanding faculty within you — bringing forth the sense of harmonious rhythm, the sense of beauty, and the conception likewise of what almighty love is. Men, know yourselves for what you are!

It is you yourself, both philosophically and scientifically, who paint the glories of the eastern sky, and it is merely the particular range of physical vibrations which reach your optic organ which is the stimulus calling forth the sense of beauty within.

Yes, verily, all things great and noble and true, as well as all things vile, are within you; and you can at any moment take your choice between following and ultimately becoming the god within, which each one of you is, or following the pathway downwards to beasthood; and I can tell you that there is no beast so vile as a human being who turns beastly. The prostitution of understanding, of all human faculty and power, to ignoble uses is far worse than anything that you can find outside of you.

Therefore, when we listen to beautiful things, like the song that we have just heard, let us remember that we are entering into one phase of human consciousness; and that there is indeed in human beings a vast range of understanding of beautiful things, because man's inner being is itself beautiful because it is a natural harmony.

There are other aspects of the universe besides the land of sleep, which are equally beautiful; indeed, outside of the land of sleep, which is one particular phase of activity of the human consciousness, there are other phases even more supernally beautiful. Fathom yourselves and find out what you are within you, and what you are really yourself — the powers within, the unexercised and therefore misunderstood faculties that you have

within you.

I am supposed to answer questions this afternoon. Perhaps I have already answered a few with this preamble. There are unspoken questions; and it is interesting that a theosophical speaker is always in close touch, spiritually and psychically, with his audience; he is trained to be that. When I came to this platform, I felt many unspoken questions in the minds of some of you, perhaps in the minds of all, as to what was meant by the words of this song: "the beautiful land of sleep."

I can tell you, outside of what I have already said, that, mystically speaking death is sleep and a perfect sleep, and sleep is an imperfect death. The afterdeath state of consciousness and existence of a man or woman who has lived a decent life is a very beautiful episode, but by no one of nature's laws can you reasonably expect that if you have prostituted everything within you to ignoble uses in life, you are going thereafter to sense, to cognize, to know, to understand, and to live in harmony and beauty and peace, enfolded within the wings of almighty, universal, compassionate love. Nature is not mocked ever, and what you make yourself you will become; what you lay up for yourself in the fabric of your consciousness, which is the fabric of your character, you will be; and ye shall reap exactly what ye have inbuilt into yourselves, what ye have made yourselves to be. Ye will be and ye are now just what ye have made yourselves in the past to be; for all being is under the governance of nature's primal law, expressing itself in operation as cause and effect: and this is what theosophists call the law of consequences, nature's fundamental operation. And how just and consoling this doctrine is!

Here is the first question that I have to answer today; I will take these questions up in the order in which I have received them.



"Do I understand you to say in your lectures that the universe is run, not by blind forces, but by intelligent beings, consciously cooperating with nature's laws? If this is so, then I am full of admiration for those beings who run the cosmic clock with such exactitude. I know that if we humans undertook to rise each morning for a month exactly at the same time, we would surely fall down on the job (I am speaking for myself, anyway). But there we see the suns and planets and the old dead remnants of moons behaving with perfect rectitude, as though their difficulty would consist in *not* keeping correct time. Do you think that they *could* sleep in if they wanted to?"

No, I don't think that they could! I don't think that they could for the simple reason that, by the law of karma, of cause and effect, otherwise the law of consequences of which I have just spoken, they made themselves to be what they are, and they cannot be the thing which they themselves are not. Vacillation, change, are the signs of imperfect beings, and the only changes that we humans can cognize in the heavenly bodies are they which exist in their evolutionary course as we can comprehend it. But their changes are strictly governed by the wide sweep of universal operations.

What a lovely universe it would be if we were to raise our eyes to the violet dome of night and see the stars running races around the sky, or running circles around each other, and the planets darting hither and yon!

No, I don't think that they could "sleep in," even if they wanted to. You must know, I take it, that theosophists do not teach that this world is a material universe only, dead inside, and by some strange magic outwardly moving and performing all the manifold operations of the cosmic mechanism. Theosophists teach, on the contrary, that all nature is invigorated, inspirited, enlivened, with

the cosmic life which is energy, the finest form of energy, or of force; and that we human beings are not exceptions to the general rule prevailing everywhere in the universe, but are merely one example or one expression of what exists everywhere else, modified only by our own human characteristics, the expression of the indwelling individualities.

Why should we be so utterly different from everything else? The idea is an absurdity. We are learning entities, and with each new thing that we learn, we come more and more to understand that we are an intrinsic and inseparable part of the universal life, of the universal mechanism, and that there is one thing that we never can do, and that is to leave the universe. Consequently, all the faculties and powers that the human being knows of and has existing in himself are merely reflections of what exists everywhere else. Otherwise whence came they?

Is a human being, again, such an unparalleled exception that he alone in all the vast spaces of infinitude is the only entity that has consciousness and will and moral faculty, and comprehends love, and has understanding and consciousness? How absurd! No. We say that the human tribe, the human race, is merely one small family of the vast hierarchies infilling the universe, hierarchies of bright and sparkling intelligences, of which we sense the infallible operations in the perfect working of the cosmic machine.

Do you see the point? Man is rooted in the universe; draws all his facilities and powers and life thence. Or, is he mayhap outside of the universe and different from it? If so, please explain to me how. If man contains something, therefore, that the universe does not contain, then the part contains more than the whole. And is that possible? No, obviously not.

You see, our ultramodern scientists are doing very wonderful

things in these days. Their researches behind the veils of the seeming, of the apparent, are bringing to light new and wonderful truths in the way of discovery, that is, new and wonderful so far as the Occident goes; and it is an amazing and most interesting thing to theosophists that every one of these newest discoveries is on all fours with theosophical teachings, at least in principle. The ancient wisdom of the human race, the wisdom religion of mankind, which is not *a* religion, but religion *per se* — which has no dogmas, which has no creeds, which does not demand that you must believe this or that, unless it appeal to your spiritual and intellectual and moral senses — is the formulation in human language of the discoveries of the great seers and sages of past ages, who have sent their inquiring spirit behind the veil of the visible into the invisible, into the very womb of being, and have brought back wisdom, knowledge, and have formulated them in religio-philosophical shape; and this formulation today is called theosophy.

Now, some of our scientists, as I have just said, are coming so close to some of our theosophical doctrines, that theosophists are on tiptoe, we are alert, we are wide awake, in checking off one discovery after the other that approximates more or less closely each one of our theosophical teachings. It is fascinating to us to see how these things are coming to pass.

Let me read to you something that I have here. I read an extract taken from a lecture delivered on Friday, July 26, 1929, before the general meeting of the Institute of Philosophical Studies in London, England, by Sir Oliver Lodge. He entitled his address "Beyond Physics" — *Metaphysics* in short — and he made the following remarks which I will now quote:

But my point is (and after all, it is a platitude), that life and mind are not excluded from the universe, and that therefore it

need not always be running down into disorder. It may all the time be more under control than we know. At any rate, the operations of life can take the random materials of carbonic acid, and water, and build them up into an apple-tree. Life confers upon the assemblage a specific and even beautiful form, with the marvelous possibility of continuing that organization for any length of time. . . . It means the introduction of a biological and teleological element into an otherwise complete scheme of physics. . . .

"In so far as life acts at all, it is an organizing and directing power. Well, I want to recognize that on a cosmic scale.

". . . No one can claim that a rose is the product of random forces. Some people may try to think that a planet is such a product, but on the whole, they must realize that they fail.

"It is needless to multiply illustrations. The meaning of what I am saying is clear enough. The time has come when we ought to try to bring life and mind into the scheme of Physics, and we shall not fully understand the nature of the physical world until we do.

"But now comes the perennial difficulty: what must be the nature of these entities, if they are to interfere with and operate on matter? How can things of one category act on things of another? The first step is to reply that conspicuously they do, whether we understand it or not. And the second step is to make some attempt to understand how they do it."

Immortal gods! Here is an ultramodern scientist talking like a seer of ancient days, and also talking like a modern theosophical lecturer. This uninitiated and yet naturally great man, finds his chief difficulty in understanding how things of one category like mind, spirit, can act on things of another category, such as matter,

body, etc. The scientists will never bridge that apparent gulf until they learn and accept what the teaching of the ancient wisdom is: that these two classes are not two categories, but are comprised in the one frontierless range of the universal life. Spirit and substance are fundamentally one, two poles of the same underlying reality. Force or energy, and gross, brute, physical matter, are fundamentally and essentially one thing. And, amazing enough, that is likewise one of the dicta of the greatest among ultramodern scientific thinkers, and why Sir Oliver did not remember it or at least mention it, I cannot undertake to say. That one fact of esoteric being and archaic theosophical doctrine would have solved his problem and given him the Ariadne's thread leading him on to discoveries of unparalleled magnitude.

Nevertheless, there are two general categories of beings such as Sir Oliver Lodge outlines them, the spiritual on the one hand, ranging downwards through many intermediate stages to the material on the other hand; but most emphatically there are not two categories of radically, essentially, fundamentally different entities, different things. The roots of both categories are the same — all spiritual beings and all material beings — the roots of them, the essence of them, are one; for spirit and substance are fundamentally one thing.

These two categories or ranges of beings in the universe are the spiritual beings on the one hand, and material existences on the other hand: both classes rooted in the same cosmic reality, which is cosmic or universal consciousness and life; but as each entity everywhere is a learning entity, a growing and therefore active being, consequently we have the vast diversity of the universe around us, everything differing from everything else, because it is at a different point of its evolutionary journey through duration or endless time. And, as I have already said, we human beings are but one of such families, differing from other hierarchies or

families of active and learning entities.

The category of spiritual beings in the universe comprises what you may call, if you like, cosmic spirits. If you were a Christian religionist, doubtless you would call the spiritual beings by the names given to them in Christian theology, as found in the works of the pseudo-Dionysius, called the Areopagite, to wit, counting upwards: Angels, Archangels, Principalities, Powers, Virtues, Dominations, Thrones, Cherubim, and Seraphim; but theosophists do not use these Christian words. We use the good old words of the entire human race: we say gods and demigods. Under this name we comprise the innumerable hosts of the spiritual beings infilling and guiding the invisible universe of which the physical universe is the shell or outward expression.

Human beings are but evolved divine entities, not yet expressing the divine powers locked up in the human consciousness; but nevertheless evolving; and in the future the human race shall become a race of demigods, and still later in evolutionary time a family of gods self-consciously collaborating with still more evolved beings, inspiring and guiding and guarding the universe, even as now they do.

Think of this magnificent conception! See the beauty, the width, the profundity, of these theosophical ideas. There is in them nothing that is unreasonable, nothing that is offensive to spirit, to mind, or to understanding. Theosophists say, in common with the testimony of mankind of whatever race and of whatever era or age, that the universe is filled full with divine beings, with gods and demigods, and inferior gods, and super-gods: hierarchies of them stretching endlessly in both directions, upwards and downwards. And we human beings are at an intermediate stage between the elemental forces of the cosmic life on the one hand, and Divinity, our future home, on the other hand.

Within each one of you is a divinity, a living god, the source of all your present human powers, the source in you of pity, of compassion, of love, of understanding — the source whence you draw your conceptions of harmony and beauty. "Man, know thyself!" Ye are gods and the offspring of divine beings.

So beautiful and harmonious is the structural framework of nature that even your bodies are composite of little elemental lives, each one conducting and guiding its own life-atom; and every one of these smaller lives has its part and place and sphere of action in the physical body in which you live and through which you express yourself, even as the gods guiding and controlling the universe express themselves through us and through the hosts of other entities. In them we live, and move, and have our being, as the elemental entities actually making the physical body of each one of us, live, and move, and have their being in us; for what nature does anywhere she does everywhere, because throughout all runs one universal life, one universal, radical, essential, fundamental consciousness — therefore, one universal law.

This is an interesting question — they all are, as a matter of fact:

"It is not at all an uncommon experience that while sitting in a room talking with others, at the utterance of some single word or phrase there comes an overwhelmingly certain feeling, or intuition, that the whole scene — people, conversation, and all — has happened before. Yet we know for certain that it has not occurred before in this life. Is this a memory of a past life? Do we repeat our experiences in this way, either largely or in part?"

We have all had this experience, and oft it is so vivid that we know just what is next going to be done, just what is next going to happen. Most likely it is not the remembrance of a past life.

Possibly so, but very likely not. In most cases it comes from the fact that there is a faculty in the human being, in the normal human being, which is not yet fully developed, and therefore shows itself but ill, but poorly: the faculty of knowing what things are coming to be; which faculty when it is developed, gives us the prophet, the seer, so called because he sees. It is an intuitive faculty, an exercise of the intuition, therefore a spiritual faculty — one of the faculties of your own inner essential divinity.

In such cases you know what is going to happen, what is going to be said, you anticipate the next step; and usually, alas, before the scene is completely unrolled, the connection of consciousness and thought is snapped. The explanation of it is, as I have just said, the work of the intuition showing the brain-mind in flashes of illumination what is next going to happen. This is the explanation in most cases.

But I am going to go a good deal farther, and take a great big step forward in explanation, and let you into a little secret of the teachings of the ancient wisdom. It is this: Just as nature repeats herself continuously, because repeating herself means following lines of least resistance — a procedure which nature always does, although each repetition is not an identity with the previous occurrence or event — just so, everything that happens is a repetition of what has happened in a former great period of cosmic existence, but not in a former human life of a few thousand years ago.

I am now referring to another universe, the parent of our present universe. It was the teaching of the ancient Persians, also of the ancient Greek and Latin Stoics, of the ancient and modern Hindus, that things repeat themselves according to cyclical law, because nature, in her unceasing movements and operations, always follows the line of least resistance, and when a pathway



has once been blazed, it is nature's way to follow that path. The groove of action has been made, and events naturally follow in the groove. Either this, or you will have nature in all its operations pursuing the most difficult path, the unheard-of path, which is the path of greatest resistance; and we know that nature never does that.

Nature never acts in that way. The path of least resistance is the path always followed. Therefore it is that things repeat themselves from the beginning to the end, but each repetition is on a higher plane, with the gained wisdom of the past, making therefore each repetition a new cycle of life; and in certain circumstances, such a scene as this question describes, and its recognition, are a vision from out the well-spring of the consciousness of man, from out the storehouse of a past eternity, striking the present understanding mind like a flash of light of recognition, in the now reduplicated circumstances, and then we say: Why, how strangely familiar this is.

"In the October (1929) issue of *The Forum*, Robert Andrews Millikan, the noted physicist, makes the following statement in an article entitled 'What I believe.' Under the heading 'The Reign of Law' he writes:

"I now turn to the two major contributions to human progress. The ancient world, in all the main body of its thinking, believed that God, or Nature, or the Universe, whichever term you prefer, was a being of caprice and whim. Today, however, we think of a God who rules through law, or a Nature capable of being depended upon, or a Universe of consistency, or orderliness, and of the beauty that goes with order.'

"Is not this statement of the learned scientist wholly contrary to fact? Is it not only in comparatively modern times, even in

our own day, and more especially fifty or one hundred years ago, that is to be found the concept of God as a being of whim and caprice to be propitiated by prayer and his decrees to be turned aside by supplication? Where in ancient literature is to be found evidence that the ancients believed in a universe or nature governed by law and order?"

This great scientist is in part right, and in part very wrong in his statement. It has been the custom, the habit, the bias of mind of the human race, the bias of its understanding, for many, many, many millions of years, according to our theosophical teaching, to be divided into two portions: on the one hand those who think, and on the other hand those who do not think. And those who do not think have always looked upon Deity, or rather the gods, as having some of the attributes of an ordinary man, with the average man's caprices and whims. Prayers have been directed to the divinities for rain, for success in war, for success in business and cheating, or for success in ordinary human life, and all the rest of the pathetic tale.

But just as that was the favorite form of Occidental religion until very recently, as you all know, even to the extent of saying that if you did not pray to Almighty God to do this or that for you, you were doing wrong and would end up in a very warm place — which is vastly more than any so-called pagan ever taught, or vastly less — nevertheless in all ages and in all countries, there have been great men, seers and sages, philosophers, true religionists, natural scientists, who have taught that the very nature of the heart of the universe was beauty, harmony — therefore order, law, love, and peace — and that the expression of these cosmic attributes throughout nature was the cause of the orderliness that the observant eye sees everywhere.

And they taught also, did these ancient seers and sages, because

they were honest and truthful, that the disorderliness that sometimes one sees in nature, the things that go wrong, the warped things, the things dying before their time, and human beings in especial, were merely the proof of the vast hierarchies of evolving and therefore imperfect intelligences in nature, which intelligences, because they were collaborators in the great universal work, produced imperfect effects because they themselves were imperfect. Do you get this very important idea?

Therefore did they say that the immortal gods, in all their evolutionary grades — highest, intermediate, and low — were nevertheless not perfect, although incomparably more perfect than men. On such reasoning as this was the true polytheism of the ancients based; and if you have a philosophical bent of mind, you will see the enormous appeal that it makes, because it explains.

This eminent scientific gentleman is utterly wrong in his wholesale condemnation of the ancients as believing in a god or deities who were nothing but creatures of caprice and whim. He has not been a student of the ancient literatures, marvelous scientist though he is; and I will tell you where to find the teachings of the ancients, wherein you will discover that it was they themselves who gave to modern thinkers the conception of a universe held in the grip of ineluctable law, bringing about an orderliness that could never be turned aside or stayed.

You will find all this in the doctrines of the Stoics of Greece and of Rome, in the Pythagorean and Platonic philosophies, in the teachings of Hindustan: you will find it all set forth, beautifully reasoned, and nature therefore adequately and fully explained.

Now, isn't it unfortunate that a great man like Millikan will make a wholesale statement which on the face of it is untrue, although he is undoubtedly an honest man; and I have no doubt that no

one would regret more than he to have made a statement which is an untrue statement — untrue not by intention, but arising in misunderstanding.

It was precisely the ancient religions and philosophies which in their inner meaning taught that the Universe is based on law and order, builded around imperishable centers which vary never, and which, each one, pursues an evolutionary course towards the divine pole star of the universe; and which further taught that the imperfect things that we see in nature around us, like us human beings ourselves, are imperfect because they are as yet not fully evolved.

And hearken, they taught more. They taught that there never is an ultimate, a final stopping place, beyond which the evolutionary stream of life cannot go. But, they said, no matter how great and how highly evolved such or another stream of life may be with all its component entities, there is veil upon veil behind and beyond the frontiers of the universe, stretching into other universes. Endings of evolution, as I have said, exist not at all.

Einstein teaches that there are no absolutes in the philosophical Occidental European sense: that an absolute is only a relative term, that everything is relative to everything else because existent in a universe composite of vast hosts of entities. This is our teaching, the teaching of the ancient wisdom, and it is the teaching of the modern philosopher, Einstein.

I tell you that our modern scientists are coming to — what? They are unveiling, little by little, the secret wisdom of the philosophies and religions of the ancient times, and are unveiling the real meaning of those ancient religions and philosophies; and therefore the bigoted, distorted, unfair understanding of these ancient religions and philosophies which you will find in our

encyclopedias and modern European textbooks will, in a short time, all be deleted or radically changed to accord with the facts. Thank the immortal gods that it is so.

It is true: all the ancients were far more religious than we. To them nature was ensouled spirit, which was the root and cause of things; and the material world was merely the expression of the indwelling facilities and powers of spiritual beings expressing themselves, self-expressing themselves, and thus producing the manifold harmony and beauty and the inspiration, and also the cosmic diversity that we see everywhere around us.

Oh, what a wonderful conception this is, and how reassuring! An ensouled universe — not ensouled by an absolute God, but by endless hierarchies, numberless hierarchies, incomputably great in number because of infinite extension, of spiritual beings in all stages of evolutionary progress, from the greatest, to use a relative term — for there is, strictly speaking, no utmost greatest, but so far as our human imagination can reach — from the greatest to the least evolved; and beyond both these stretching endlessly in either direction.

Furthermore they taught that these divine beings, these spiritual and ethereal beings, lived in spheres or worlds of which they are the children, the offspring, therefore possessing bodies similar in type to the worlds in which they live, as we humans do in this physical world. They taught the existence of invisible worlds within the visible universe, these invisible worlds being the mainsprings, the fountains, of all the forces and activities expressing themselves in the material world.

So important is this idea to an understanding of theosophy, to an understanding of the common wisdom-religion of mankind, and to an understanding of the meaning of nature, that I have dwelt upon it at length this afternoon.

"In your series of pamphlets *Questions We All Ask*, No. 10, page 146, contains the statement: 'but psychic matters — what do we know about them? — practically nothing.'

"Pamphlet No. 11, page 174, says: 'The period between death and rebirth for the ordinary man and woman averages one hundred times the length of the thinking conscious life he has lived while last on earth.'

"Question: If for every year one lives on a physical world, one lives one hundred years in the invisible (to us) realms, is it not passing strange that with such a marked preponderance of experience of the latter kingdoms we know 'practically nothing' of them?"

First, in answer I say: *Non peccavi*, I have not sinned. I did not say that we know naught of the invisible or spiritual worlds in the lecture printed as Pamphlet No. 10. I spoke of psychical matters: the so-called ordinary psychical stuff of which you read so much in books in these days, and hear about so much in the daily press. Most of it is imagination, though some of it is based on facts adequately dealt with in the ancient wisdom.

The psychical world exists, but it exists in man. It is a part of his constitution, and my dear and respected querent, I fear, has not quite understood either one of the two extracts that he makes from these two pamphlets. In the second quotation, taken from Pamphlet No. 11, I was treating of the invisible worlds or realms through which the entity passes post mortem; whereas in the first pamphlet I was calling attention to the great amount of stuff that is printed about psychic matters, drawing attention to the fact that very little of actual truth was understood or known of just what psychic matters are.

As regards the question of memory, remembering the

experiences we have been through, I suppose that if I were to single out any one of you and ask you a point-blank question about how good your memory is, such as: Do you remember everything that you did this morning, or last year, or when you were five years old? how many of you could tell me in detail just what you did, or even recall, imperfectly it may be, the experiences you have gone through?

So the mere lack of remembrance of generals or particulars is an exceedingly poor argument against the fact of the consciousness passing through one experience after another whether in invisible realms or in visible ones.

But nevertheless you have a continuing consciousness, a generalized consciousness, that you have been through these experiences. Thus does the mental apparatus of the average human being work in our present age. It is true that, on the average, the ordinary man passes one hundred times the length of time in invisible realms that he does here on this very unevolved little dust-speck called Earth, our Mother Earth; and the mere fact that he does not remember these is no proof that he has not had such experiences many times in the invisible realms.

It is in the character that inheres the fact of all these experiences: for these experiences in the invisible realms have built themselves into the fabric of the consciousness of the individual human being, making him what he is, the consciousness-resultant which he is; and in this character resides the memory of what we have been through, although we are not able self-consciously, as a rule, to bring it into recollection. As even on this earth we are building by our experiences here a small part of the character which we are, just so in the invisible realms, having one hundred times the length in time and in experiencing life that we have on earth, our character is far more definitely and largely shaped

thereby.

Just think it over. Examine yourselves in proof. Think of what you have within you: undeveloped powers, undeveloped faculties, that in the average human being now and again suddenly startle you by their unexpected appearance. You say, perhaps, of these things that they are thoughts, that they are hunches, that they are intuitions — call them by what name you like — but it is obvious that they exist in you, in your character. They are there, indeed, and there is no reason at all why, instead of having an occasional and small experience of that kind, such experiences should not be continuous and grand.

All you have to do is to open up the treasuries within yourself. You have, each one of you, eternity behind you, for the root of your being is deathless: it is a divine spark, it tastes never of death nor of stain of material things. It has been evolving in all the eternity of the past, in other universes, in other hierarchies of life: beginning at the beginning of each, and running through its courses, and reaching the culmination in each; in each one learning, learning, growing, growing, evolving — evolving faculty and understanding and power — finally reaching the end of any particular hierarchy, and then beginning new life-experiences on a higher hierarchy at its beginning, and pursuing therein a similar period of growth or evolution. Thus it is that all these experiences have built into you vast and, to the average man, utterly unknown powers and faculties.

If you could reach into the inmost being of yourself, you would discover that you are a very god, a divine being, with faculties so tremendously great that you could understand the universe; with powers so unspeakably tremendous, so ineffably great, that by the merest exercise of your will you could, if you would — listen! — sway the very movements of the solar systems or of the atoms



in their courses. But you wouldn't. Yet you could. But you wouldn't! Do you understand me?

Because your whole nature, in your higher parts, is at one with the cosmic harmony and life, and because you are a child of the gods, you can, by reaching ever deeper into yourself, come to see, and therefore to understand, the godhood within you; and in the ordinary affairs and walks of life, those men who succeed even in material things — who succeed and nevertheless retain the respect of their fellows — are the men who, consciously, or unconsciously mostly, have seized hold of some intuition of the powers and faculties within them. They are the men with vision.

Then, so seeing, they exercise their will and work steadily to the ends they have in view; and the world says: That man is a success in life.

Now, I don't tell you this in order that you should use high spiritual powers for the gaining of material advantages, such as the piling up of a big fat bank account. You would soon cease doing this if you knew what was happening to you by thus misusing your spiritual powers. But I speak of this in illustration of what happens to some men unconsciously, and in further illustration of the fact that these powers and faculties do exist in man. When you can drink of these Pierian springs of the spirit within, then you are a poet, you are a musician, you are a philosopher, you are a true scientist; and greatest of all, you are a lover of all things that exist. Then you recognize your kinship with all that exists, knowing that you are gods; that each one of you is a god in his inmost being; and I say to you in concluding our study together this afternoon: Be that inner divinity!

**No. 32 (May 6, 1930)**

**QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK**

(Lecture delivered January 26, 1930)

On previous Sundays I have covered a great deal of ground of thought, in answering questions that have been sent in to me.

Other questions that came in to me afterwards have, to a large extent, been answered in the responses given to those previous questions. It is obvious that I don't want to go over grounds of thought that have been more or less adequately covered in the answers to former questions; and I also take it for granted that you know something of what our majestic theosophical philosophy teaches.

On the other hand, I recognize that on each Sunday when I speak to you, there are newcomers here in our Temple of Peace who have not heard the responses that I have given to questions previously sent in. Faced with this situation, I try to make my answers to the different questions as they come in comprehensive enough to be satisfactory, and yet not repetitions of what I have said before.

The first question that I have before me to answer this afternoon is the following:

"Do you believe that such weaknesses as we overcome in this life we must again overcome in the life to follow?"

No, not if the weaknesses are overcome. The lesson in such cases has been learned; the character has been strengthened, and there is not the same temptation to repeat the old mistakes and faults. But if the old weaknesses are overcome only in part, then only

partly have we gained strength; and we shall have to meet the remainder of those weaknesses, those weaknesses in ourselves, in our own fabric of character, in our will, until we learn to overcome these remainders.

Is not all this naturally just? Everything that we gain, we gain from our own efforts. Nature is infinitely well balanced and just: spiritual nature, and mental nature, and psychical nature, and astral and physical nature. We get only what we take, and we take only what we can and may, and if we take wrongly, we pay the penalty. Furthermore, if we take what the law of nature says that we may take as collaborators in the cosmic labor, then we grow ever more towards becoming what we truly are in our heart of hearts, kin to the gods; and when we shall have reached this high status of evolution, we can take all that we will to take, for our taking will be supremely just and right.

Weaknesses of character are those parts of us which have not learned nature's lessons; and in order to overcome these weaknesses we must go to school again in other lives. We cannot go out of the universe, we are intrinsic parts of it. We are atoms in the great cosmic corpus; consequently everything in the universe affects us sooner or later, and we likewise ultimately affect everything in the universe by our actions and reactions.

Do you see my meaning? We are responsible for what we do in nature's great scheme, and she posts the entries in her books, and does the posting infallibly. It is automatic. When we do well, it means that we exercise our spiritual wills, our strength of spiritual purpose; it also means that by this exercise we grow strong; it means that we inbuild into our character all the beautiful forces and energies swinging out into manifestation from the heart of the heart of each one of us. Thus we more and more self-express ourselves; and this is evolution; it is nature's

eternal commandment to us: Come up higher, be more what you really are, use your faculties, sleep not! Our weaknesses arise in us when we sleep, which means when we do not act properly — when we refrain from doing what is right.

It is according to nature's fundamental, ethical principles that right is right, and wrong is wrong. Nature is not mocked. Ye reap what ye sow. And what ye now sow, ye shall reap it in the future. You are not here by chance. Just pause! I verily believe that if any human heart thinks that the human race, or the individual human, is here on this earth by chance, he is either insane or has not truly thought over the matter at all.

I see chance nowhere. Everywhere I see the sweep of cosmic operations, what men call law and order in the universe. And as man is an inseparable part of the universe, one of the cogs, so to say, in the cosmic wheel of destiny, he is here not by chance but by law, which means by his own acts. He has made for himself the body in which he now works, and by his own acts he will make for himself the bodies in which he will live and work in future lives on earth in human form.

This is the teaching of reïmbodiment, and also includes our doctrine of karma, the doctrine of consequences, of cause and effect: that by what ye sow in the field of your character — whether by doing things or by leaving things undone, by acts done or not done, by thoughts which are mastered or which you allow to master you — your character is formed, shaped, carven, builded accordingly.

Everything that happens to you, no matter how unjust at the time it may seem, or how just, is the resultant of your own acts. You have caused it. You have brought it about. Be it luck and happiness, or be it sorrow and pain, it all originates in you. Nature is not mocked, I repeat. Otherwise you must believe, if you

can, in a lunatic universe in which no orderliness prevails, in which there is no consequence following upon thought and action, in which everything is helter-skelter; and what sane man believes that?

Quite along this line of thought is the answer that I am going to give to a note in the form of a question which I received shortly before I came to the Temple this afternoon. It is a question about heredity. I was asked to answer this today because a friend of the asker is leaving for the east and, as I understand it, he is interested in our wonderful theosophical thought, and wanted to know what the theosophical philosophy had to say about what men, knowing no better, call heredity.

"Is heredity just? Is it true?"

A child is born into the world. It is born healthy and strong, with every faculty symmetrical and working symmetrically with every other faculty. It is born in the lap of wealth; it has every chance in life; and it becomes a noble man — or a wretched failure — as the case may be. And another little child is born, perhaps not a stone's throw away from the house where this first child was born. Everything seems to be against this second child. It is born mayhap of diseased parents. Perhaps if the parents be healthy, it nevertheless soon shows evidences of a disease. It may be stunted in mental growth in some obscure fashion, as the years pass. Its life seems to be one long theme of grief and misery and pain. The average materialist here says: heredity!

Immortal gods, is a mere word an explanation? What is heredity? People do not know. They simply explain heredity to be a transmission of characteristics from parent to child, or from some remote ancestor manifesting itself in the present generation, which latter form of heredity is commonly called atavism. But where is the justice in all this, if we accept the common theory,

called heredity which passes current among men today? Where is the justice, I repeat? Where is the right about it all?

Both these two little children that I have supposed are human beings; and naturally the tender human heart asks: Why should these two children be born in surroundings so different, and why should their destinies be so diverse? Where is the justice in it all? Where is the right? And all the answer that you get from the bigwigs of science and of modern philosophy is one word: heredity! I repeat that this word does not explain anything. The so-called explanation merely restates the obvious facts. The inquiring mind wants to know *why* these differences in human life are. I can go to the dictionary, or to the encyclopedia, and consult these books, and find a half-dozen or more words which are descriptive of heredity or of some branch of heredity; but descriptive words tell me nothing at all about causes, nor do they tell me why these great differences in human life exist.

Theosophists believe in a universe where law and order rule; where justice is the very heart of being; where almighty love is the cement of things, keeping things in harmony and orderliness. That is what our theosophical teaching tells us, and such likewise is the teaching of all the great religions and philosophies of the entire world, and of all human history.

Now, theosophists do not believe in any such scientific theory of heredity as commonly passes current among men, if by heredity is meant the mere transmission from parent to child of characteristics and similar traits, and without a reference to a more deeply lying cause of the phenomenon of so-called heredity. I repeat: Where is the justice, where is the orderliness, where is the right in it all? No wonder is it that we have men whose hearts bleed at the things that they see, who revolt against the established forms of philosophy and religion and science. Human

instinct, human intuition, tell them that a mere description of the transmission of characteristics and traits and diseases, etc., from parent to child, is no true explanation, and is merely a description; but this description explains nothing at all.

No theosophist has ever denied a natural fact. We too believe that parents — do not transmit from themselves — but *pass on* automatically, as it were, the vital stream, the vital strain, and therefore characteristics similar to their own. They can transmit nothing but what they themselves have. Isn't that obvious? Does an apple tree produce strawberries? Does wheat grow from figs? No, each can pass on to its offspring only what it itself has in itself.

But the reasons, the cause? Here they are. A child comes out of the past as a character, as a bundle of energies, as an individual which itself has made for itself. You are your own creator in that sense. You are the builder of your own character. You are responsible yourself for what you are; and you pass from human life to human life, in each human life entering the bosom of the family, drawn in incarnation to the father and the mother, whose tendencies are most like those of your own character.

Consequently you get the body and the destiny in the next life that you yourselves have won. Do you see the point? Do you see the justice of this?

Two boys go to school. One studies; the other plays truant. The one takes a degree and becomes a success in life; the other is a failure. What is responsible? The school? No, the two boys; each one is responsible for what he becomes, therefore for what he gets, for he himself has made it so. He himself has made himself. Do you not like this? If you don't then you must turn to the alternative and say chance.

Now chance is no explanation, it is just a word, like fortuity; or

perhaps you like the explanation of the theists that Almighty God, in his great wisdom, saw fit to make one child thus and the other so; but in this case like cowards you are placing on the shoulders of a supposititious deity what in your heart of hearts you know you are responsible for yourselves. Why place upon the cosmic spirit, by whatever other name you choose to call it, the responsibility for your own faults, and then think that you can escape scot-free from your weaknesses, by saying: I believe that I shall be washed clean "in the blood of the Lamb"! Poor Lamb! I think that only a lamb could show such patience, and I don't mean this remark unkindly. I am simply putting before you, in plain language, the facts of the case in order to pass the thought over to you.

I have many good friends among the Christians, men and women whom I respect for their qualities of mind and heart, but I myself am not a Christian, nor am I a materialist. I have learned something in this my life. I am a follower of the ancient wisdom-religion of mankind; and I believe that justice is the heart of Being, and that love is the vital fluid that flows through the heart of me and all else, giving life to all things, and feeding all things. I believe that what men in their ignorance call laws, rules everything, and that man places himself in either one or the other pan of the balance of destiny; for mark you, friends, man has the godlike quality of choice. He has will; he has choice; he has intelligence; he governs and controls his destiny, for in his own heart of hearts, at the core of the core of his being, he is a god. And all evolution consists in the progressive manifestation of these faculties, energies, powers, at the heart of things, flowing through man as well as through atom, manifesting everywhere. For evolution is but self-expression; it is growth in interior faculty and power.

Thus we see that heredity, if you want to use this name, in view of



this theosophical explanation takes upon itself the shapely and stately lineaments of justice and truth, for we see the reason why things happen thus and so, and the cause of the great diversities as well in human life as elsewhere. Reincarnation and karma — otherwise the law of consequences, that ye reap what ye sow — explain fully what men call heredity; for a child comes to the bosom of the family, to the parents only, to which his own psychomagnetic instincts attract him by nature's ever-moving, just operations.

"Do you think that we shall have added strength to overcome our defects in our next life, or do you believe it is just like another day dawning: we have only that which we had the day before? Surely our likes and dislikes would draw or repel those things that we like or dislike, do you not think?"

To a certain extent I do so think; but a theosophist would not have put this question in the form in which it is embodied, because it must be obvious from what I have said in answering previous questions this afternoon, that we shall have added strength in the next life to overcome our difficulties if we have strengthened ourselves in the present life.

Does an athlete strengthen the muscles of his body by lying down and going to sleep? If so, when the time comes to run the race, in what shape is he to meet the test? We shall have added strength in the next life if we have strengthened ourselves in this life. But also, whether we have strengthened ourselves, or weakened ourselves by indulging our present weaknesses, each new life is but the dawning of another day, a new life-day. We carry on from life to life precisely as we carry on from day to day. We wake up in the morning the same man we were when the night before we laid ourselves down in our beds to sleep and to rest. We come into the new human life with added strength and power, provided

that we have won them.

If this be not so, then we get something for nothing at all, and there is favoritism in the universe; and that idea we theosophists refuse to accept. We do not believe in the doctrine of favoritism. We believe that man is an incarnate god, taking out of life what he will; and woe to the man who does otherwise than justly, for all the enormous weight of the Universe is against him, because the universe in its steady and relentless operations goes steadily forward all the time; and the man who acts to disturb the harmony of being, who throws, so to speak, a monkey-wrench into the works — or tries to, unhappy man! — nature reacts upon. Then the unfortunate man says: "My God, what is the explanation of my suffering? I do not remember anything that caused it. I never did anything that merited this." As if his lack of remembering what he did in a former life or lives were an adequate excuse or explanation!

You cannot even remember what happened to you last year, even while you are in this same body, unless it was something so unusual that it struck your imagination and burnt itself into your character. You cannot even remember all the things that you did this morning. So it is obvious that this argument, from lack of remembering, is no argument at all.

Yes, every life is a new day which dawns, and we are just that which we were when we laid ourselves down to sleep before our long sleep of rest and peace at the end of the preceding life. But — and I will add this — during our stay in the post-mortem state, before reincarnation, we assimilate what we have learned, building it into the fabric of our character; and in that sense indeed we become stronger.

You see how just these doctrines are; you see the dignity with which the theosophical teaching clothes man, as with a majestic

garment. This teaching brings peace to his heart, for it shows him that right and justice rule the universe; and to his mind it brings a light, for he understands.

But do not imagine for a moment, please, that the theosophical philosophy is something new, something which has been invented recently. It is — and this you can prove for yourselves if you study the matter — the ancient wisdom-religion of mankind, and in all the literatures of the great world religions and world philosophies you will find the theosophical teachings in the background of them all. In every case, one or two or three or four or more of our theosophical teachings stands or stand prominently in the foreground, and forms or form the distinctive character of each of these great world religions and world philosophies.

Theosophy is the teaching — and I am now going to tell you a little secret — originally given to the first human protoplasts on earth, the first self-conscious men on earth — aeons upon aeons upon aeons in the past, tens of millions of years ago, by spiritual beings from another sphere, an invisible sphere of existence, who incarnated in order to instruct and to guide nascent humanity, to strike the keynotes of truth in human understanding, the vibrations of which keynotes have reverberated down the ages into our own time, and form what European philosophers call innate ideas.

Think this over. Other incarnations of great souls, less lofty than the spiritual beings I have just spoken of, have occurred ever since that far past age at cyclical intervals, in fact ever since the earth has been habitable; and men have marveled, have wondered, at these great luminaries of spiritual and intellectual brilliance who have at different times lived among men, and taught them; and I here enumerate a few names of the most

recent of such great incarnations: the Buddha, Jesus, Pythagoras, Krishna, Sankaracharya, Lao-tse, Confucius, Orpheus, Musaeus, Olen, Apollonius of Tyana, Empedocles, Socrates, Plato — in fact there have been hundreds of them.

Furthermore, how many geniuses of minor splendor, who were yet great men, have there not been in the history of the human race? These last are incarnations of minor spiritual entities, nevertheless showing what the human fabric of consciousness can bring forth; and you have but to follow the line backwards in your imagination, beginning by following the great ones known in history. Do not wander away from facts; but going up from the average man to greater man, to still greater man, to outstanding genius, to the great sages and seers of whom I have mentioned some names to you, then your own intuitive faculty will compel you to admit that where there is such a ladder of progression, of increasing spiritual values, where may you stop? If you can say: Here we stop! then you proclaim that you know that you have reached an end. And you don't know anything of the sort. All you do know is this ascending ladder of genius of which I have spoken.

So you see, merely on the grounds of logic and probability, our theosophical statement to the effect that in the earliest ages of thinking mankind, great spiritual beings incarnated among men in order to instruct them and teach them — demigods and gods, if you want plain words — is logic, is probable at least; and it is they who originally taught this synthetic body of doctrine to mankind which today is called theosophy, the archaic wisdom-religion of the race, belonging to no man, belonging to no one age, and which is everlasting. Theosophy is the explanation of things as they are, the formulation in human language of the principles of the universe.

Examine our theosophical literature; study our theosophical books; I leave the conclusions with you.

"This question was asked by a visitor who came to your lecture a few Sundays ago. There may be others who would like an answer to the same question, so I send it in to you.

"Just what is the basis of your religion? Is it based on astrology?"

No; the whole is not smaller than the part. Astrology is based on theosophy, the archaic wisdom-religion of the human race; and when I say astrology, I do not mean the tawdry, more or less disreputable, pseudo-art so called, that passes currency today under the name of astrology. That is but a tawdry remnant of the living body of the ancient astrology of former ages, which was, in very truth, a great, a noble, a holy science-religion-philosophy. This ancient astrology, beautifully complete, symmetrical, fully explained, we believe in and we also teach it. But it is as different from the tawdry, misunderstood remnant that today passes under the name of astrology, as anything which you can conceive of as enormously differing from something else.

Astrology, so called, of today, is but a shred, so to say, of a dead and sere tree leaf which fell from its parent tree three or four years ago; whereas the ancient astrology, still studied by a few privileged students today in our ranks, is like the majestic oak, green and strong and flourishing, battling with the winds of heaven, and casting its seeds abroad, to blossom into other oak trees. This is a parable, but it is a true one.

Let me tell you something of what real astrology is. As modern astronomy is mostly a descriptive science, telling us of the movements and of the physical characteristics, as far as these latter can be gathered, of the celestial bodies, so this archaic

astrology is the science-religion-philosophy which tells us of the soul, of the causal relations in and behind and above the celestial bodies, explaining why they are there, why they possess such or other powers, why they differ among themselves, what influences they exert upon the surrounding Universe in which they move and live and have their being, and what influences they are subjected to.

May I tell you? — listen! — that the finest part of the constitution of the human being is, in each case, a child of the spiritual part of one or another of the glorious suns scattered throughout frontierless space. Ye are gods in your inmost parts, atoms of some spiritual sun; and the roots of the bewildering diversity throughout natural being express themselves in mankind also as the differing characters of men. This diversity is ascribable, fundamentally and ultimately, to the divine-spiritual selves and operations of the gods which infill the universe, and who are the ultimate causes of its being.

Think over the matter. The universe is full of gods, of divine beings, of cosmic spirits, call them by what name you will. The name is nothing, the thought, the idea, the truth, is everything. You are inseparable parts of the cosmic structure; the physical universe that we see is but the outer garment or veil, the body, hiding the invisible splendor within.

Intelligence, energy, love — all the faculties which express themselves in and through men — do so because man is an individual is an inseparable part of the boundless universe, and therefore what is in the whole flows through and invigorates with its enlightening flame every minutest part. Do you get the idea? Do you see the suggestiveness of these teachings? In them lie the secret meanings of the great religions and philosophies of the past, and these teachings are keys by which you may explore the

works of majesty and splendor produced by human genius in the past, in the present, and to be brought forth by men of the future.

No, the basis of our religion, of theosophy in other words, is not astrology; but astrology, as I have been attempting to give you some little inkling of it, is one of the offsprings of the theosophical philosophy.

I have received an interesting communication embodied in two questions. It is dated January 20th. I will not read the address nor read the name, because I do not know that I have a right to do so; but I will read the questions that have been sent in to me.

"I have attended several of your most interesting Question-and-Answer hours recently and have become emboldened thereby to ask two questions of my own which I hope you will find time to touch upon on next Sunday.

"The other day the following question was asked me, and I am most desirous of knowing, in your opinion, how nearly right I was in my answer, since the thing has bothered me ever since.

"Questions: Theosophically speaking, is there an absolute good and evil?

"My answer: Premising that the all-enveloping Buddha is, then it follows that the entire universe works in harmony with his laws. Since all that is works an harmony with the ONE, the universe exists for the benefit of every living thing within it and the law of the necessity of the harmony of the parts with the whole may be considered the absolute good. The antithesis of this would be the absolute bad, but, since from the very nature of the whole, this cannot be, then, theosophically speaking, there can be no absolute bad. Is this a correct answer or not?"

Speaking generally, it is. There is no absolute bad. Bad is disharmony; bad is hate; bad is separateness. Bad is lack of union. Bad is concentration of interests around the individual, to the exclusion of all else; and everywhere in the universe we see the contrary of these: orderliness, law, union, everything existing for everything else — or going to pieces!

But this kind friend, in my judgment, should beware, on the other hand, of saying that there is such a thing as absolute good. Since Dr. Albert Einstein came amongst us and taught us that there are no absolute absolutes, but that all things are relative to each other, thereby by so much limiting other things, it is obvious even to modern scientific philosophers that absolutes cannot exist. If there were in absolute good, the heart of the universe, there could be no bad in that universe at all. It would be absolutely good throughout. But we know better than this, for we see imperfection in greater or less degrees everywhere.

Imperfection is as much the law of the universe as is the constant growth to better things, for the two are really one. Imperfection arises out of the diversity that I have spoken of, or, otherwise, out of the countless multitudes and hosts of imperfect but evolving entities which are learning; and because they are learning, obviously they are going higher, and they will be going higher for eternity; for, thank the immortal gods, there are no absolute ends beyond which nothing better can be gotten or learned.

Do you see the point? There is therefore no absolute good, nor is there any absolute bad; for the one would utterly prevent the existence of the other. But what we do say is that there is relative good and there is relative evil — and no matter how high you may place the dhyani-buddha, the cosmic spirit, there is always another one still higher, more evolved, more perfected still, more divine; and this merely means that man's utmost imagination of



perfection, to which he gives a name and calls it absolute good, is but a recognition of the fact, an unconscious recognition of the fact, that there is something still diviner than it.

Figure to yourselves a boundless life, a boundless universe, a super-universe, frontierless, without beginning, without an ending; existing in eternal duration, filled full of worlds and entities in all-various grades of evolutionary perfection or imperfection, some entities so highly evolved that we humans call them gods; but others so much more highly evolved that they whom we call gods would say of them: They are our gods; and again the same thing exists in reaches still more sublime — and so on forever.

So you see that when you say absolute good, you limit, belittle, you make frontiers. Do you get the idea? Remember also that what we humans call bad or evil, is a recognition by human minds of imperfection, of imperfectly evolved entities and things. They are not wholly beautiful, not wholly symmetrical, not yet fully developed, or evolved, which last word you will remember in our theosophical teachings means the throwing out, the growth, the unwrapping, the unrolling, of what is within; as an acorn has in its heart, and will bring forth, the majestic oak; as the apple-seed has at its core the apple tree to be, which apple seed, if given proper environment, will produce the apple tree; as a human being has in the core of the core of himself all the potentialities of future evolution.

It is obvious that evolution is growth, meaning the unwrapping, the unrolling, the bringing forth, of what is locked up within. That is evolution. So consequently, when we speak of 'bad,' we mean imperfection, imperfectly evolved beings, no matter how great they may be at any one time; and therefore theosophists say, and say very emphatically, that we do not believe in an infinite,

personal god. For myself, I don't believe in a unique, supreme god at all. But I believe in a universe infilled with gods, with bright and flaming intelligences; just as on earth I do not believe in one big man who is humanity, but in hosts of human beings who are men and who, as a host, express human qualities.

But above men there are other hierarchies and families of entities still more evolved; and above these are other hosts and hierarchies, and above them still others. So you can count the rungs of the ladder of Being going ever higher.

"Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,  
As the swift seasons roll!"

And that is what the human race is doing, building ever nobler mansions for itself. In the present epoch of the human race, in its present evolutionary stage, we have soft and tender bodies of flesh; but in future aeons we are going to have far more perfect bodies, much more fit to express the indwelling powers of the inner god. Splendid intellectual faculties will blossom and bloom in those future aeons through men. Transcendent spiritual powers will manifest themselves in mankind; and I tell you in very truth, and in all solemnity, that before the human race leaves this earth for another earth in the invisible realms of being, in other words for something higher, men will walk this earth like demigods; and the civilizations in those far distant aeons that they will bring forth will be like themselves, the fruitage of fully developed souls, of fully developed intellects, and of fully expressed, evolved, spiritual beings.

The second question is as follows:

"Further, if possible, I would like to know why, in all theosophical teachings, the state of single blessedness is so stressed? Is it not possible for a married couple to progress

together up the spiritual ascent as rapidly as they could were they single?"

Yes, provided that — !

I said to a friend the other day, when he asked me why I had never married: "My dear chap, I have my own private reasons." He said: "What are they?" So I said: "I am a trouble-dodger!" And he looked at me for a moment, and then he remarked: "You are complimentary to the other sex!" "No," I said, "I don't mean it in that way at all. I mean it in another way."

I believe in the married state for the average man and woman. I think that it offers a field for bringing forth from the human heart and mind qualities which the state of "single blessedness" does not so easily offer a field of expression for. I think that the married state is an excellent discipline. It teaches human patience; it teaches human kindness; it teaches one self-forgetfulness, if you are earnest and true, if you really look upon the married state as a fine and splendid thing for the average man, as I do.

But there does come a time in human evolution when a man or a woman arrives at a point where he wants to concentrate all his energies — spiritual, intellectual, psychical, astral, vital, physical, everything — on one object, namely, to make himself a fit servant and servitor of his fellow human beings without any other distractions or calls of duty. And this is what we call chelaship or the state of the disciple. That is all.

I do not know that the state of single blessedness is overstressed in our teachings. On the contrary, you must have heard my predecessor Katherine Tingley, tell you hundreds of times in our Temple of Peace, how beautiful the married state is for the average man and woman. We highly approve of it.

Furthermore, let me tell you something more before I close: If a man and a woman go into the married state and make it the beautiful, dignified thing that it ought to be (now please mark carefully what I say) it is just this concentration of the splendid facilities of the human being on a limited sphere, however fine that limited sphere is, which, for the disciple who is striving to do what I have already spoken of, is the most dangerous thing of all, because the higher a man has evolved the better husband he makes, the more he loves, the more kindly he is, the more interesting and splendid companion he becomes; and where affection is, where the deepest cords of the human heart are pulled, as married love pulls them, there is nothing that so distracts the attention away from his other aims and object which is so beautiful, to wit, to make himself fit to be a spiritual servant and servitor of his fellowmen. That is what our Masters of Wisdom and Compassion are. This path of discipleship is for the few; that is true.

Thus there comes a time when every human heart must feel and say to itself: However beautiful love is, there is another love which is so much more beautiful that I cannot enter the married state without feeling my own heart too strongly attracted away from the sun and light of glory that I see in the Mystic East. It is the beauty of human love, its strong appeal, wherein lies the danger for the disciple — not that it is unholy and wrong. It is holy; it is right; it is good. I am not opposed to the married state, please understand. But for the chosen few, those who have chosen to give up life and all that it has for themselves as individuals, for the purpose of serving the human race, free from any ties of a personal nature, the most beautiful of personal things are precisely the most dangerous, because their pull is the strongest. Now perhaps you understand.

So, remember the message which has run all through our talk

and study together this afternoon: that in each one of you is a living god, a spiritual entity of transcendent power and beauty, to become one with which lies on the far horizons of the future destiny of the human race; and that even now, imperfect as men are, they can come into personal communion with their god within, if they will; and when you do so, then you become a Christ, a risen Christ, risen from the tomb of the lower selfhood into the atmosphere of spiritual glory. You have become then the awakened Buddha, "the awakened one," expressing at will all the powers and faculties of the god in the heart of the heart of each one of you.

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[Vol 1, No 33](#)

[Contents](#)

**No. 33 (May 13, 1930)**

**QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK**

(Lecture delivered February 2, 1930)

"The Dawn is here," the spiritual dawn! As a messenger of glad tidings I speak to you this afternoon, for there is truth in the world, truth which you may have, truth which you can find; and the finding of this truth is seeing the spiritual dawn on the mountaintops of the Mystic East. This Mystical East is not a geographical locality, but is in your own heart, as a reflection of the universe.

The spiritual sun within you, your own inner god, which enlighteneth every man who cometh into the world, sends its rays down into your brain-minds, and gives to you what we human beings call inspiration, and peace — that peace which passeth ordinary understanding — and the love and sense of beauty, and the streams of genius, and the stimulation of the moving of the human heart in those noble outflowings which we men call compassion and pity; and, supereminent over all really, the root of them all for it is the very core of our being, is almighty love: impersonal, divine, deathless, for it knows no frontiers of time or of space; and the man must be either insane or degenerate who does not feel stirring within himself these things of which I speak.

Examine yourselves; realize that there is divinity within you, call it by what name you please — whether you be religionist or agnostic matters not at all; for these divisions of men into schools of thought and opinion are of the brain-mind only and vanish when the body dies. Examine your own inner movements of consciousness, and you will know that these things of glory are in you. They are the working in you of your inner god, your spiritual

inner sun.

This is the message of the great sages and seers of all the ages to their fellowmen and brothers, and whenever such a message comes anew to mankind in times of materialistic darkness, then we say, and truly say: the dawn is here.

The Theosophical Movement was founded above all else to promulgate among men these noble teachings, which not merely arise in the spiritual nature of man, but are also the formulation in human language of the qualities and energies of the universe as they exist in that universe and in man as an inseparable portion of that universe. Therefore theosophists say: The Theosophical Society has brought to you once again the same old doctrine of peace and of bliss and of wisdom and of brotherhood that has been taught for long ages in the past — no political nostrum which is interpreted according to man's opinions — but the doctrine of that living fire of consciousness within your breast which tells you of your oneness with all that is, and of your kinship with everything that is; for verily you are akin to the gods who are the rulers and counselors and governors of the universe.

To put the matter in briefer and simpler language: one of the purposes for the founding of The Theosophical Society in our age was to save men from committing spiritual suicide: to keep alive in man his spiritual intuitions; to call forth from the sons of men courageous hearts, quick, alert minds who could seize this message and deliver it to their fellows, without hesitation and without fear, breasting the strong adverse current of materialistic thought which was threatening, when The Theosophical Society was founded, to submerge mankind in the morasses of materialistic superstitions — superstitions because contrary to truth and natural fact. For so far had human beings become involved in the opinions and theories of the age, that they had

even forgotten to examine themselves, had even forgotten to realize what was within them, had even forgotten that the only voice that the human being can understand, is the voice of the silence of his own inner nature, call it by what name you like: the voice of the soul, the voice of the spirit, or, as we theosophists call it, the inspiration of the inner god. The name by which we speak of it matters not at all. Try to grasp the idea, and you will gain something of great and permanent value.

The men who have realized this great idea and have cultivated their spiritual nature, who are they? They are the great sages and seers of the human race, the titanic intellects who have swayed men powerfully because they have given to men ideas and therefore have made and unmade civilizations. Where do these ideas arise? In the sky? In the sun? In the winds? They arise in the understanding and heart of man. In the measure that these ideas are great and sublime do we say that they are the manifestation of the spiritual fountain within, an ever-flowing fountain; and all such streams of energy manifesting themselves in the outstanding works of genius and inspiration produced by the great sages are impersonal, therefore universal. They copy the majestic operations of supreme nature herself, in that they are impersonal, unvarying, sure, enduring, and will be as true ten billion years from now as they were true ten billion years in the past.

When a man does not believe that he has anything spiritual within him, that he is naught but a physical body, then he is a spiritual suicide; for man's will is supreme. He can cut himself off from his own higher nature, if he will. You know it; you have experienced it in minor degrees in the ordinary operations of your day-to-day consciousness. You can choose: you can take; you can leave.



One, and perhaps the greatest, of the objects of The Theosophical Society is to save men from becoming spiritual suicides, to keep alive in them their spiritual intuitions, to give them hope, to give them vision. We Theosophists gain nothing at all except the unspeakable bliss of doing good to our fellowmen; and there is no happiness known to men like that.

I came to the Temple this afternoon in order to answer questions, and I will do so: and, perhaps, I have already answered many questions in what I have just said, if even only by allusion, by hint, by pointing to where you may find a fuller explanation than what I have said, if you want to find it. If you want to understand life, if you want vision, if you want happiness, if you want mental peace, if you want to feel that you are a full and complete man, exercising every faculty within you, then you must realize that you have these fountains of inspiration and wisdom and knowledge within you, and that you are something vastly more than a mere physical body.

The first question:

"How many aeons of deep study and varied experience must a poor mortal endure before he arrives at a point where he can conceive of *anything* that had no beginning? Any question involving the mystery of the First Great Cause is usually dismissed with an airy gesture coupled with the assurance that it was or is beginningless."

My sympathies are with the questioner. Has it ever struck you what a strange idea it was — the old-fashioned opinion of our fathers and grandfathers, and back of them for several hundred years — to talk about a First Cause which never had a beginning? How can man, with ordinary reasoning powers and intelligence, believe such a thing?

Theosophists, on grounds of intuition and logic both, as well as from the knowledge of physical nature that modern science gives to us, do not believe in a First Great Cause. What preceded this First Great Cause? If it had a beginning, which is to be assumed because it is called First, how can it be infinite? How can a stick have a beginning and an infinite extension — have only one end, in other words? No. That is what theosophists mean, and that is what I meant on last Sunday, when I said I do not believe in an infinite personal god called a First Great Cause. I am not going to limit infinitude by saying that it is a cause, and that it was first.

What preceded the "first"? In what does this first exist or inhere? How and why did it begin? If it is infinitude, it cannot be a cause, because then you would have an infinite cause, which is impossible as implying activity in finite relations; and again, if it is infinitude, it cannot be first, because then it would have a beginning. A cause, or the first of a series, implies relation, limitation, something which produces something else. Infinity, eternity — when did "time" begin?

Now, just think. We theosophists say that time never had a beginning except in its finite aspects. Time, more properly speaking, is our human understanding of endless duration; and this is both beginningless and endless. If time had a beginning, what existed before time? And how could that "what" exist if there was no time in which to exist?

Theosophists say that ultimately — that is radically, going to the roots of things — nothing that is ever had a beginning except as a form, as a shape, as an event. Can you conceive of something which had no existence before it began to exist? I cannot. I cannot conceive of infinity — which can work only, if it does work at all, in infinite space — producing a limited thing. This is the old argument of the polytheists against the people who believed in

one infinite, personal God. They said: If your God is infinite and all-good, therefore it cannot produce evil, nor can it produce finite things, because it cannot be different from itself, and produce things different from itself. Therefore, what produced evil, and whence came things, both of which are finite and therefore limited?

Were it possible, they added, for infinity, an utter infinite goodness, to produce anything, it could produce only itself — infinite and utterly good. But as good is a human word and implies a human relation, therefore even what men call good — is a limited thing.

This is high philosophy; this is high religion. But I ask you: are you going to let someone else do your thinking for you, or are you going to think for yourselves about these subjects? Are you going to let someone else think for you and give you your religion with a spoon, so to say? If so, then you might as well resign your spiritual and intellectual manhood.

We theosophists do not do that kind of thing. Our appeal is to the divine-spiritual within each human being. We call upon you to think for yourselves, to follow your own conscience, to ally yourselves with your own spiritual being, with this fountain of illumination within of which I spoke, and to abide honestly by the results that you arrive at. These results may be imperfect, invariably they will be imperfect, because you are still imperfect; but you will grow spiritually and intellectually greater by the exercise of your own faculties; and in time you will give birth to something nobler still, for you will have advanced in development; whereas, if you want to go to sleep — spiritual suicide literally — cutting yourself off from the fountains or streams of glory and splendor that you are in your inmost being, then refuse to recognize the spiritual and intellectual faculties

which form the best and noblest part of you. In your hearts you know it just as well as I do.

"How does reincarnation explain the fact of the constant increase in the world's population?"

There is an assumption here, of course, that the world's population is steadily increasing — quite a common idea; but I don't know that it is true. Our historians as a rule make assumptions regarding the population of European countries three or four hundred years ago, from the imperfect data that they have; and they take it for granted that all the rest of the world was then in just the same state as regards the birthrate that European countries were; but this is an utterly foolish assumption, because even as regards European countries the birthrate is by no means the same in all.

Then again, how about the teeming millions of Asia? When the Asiatics were in the heyday of their glory and splendor many centuries ago, our ancestors in European countries were not yet truly civilized, if civilization means the manifestation in human life and in human relations of the noblest and finest parts of human understanding.

The population of a country increases, as a rule, when the civilization of the country is on the upward grade towards its culmination in greatness. The reason is that souls are then incarnating more numerously in that country; and conversely the birthrate falls, as a rule, when a country is passing through a downward phase of its vital evolutionary course — a phase which does not necessarily last for a very long time. The country may take another upward rise. The different circumstances and conditions all depend upon what theosophists call the karma of the country — the fruitage or consequences of what that portion of the human race has done in the past. Nevertheless, I do

personally think that the population of the world today is greater than it has been for the last two thousand or three thousand years.

Reincarnation explains very easily both increases and decreases in the world's population, or in the population of any one country. It is our theosophical teaching, as of course you know, that a man is more than the body in which he lives. The body is but the garment or veil of him. There is an inner part of him which produces the splendid phenomena of genius, those works of genius of which I have already spoken. You may call this superior or inner part soul, or spirit, or the inner man, or give to it some other name. The name does not matter at all. But the real man is there: that fountain of energies, that bundle of faculties, which man is. Call it, for purposes of convenience, the ego. No human being, unless he be a congenital idiot, lacks himself. There could not be a baby born unless there were something within guiding and urging the coming into being, the growth, of that baby; and this something is the reincarnating ego.

Consequently, when more babies are born than at other times, it means that the inflow of reincarnating egos is then in larger measure than before. As I have already pointed out, the populations of the respective countries increase when a race or a people is on the upward grade, marching upward in civilization, increasing, going from its better to its still better, towards its best. Whereas in countries or peoples or nations where the population is decreasing, there the reincarnating egos are not drawn in so large a number to incarnate in those countries or races or peoples.

Consequently, the increase in the world's population simply means that a time has arrived when the reincarnating egos which exist in the invisible realms, in hosts, waiting their chance to

enter physical bodies, are attracted more strongly into the bodies which are to be theirs, and they are drawn by psychomagnetic attraction, thus to incarnate together. It is like an increased flow in a river of life, the drops of which are the reincarnating egos of men.

I will add this: Just as a people, a race, has its periods of increase of population, and its periods of decrease — because it sometimes is on the upward grade, and sometimes on the downward grade — just so the whole earth at times is more numerously populated than at other times, because the whole earth, just as in our own time, is then passing through a more intensive phase of increase in civilization.

Civilization is now spreading all over the world; the most backward peoples in our own time are beginning to feel the call. Men — races, peoples — are not so separate as they used to be; everything is awakening, growing, increasing; but this cycle will pass in its turn. Just as individual man has his day in which he works, and his night in which he rests, so do peoples have their day in which they work on the stage of life, make their gestures, perform their antics, and then retire into the silence — and sometimes I feel like saying: Thank the heavens!

"Are new souls being constantly created?"

No. In the first place, theosophists do not believe, and therefore of course we do not teach, that human souls are 'created.' That is the old Christian idea. A human spirit is a deathless entity; it is a part of the very fabric of the life universal in its inmost parts; and this spirit of man, this inner being, call it for convenience his spiritual soul if you like — the name matters not — this spiritual soul is pursuing an eternal pilgrimage in space, infinite in space and eternal in time. It passes from mansion to mansion of life, sojourning now here, now there, learning everywhere. The earth

is one such mansion, in fact. Every sphere, every orb, in the celestial spaces is another mansion of life.

But listen: the greatest lessons are learned in the invisible worlds, for this physical world that we see, despite its physical splendor, its illusory and magical interest, is but the shell, the garment, the body, the exterior; and just as from the interior of man flow forth all his thoughts, all his inspiration, all his genius, all his powers and energies, into the physical, and express themselves in the works that man does, so precisely all the manifestations that we see in the physical universe are but the expressions of the indwelling energies and faculties and powers and forces within that universe.

This eternal pilgrimage of the spiritual soul of man is not only in this cross-section of the physical universe which our imperfect eyes can see but most especially in the invisible realms — in what men call the spiritual worlds, in the plural please; for there are grades upon grades upon grades of them, higher and higher and higher and higher. I desire to leave the thought without frontiers, signifying that there are no jumping-off places, no ultimates, beyond which nothing is.

But this god within, an eternal pilgrim, learns eternally, going higher and higher and higher; and like human races on earth which, after reaching their culmination of splendor in civilizations, fall to rise again: so does the Monad, the god, our spiritual soul, pass from the spiritual worlds down into ethereal matter, learning in each, and rising again out of it in order to reach a still higher peak of destiny; then down into the ethereal material realms again; then another rise to something still more lofty and sublime — and so on forever.

Therefore is our earth a sojourning place, an inn of life. We are not children of earth. Think! Let your intuitions work! Just ask

yourself: Well, isn't that truth? Is it true? Does it appeal to me? Is it clear? Therefore, I say, think about it. You will gain enormously if the idea has struck home to you. You will be a new man, you will be a new woman. You will have a vision that nothing else in the universe can give to you, for it is truth. Examine it. Test it. Prove it; and if it is good, grip it to your soul with hooks of love and conviction.

No spiritual soul is ever created. It comes out of the eternity of the past; in its majestic evolutionary sweep it passes to earth as it were, and then finishing here, pursues its journey; cycles back again along its own rounds on higher planes; reaches earth again, and finishing here, goes still higher; for everything has its own evolutionary sweep, which is constantly increasing not only in diameter, so to say, but it lasts throughout eternal duration. The sweep becomes ever longer and wider and grander, for there is in man a divine spark. That spark must find fields for the exercise of its faculties, and it cannot free itself from any one mansion of life until it feels itself exercising the faculties within itself. There is a divine dissatisfaction in the human heart which is one of the noblest things that the human heart contains.

Oh, may the immortal gods help us, should we, as a human race, ever think that we have reached perfect, absolute truth, and then begin to sleep! Then would we be committing spiritual suicide. Give me the divine hunger for light and truth! Give me more of that hunger for truth and light — the divine dissatisfaction that I speak of — anything rather than the spiritual death of immovable matter.

The following is a beautiful thing that was sent to me. I get some very interesting questions, questions that are interestingly phrased, and some are very thoughtful. It is as much a pleasure to me to read them and to think over them, as it is to have the



opportunity of answering them here. I might say, in passing, that one of the most interesting things that I have noticed about these questions is this: they are keen, most of them. They show that men are awakened, that they are hungering; and this hunger within their souls is breaking down the barriers of prejudice and convention, mental prejudice and convention I mean. Men are beginning to take a free breath, to breathe deeply and long, as free men should breathe mentally and spiritually, for such breathings free them from cramps and bonds, free them from spiritual death. That is the only death that I know — the smug self-satisfaction of the man who thinks that he knows it all.

This is the first lesson that you learn in theosophy, to wit: to realize that you are a learning entity in a most marvelous universe in which going to school is a most wonderful experience, for it is the school of life. You learn that you are akin to the gods, yes, and akin to the humblest material thing, so that love and pity and compassion and understanding fill your heart and mind, and give you the sympathetic vision to read the hearts and minds of your fellows, so that you can see good in other men, good everywhere indeed.

This is the question that I spoke of. It is preceded by this preamble:

"During the last preceding cycle it was the accepted thing to look without for all causes — the air that one breathed, the food partaken of, the flowers that brought gladness, the skies; the suns and stars, those 'flashing gems that deck the purple robe of night'; mighty mountain peaks, deep woods, crystal streams and tumbling waterfalls with joyous laughter mantling impeding rocks with living lace.

"Observing all this, man learned to look without for Deity, and for physical and spiritual sustenance. Today the world echoes

the mandate '*look within*' for all that is worth while. Even 'Lo, the poor Indian whose untutored mind sees God in clouds and hears Him in the wind' with one eye on his favorite cloud is trying to '*look within*' and at the same time carefully avoiding the pitfall of self-worship.

"Question (excuse the preamble!): At the beginning of the next cycle will man be looking within, without, or — ?"

Now, that is a beautiful thing, beautifully phrased, and there is much about the thought herein contained that every beat of my own heart is attuned to; nevertheless the idea that "looking within" is a recent achievement of mankind is utterly untrue. It is the oldest spiritual lesson ever taught to man, and it lies at the very heart of every great religious philosophy, of every great philosophical religion. "Man, know thyself," said the ancient Greek Oracle, the voice of the god Apollo; and in the ancient scriptures of Hindustan you will find repeated over and over and over again, as the very keynote of learning and of evolution: Search within yourself for truth. That is the same message that The Theosophical Society today gives to you: Look within for truth, for as you are a god in your inmost parts, a spark of the universal Fire, so to say, rooted in infinitude and in eternity an inseparable portion, particle, of the kosmic whole, therefore you have abiding and flowing in you, active or inactive, all that the universe has, active or inactive, manifested or unmanifested.

Consequently, seek for light where light is to be found — within! Seek for truth where truth is to be found — within, in your spiritual nature, for that is the pathway to divinity. You are inseparable, in your inner spiritual nature, from the boundless universe. Therefore, knowing yourself, your spiritual nature, the spiritual reaches of you, you will know in time, which means throughout infinity, that universe which is truth, and you will

have an ever-growing realization that you will never reach an end, for you will be passing to ever grander illumination, seeing before you always a sublimer peak to climb; and even when ye, as sons of the Sun, enter the portals of the solar orb, ye shall not have then reached the ultimate.

Think! Life is endless. Time is beginningless and frontierless. The universe is all there is: it never had a beginning, it never had an end; and you are its child: bone of its bone, blood of its blood, flesh of its flesh, energy of its energy, life of its life. Do you see the vision? Do you begin to catch a glimpse of the vision sublime? Do you see the hope in it? It is indeed wonderful. This is what I meant when first speaking to you this afternoon I called attention to the Mystic East and to the god within you.

So consequently, answering the question: "At the beginning of the next cycle" — I do not quite know what that means, because it is our theosophical teaching that cycle succeeds cycle for ever, and also that there are small cycles and great ones, but the presumption is that the questioner means the beginning of the next great human cycle — "will man be looking within, without, or — ?", I may say: Undoubtedly he will be doing as we humans are now doing, but also will he be wiser, looking more within than we do, because he will be farther along the evolutionary path of development.

Do you know what evolution is? Evolution is the bringing out of what is within. It is the unwrapping of what is wrapped up, the unrolling of interior faculty and power, of energy. Having this inner god within you, which is a fountain of spiritual energy, therefore illumination, intellect, everything appearing in evolution, is naught but a progressive bringing forth of what is inwrapped within the evolving entity. Otherwise how could anything evolve if it did not have the capacity to evolve?

Now, we are evolutionists through and through, but we are not Darwinists. Do not misunderstand me in that respect. But true evolutionists — yes, for evolution is growth, it is expansion. As the acorn has in its heart all the oak, but not yet expressed, not yet unwrapped, unrolled, so has every other thing in itself a vast number of faculties and powers — possibilities men call them; and time and environment offer the opportunity for growth, and growth is evolution, that is to say bringing out what is within. You could not be anything unless you had the germ of it within you. It would be impossible. Do you see the idea?

Hence the men of the future will look more within than we are accustomed to do. They will be greater men than we are, grander.

I often wonder, in standing here, whether my audience imagines for a mere fraction of an instant that the theosophical philosophy has been invented by anybody. I tell you that it has not. Or does anyone imagine that theosophy is a mere syncretistic system, to use a word of the scholar, that is to say, a system taken piecemeal from different religions and philosophies of the past, and put together more or less neatly and symmetrically? It is not that at all.

Theosophy is in the background of every great world religion and world philosophy, and you will find it there if you look for it. This is a statement of fact. Look for theosophy there, and you will find it; and it is there because it is the primal religion of mankind; and these various world religions and world philosophies have been given to men by the great seers and sages of past ages, who learned their wisdom in the secret retreats of our Holy Order from that compassionate band of sages whom we call the Masters of Wisdom.

From this Order individuals at different times came into the world, were sent into the world, and founded this religion or that

religion, or this philosophy or that philosophy; but in all cases they drew from the theosophical philosophy, and made it the basis of all their religious or philosophical teaching.

What is this theosophical philosophy? Whence came it? How did men first know about it, as it was neither invented nor a mere patchwork? Where did it come from, and when did it first appear among men? I will tell you just what our teaching is, and some day perhaps I will talk to you at length about it. But here are the facts.

Truth, as men see it, is an expression of the operations and facts of the Universe, formulated in human tongue by men. Man being a god in his inmost parts, is rooted in the Universe because he is an inseparable part of that Universe. Therefore if he follows the pathway of his consciousness, ever upwards and inwards, he finally comes, with his perceptive consciousness, to that god within, that inner god. This inner god may also be conceived of as one of the divine particles of the Heart of the Universe, of the Fountain of cosmic light and order.

Consequently man, having this spiritual consciousness, which is rooted in the spiritual consciousness of the Universe, has a divine vision, and therefore sees with this spiritual consciousness; and he comes back from this pathway of following his consciousness ever inwards: he returns from this sublimest of human adventures, which is done through initiation; and gives his message to men in so far as the men of his day can understand it, not overloading their minds with too much glory, but giving them as much as they can at the time take in and understand. And behold, a new religion is founded, a new world philosophy is born.

The heart of the teaching of these great world religions and philosophies — that teaching in which they all agree, that body of

doctrine lying at the background of the religions and philosophies, that which is the same in them all, as taught by these great initiated sages and seers — that is theosophy.

I am going to close now, because I desire to leave the present atmosphere in our Temple undisturbed. I do not want to change it by answering other questions that I have here, although they are very interesting questions indeed. I desire to leave this atmosphere just as it is, undisturbed.

No theosophist, teacher or student (and we are all students — the highest among us is a student of life, subject to correction by the greater wisdom that he will acquire in time), no theosophist ever will tell you that theosophy is dogmatic, because it is not. You do not have to accept any creeds when you join The Theosophical Society; you do not have to abandon even your own particular religion, if you prefer to keep it. Christian, Buddhist, Hindu, Confucian, atheist, agnostic — it matters not what — if you believe in our one principle that men are brothers with a common spiritual origin, the doors of The Theosophical Society stand wide open to you.

The only prerequisite to membership in The Theosophical Society is a sincere belief in universal brotherhood. You do not have to accept a single doctrine of our majestic philosophy, which, as I have told you, is a formulation of the truths of the universe, unless you desire to. It is laid before you in book and by speech; and we say to you: "Come, here are these Pierian Springs, which have given us such ineffable peace. Come, taste, drink; for they are the waters of life. A god lives in you, in each one of you. It is a reality; it is the source of all that you are in the best of your manhood and womanhood; it is the source of your noblest thoughts and aspirations."

Men have not realized one-millionth part of what they have

within them; and belief that you have these faculties and powers as yet undeveloped within you is the first step towards acquiring the consciousness of them. You cannot see if you willfully turn your eyes away. But once the thought becomes familiar, its attraction is so powerful that you will be led on step by step, and rapidly, to be your noblest self.

In future ages, when you shall have expressed more or less perfectly these powers and faculties locked up within, of which you at present receive but adumbrations, intuitions, flashes, glimpses — which men call genius — in the future ages, when you as individuals shall have arrived at the full consciousness of what you are, then you will be, each one of you, an awakened Buddha, a Christ risen out of the darkness of ignorance into light.

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[Vol 1, No 34](#)

[Contents](#)

**No. 34 (May 20, 1930)**

**QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK**

(Lecture delivered February 9, 1930)

I have quite a number of questions before me, and I am going to answer them in the order in which I have received them, with the exception of one question which arrived this morning from a friend in Los Angeles who will be here this afternoon, and he asked that this question, which is about a little child two years old, be answered today. I will try to do so. Personally I am a bachelor. I have had no personal experience in the raising of children; but I know human nature. I know what men and women are because I know something of myself; and if you know yourselves — know your own faculties and powers, and something of what is within you — then really you have a key by which to know all other human beings, and, indeed, all things. For you are an inseparable part, each individual of you, of the boundless universe in which you live and move and have your being; and therefore, through your inner self or spiritual nature, you have a road reaching to the very heart of the universe; and therefore all things are open to you, if you travel that road leading ever more withinwards.

So even I, a crusty bachelor, can answer a question about a little child. I was once a little child myself; so were you all once little children; and, do you know, I sometimes think that we grown-ups are but little children in many ways. The little ones are not specifically or radically different from us. We merely have brought out more of what is within us than the little child has; and in treating a little child I think that it is our duty to remember these beautiful theosophical precepts and principles, and to treat



a little child as a growing soul, as a human blossom just come into this world, ready to begin its pathway through this particular phase of its long evolutionary journey, this particular schoolroom of life. The child needs help.

Already, I see, I am answering the question about a little child, but out of place; and I will now turn to the other questions before I answer in full this question about the little child.

The first question, then, is:

"Can you tell us something about the special methods used in the Raja-Yoga system of education?"

Of course I can. The Raja-Yoga system of education is a system — not founded, not thought out, not originated, but — introduced by Katherine Tingley, my great-hearted predecessor, whose portrait you see in the Temple this afternoon. The title Raja-Yoga is Sanskrit. It means "royal union." In itself it is but a term, and yet the idea behind this term is that there is, in the human being, at the very core of the core of him, as the heart of the heart of him, a divine entity, a living god, the highest part of his being; and that an appeal can be made to this inner glory at any time and in any place, through the ears of the adult, but likewise, although with more care and with a tenderer love perhaps, through the ears and eyes of a little child.

The idea, then, back of the Raja-Yoga system of education is to bring out this inner, divine splendor, as much as may be: not to develop it, not to stimulate it, for it is always there in its supernal glory, filling us full, even us imperfect creatures, with all that we have that is noble and fine, splendid and gracious, and kind; but to part the veils of the lower selfhood so that this inner glory may shine forth through us.

As you may know, the only difference between the great man and

the man who is not great is that in the former this inner splendor, this inner glory, has had some opportunity to come into manifestation in his life. Whereas in the inferior man, this inner splendor has not been able so fully to express its transcendent powers. All inspiration, all that tends to ennoble humanity, all genius, all the streams of illuminating thought — whence spring they forth? From within.

There, then, is the fundamental idea back of the Raja-Yoga system of education: to cooperate with natural laws so that the little child will have less to struggle against, so that it shall be guided with a helping hand, with a kindly and sympathetic understanding — in brief, so that it shall be guided by an understanding heart. That is what our teachers strive to do, and the success that we have had in certain cases has been remarkable.

But not all children are equal. We cannot take impossible human material, obviously, and produce a god walking on earth; but even with very refractory human material we can soften things, we can lead forth the inner splendor, at least to some degree, because our theosophical principles of thought and action are based on the laws springing forth from nature's heart. There is the keynote — nothing unnatural, nothing weird, nothing uncanny; but love, understanding, and the wise philosophy of the ancient wisdom-religion of mankind today called theosophy.

That is all, and it is simple, as you see. Those are the ideals behind the Raja-Yoga system of education which we are striving so earnestly to put into practice; and the methods that we follow are based wholly upon those ideals.

Some people perhaps might object to the Sanskrit title, and say: Why don't you choose a term more easily understandable, some English term, for instance? Why go to the far Orient and pick out a word that inevitably will make people misunderstand you in

the Occident, and therefore cause them to confuse your school and your efforts with those of certain schools of Oriental yoga? Because wisdom dictated this choice. Because these words describe exactly, when you understand them (and they are worth understanding), just what we are striving to do. Our school attempts to inculcate not merely ethical principles of the loftiest type, but to teach the child to respect itself, to teach it self-control; we endeavor to elucidate the child's own innate powers, its own inherent faculties, so that it shall grow up a developed and free man.

In using the word "free," I do not refer to politics at all. I refer to something loftier and more sublime by far: I refer to matters of the spirit and of the mind and of the heart, which, when developed, make a man free, inwardly free — a truly free man. You know, of course, just what I mean.

That is our aim, that is our ideal; that is what we are striving for.

I might add this, that in the Orient there have been from immemorial time (oh, the immortal gods only know how many ages!) four paths, as they are called, which the four classes or types of men, according to this ancient theory of Hindustan, follow. The first is *karma-marga*, the path of action, which I suppose our psalm-singing Occidentals would translate as "salvation by works," with the idea, implicit in theory, whether right or wrong, that action alone is sufficient for progress.

The second path is called *bhakti-marga*. *Bhakti* is a word meaning "affection," "trust," "faith." These two paths, or these two systems of improving the heart and mind of men, are also more or less known in the Occident, and have been respectively called salvation by works, and salvation by faith. But these two paths are not the highest.

The third path is called *raja-yoga-marga*, the path of raja-yoga, the system of raja-yoga: the path which the striving entity follows in order to attain freedom and light: to attain that real union with the self within by means of self-devised efforts — what Katherine Tingley has called "self-directed evolution."

And the fourth path, considered to be for the choicest of men, was called *jnana-marga*, the wisdom-path: the path of the great seers and sages, and, generally speaking, of the noblest portion of mankind.

These four pathways correspond very accurately with the four grades, social and political, of the early civilizations of Hindustan in the Vedic period: the *sudra*, the agriculturist; the *vaisya*, the commercial man; the *kshattriya*, the administrator, the warrior, the king, the prince, in short, the world of officialdom, etc.; and fourth, the *brahmana*, the philosopher, the sage.

Question 2: "What distinguishes the Theosophical University from other universities?"

This is an interesting question. Raja-yoga principles run throughout the work done, the ideals held, and the objects strived for in Theosophical University as they do in the Raja-Yoga Academy and School; but in the University something is aimed at still higher and more appropriate for adults. We have therein our intellectual courses of study, of course, because we seek improvement along all lines, we seek freedom of thought and of the human spirit, as is done in the best of Occidental universities; but we seek something higher. We teach — as a fundamental postulate, not as a religious dogma, for we have no dogmas in The Theosophical Society, but as a fundamental postulate of clear thinking — that the source whence spring forth all the things that make men great (and there have been great men) is within: your own inner god, the living being within you, the fountain of genius

and inspiration in your heart, meaning, by "heart," not the physical organ, but the core of you, the loftiest, highest fountain of your being. Our whole work is founded on that sublime thought.

You may ask: Are there not religious schools, sectarian schools, which are also founded upon religious principles? Of course there are. But theosophists have no dogmas either in our philosophy or in our Society. You don't have to believe a thing in The Theosophical Society unless your conscience tells you that it is truth. You don't have to accept any dogma when you apply for membership. The only prerequisite for joining The Theosophical Society is a sincere belief in universal brotherhood.

So, you see, Theosophical University is founded upon the same principles upon which were grounded the sublime Mystery schools of the past, of whatever country and of whatever race of men: the same fundamental ideas, the same fundamental principles of thought. Once that a man realizes what is within him, or perhaps more accurately, realizes what he is in his inner being — that divinity is at the core of each human being — then he begins to sense and to cognize his oneness with universal nature; and whether he will or whether he nil, he feels himself to be an instinctive mystic.

On Sunday after Sunday from this platform, I recur to the thought of this essential divinity within the human being because it is the very foundation stone of all ethics, of all religion, of all philosophy; and, I venture to say, of all true science. This inner divinity is the cause and source of human genius and inspiration; and this divinity within finds its source in the almighty love which holds the universe true and steady in its courses. Love is the very cement of the Universe, the power binding all things together; and when a man who now is a free man feels this

almighty force stirring in his being, then there is an inner transfiguration of him. Indeed he can increase his receptivity of the divine powers in his inmost core so greatly that, I tell you in all solemnity and in all earnestness, his very body will shine with the outpouring of the inner light. The old records of the seers and sages of the past are true.

Question 3: "I have heard that a real Raja-Yoga is a rare product. What was meant by this?"

I might say that of course the proper term to use for a student of raja-yoga is *raja-yogi*, but we don't use this term. We simply say "a raja-yoga." We do not use the other term because it is so easily confused with Oriental yogis and so-called swamis and fakirs — the modern itinerant representatives of the ancient philosophies and religions of archaic date.

But why is a spiritual genius, or why is a great seer and sage, a human phenomenon? Because such men are the fine flowers of the human race. Were every man a great sage and seer, a Christ, a Buddha, then indeed real raja-yoga students — the true ones — would not be rare products, but everyone would be such. It is all a question of evolution. Give us splendid material — we will produce splendid results; give us poor material and at least we can better it, better it immensely; but you cannot work miracles (in which we theosophists do not believe).

Question 4: "What is the difference between your Theosophical Society and other Theosophical Societies, and what is your attitude towards members of these other societies?"

This question is easily answered. I will not, however, point to the differences, but will merely remark that a tree is known by its fruits. Instead, I want to emphasize the points of union, the points

of contact. I love to notice friendliness and kindness in human hearts, not diversity of opinion, not unkindness, not criticism.

We adhere strictly to the wisdom-religion of the ancients. We have not wandered therefrom a hair's breadth. That is our sublime ideal which we follow truly, because sincerely. However much as human beings we may fail, we try; we are sincere. The members of other Theosophical Societies I doubt not try to do the same.

But I can tell you this, friends, that in The Theosophical Society the stream of illumination, of inspiration, originating in the Lodge of the great Masters of Wisdom and Compassion, flows as ever today, strong and true. The link is unbroken; and he who desires to drink at this Pierian fount may if he will. We do not ask members of other Theosophical Societies to resign their fellowship in these other societies. We simply say: "Our doors are open. We extend to you the glad hand of fraternal goodwill. Come; come in; drink; prove to yourself that what we say is true."

I want to emphasize the points of union, not the points of difference — those unfortunate and unhappy differences of opinion which in the past have caused the Theosophical Movement to be separated into a number of different branches, societies. I want to gather under the wing of the one protecting spiritual light all true hearts. That is what I live for. I am true to my word and I am willing to take other men as true to their word also.

This does not mean that we abandon our views, our Society, our pledge, nor that we shall wander one hair's breadth from the wisdom-religion of antiquity which H. P. Blavatsky brought anew to the Western world. Oh no! That is not the idea. We simply say: "Our doors are open. We extend to you a cordial welcome."

I have no word of criticism at all. I simply point out one fact: a tree is known by its fruits. If we have erred in the past, we shall remedy our errors; and if these other Theosophical Societies have erred in the past, let them come to us, to the common theosophical banner of truth, light, and freedom, and work with us. Never mind the errors; never mind the diversities and differences of opinion. Learn to forgive; learn to love. Love and forgive: these are the watchwords of the new theosophical era which is opening.

And I make a definite promise to him who comes with a clean heart and an eager intellect: he shall receive the very waters of truth in proportion to his capacity to drink thereof. We should be wretched failures, we fellows of The Theosophical Society, if we did not practice what we preach.

We are so convinced by experience of the truth and regularity of our own standing that we open wide the doors. The test of all who come will take place in time, not by anything that I as Leader of The Theosophical Society shall ever do, but through the workings of the laws of the universe; for if anyone, after joining, does evil, it will find him out; if he be false he lays snares for his own feet.

Therefore our attitude towards the associates of other Theosophical Societies is, as said, one of kindly brotherhood and fraternal good feeling. They have their problems; we have ours; and my hope is to gather under the theosophical banner of The Theosophical Society, on our broad platform of universal brotherhood and under the aegis of the constitution of our Society, every true theosophist in the world. I say to them all: "Here is my hand. Come!" That is our attitude.

In conclusion, you may ask: Would it not be better, however, if every theosophist who joined The Theosophical Society resigned his fellowship in other Theosophical Societies? I will tell you



truthfully what I think: it would be better, and for one reason only, that thus his energies would not be dissipated by a diversity and variety of interests. Spiritual training, intellectual understanding, run in one single stream, and rather than dissipate one's forces, it is better to concentrate them in the noblest effort that human being ever tried: self-conquest, which ultimately will bring out the inner glory.

Question 5: "What religious teachings are given to the children in the Raja-Yoga School?"

If this question refers to dogmas, sectarian teachings, then we say: None. But if religious teachings means the great fundamental principles which stir the human heart to right action, to live cleanly and truly, to aspire to the best — these we teach. These principles are the cream of the ethics of the world — but no dogmas are taught, nothing that tends to cripple the child's mind. He learns to think for himself, and to control himself; and if he does not, he is a failure. But we do our best.

Question 6: "In the world we hear much about intellectual faculties. I hear theosophists speaking a great deal about the 'doctrine of the heart' and 'soul-wisdom.' Do the heart and the soul think?"

This question is a very understandable one, but it arises, I think, out of a misunderstanding of these two terms: soul-wisdom, and the doctrine of the heart. These are Oriental terms, also used by some of the Greeks in ancient times. They refer not to the physical heart but, as I believe I have before told you this afternoon, to the core of things, to the heart of you, to the central point of consciousness, the inner fountain of being. That is what we mean by the doctrine of the heart, in a general way.

But it also has the meaning of the body of more mystical, more

profound, and more definite teaching which theosophists classify under the head of esoteric teachings, because they are hid from view, as the heart in the body is, and also because they form the core of the entire theosophical philosophy. Therefore are these teachings collectively called the heart-doctrine.

We have its contrast in what theosophists call the "doctrine of the eye" — that which the eye sees: the external forms of religion, ritual, ceremonies, formal observances. These theosophists do not have. We do not say, however, that they are wholly bad. We simply say that we have them not. The unfortunate part about them is — these forms and rituals — that they distract the mind away from the essential realities, away from the heart-doctrine or the core of religion. We try to show men what and who they are; we try to show men what is within them, the unspeakable glory of the divinity within, the living god in the core of the core of each one of you. This teaching requires no rituals, no ceremonials, no formal observances.

Oh, the relief, the freedom, the sense of intellectual expansion and spiritual growth, when once you feel stirring within yourself this ineffable mystery which we call the inner god, the immanent Christos, the Buddha within! Every one of you is an incarnate divinity, a spark of the Central Fire of the Universe, because you are an inseparable portion of the universe, each one of you. You cannot leave that universe; you are in it; you are an inseparable part of it.

Therefore, everything that is in the universe is in each one of you, active or inactive as the case may be. The more evolved man has evolved forth more largely the inner splendor. That is also what we mean by soul-wisdom and the doctrine of the heart.

I now take up the question about the child two years of age that I spoke of in the beginning of my talk to you this afternoon. Here it

is:

"What method of correction should be applied when a child, two years of age, grasps playthings from his baby sister, and the mother takes some treasured article from him as an object lesson; but the child, rather than yield the object taken, will give up his other most treasured possessions?"

How would you deal with a child like that? The case is quite a common one, and I see nothing unusual about it. Children, in their way, are very alert. They sense very quickly whether their teachers, parents, guardians — those in charge — know how to treat them, and they react accordingly. Do you think that because a child is acquisitive, because it grasps at things that do not belong to it, it is going to help the child to turn away from its fault if you also grasp at something that the child loves and take it away from him? I do not, because the child will conceive the action to be a mere declaration of what it itself does.

On the other hand, in the way in which you train a little child — that is the way in which he will grow. In the way you train a sapling, thus will grow the tree. It is a heavy responsibility, this bringing up of a little child.

It seems to me, in answer to this question, that two main things are required in the parent or the guardian or the teacher: inflexible firmness which no tears nor screaming will change, and great gentleness. If this child were mine, at every instant where I saw it grasp at things belonging to others, I should interpose, and gently but firmly restore the thing that was grasped at to its owner, and should do this regularly. Finally the child will learn; it will begin to wonder at your action; then it will begin to think; finally it will copy what it sees its parent or guardian do, because children are very imitative.

However, when the child grows to be a little older, then watch yourself, for if there is one thing that a child is, it is imitative; and if it sees papa take the paper or something else from mama's hand, and begin to read it, do you think that it will ever forget that object lesson? You have taught it a lesson to do likewise. Or perhaps it is mama in this case who is at fault, and takes something from father; and the child will imitate that action.

Firmness, inflexible firmness, is required; and in this way you discipline your child. Correct it, but never coarsely or brutally. Treat a child brutally, and it will grow up to be a brute. You can form a child in very large measure to be what it finally becomes; and if you want it to be a weakling, then treat it weakly. If you want it to be strong, then inculcate lessons of firmness, of right, of cleanliness, during the plastic period of childhood; and that child will live to bless you.

I marvel sometimes that men and women do as well as they do as adults, when I see how mothers and fathers so often treat their children! Indulgence follows upon indulgence; a whimper is gratified, and then the next whimper of the child is louder than the first. It is again gratified, and then, instead of a whimper, you will one day be greeted with a scream. It is again gratified in order to have peace in the household. Then the next step is that some day you will be greeted with a yell; and the child is again gratified in order to have peace in the house. Then finally comes a spasm of hysteria! All this could have been, and should have been, prevented in the beginning of the training.

Don't think that a child does not think. It does think in its own way. Just throw yourself back in thought as far as you can to your own childhood. I do not say that the child two years old would reason, after the fashion of infantile reasoning, in the manner according to which a child of five would reason, nor after the

manner in which a boy or girl of ten or fifteen would reason. But don't deceive yourselves. A child feels and thinks in its own way almost from the very earliest years of babyhood, and this is the exact reason why you can train it. If it did not think, and had no feeling, it would be an unconscious lump of flesh.

Therefore use discipline, but no harshness — the discipline of firmness, and of clairvoyant love when you train your child. Look ahead into its future.

"Emerson says: 'It is the finite that suffers, the infinite lies in smiling repose.' Does this mean that the infinite smiles at suffering?"

I cannot imagine a smiling infinite. Emerson had drunken of the Eastern wisdom as it had filtered through the English translations which he had read; and therefore much of Emerson's thought is akin to the theosophical thought. But I am pretty certain that here is a little point where Emerson slipped in language, because to talk of a smiling infinite is, at the very best, a paradoxical way of speaking. But Emerson's meaning is clear. The infinite is utter peace, all-embracing love. It is no person, it is not even conscious. It is not even unconscious. These words signify human attributes. It is beyond consciousness, just as it is beyond unconsciousness. To put it in another way: it is consciousness to the *n*th degree, cosmic consciousness.

Would you have the infinite think and feel and have the consciousness of a man, or of a god, or of a super-god? What kind of an infinite is it which has finite attributes? Because all these — man, god, super-god, and you may ascend the scale or ladder of life as high as you like — are all finite by contrast with boundless, frontierless, infinitude: without beginning, without end, whether inwards, whether outwards.

It is the finite which suffers. It is the finite which loves. It is the finite which does these, because it learns. It is learning, growing — no matter how small it may be, no matter how great, insect and god, super-god and atom of earth — all are learning and growing, therefore passing through stages of happiness and bliss, and of suffering and pain.

And don't mistake the matter. What we men in our ignorance call suffering and pain are better teachers than are happiness and smug contentment. The latter is almost spiritually suicidal — to be so smugly content with yourself and what you are that you sleep. But nature will not have it thus always: finally there comes the karmic impulse, the karmic stimulus, and then you suffer a little; but in doing so you awaken and begin to grow. Bless the karmic stimulus; be not afraid of it. Look to the essential divinity within. Remember that everything that happens is transient, and that you can learn from everything, and in learning you will grow — grow great, and from greatness pass to a larger sphere of greatness.

Everything that *is* is an opportunity to the percipient eye and the understanding heart to learn, which means to grow; and I will tell you in this connection a little secret. There is pleasure in pain, so much so that when this curious phenomenon manifests in an ordinary man, the physicians give a name to it, referring to a person who deliberately inflicts pain upon himself or others in order to derive pleasure from it. It is a degenerate act, but it manifests the truth of what I have said; and when you realize that suffering and pain are two of the means by which we grow, then comes peace to the heart and rest to the mind.

What is it that makes the majestic oak such as it is? Is it the gentle zephyr and the soft-pattering rain? The oak might be weak and yielding as a willow to the blast if that were the truth. No, the

tempest and the storm have their way with the oak, and the oak reacts in robustness and strength; battling the storm and tempest it grows strong.

Human beings learn far more quickly than does the so-called insensate plant. There is nothing that learns so quickly and easily as does the human heart. Therefore shrink not from suffering and pain. Remember that the human heart and the human mind must be tried in the fire, even as gold is purified in the cleansing flame.

These are facts. Therefore, when pain and suffering come upon you, remember these truths. Stand up! Be a man! Face the storm; and before you know it, you will see the blue sky ahead, and success and prosperity, because you have acted like a man. You have passed through the test, and it has made you stronger.

"How do you account for the fact that genius is often accompanied by a lack of self-control? For instance, the French poet Alfred de Musset wrote his best works when intoxicated; the Italian musician Donizetti was said to be unable to receive inspiration for his compositions except when drinking cup after cup of black coffee; Coleridge wrote his immortal works when under the influence of opium — or so I have read — and many other instances of this could be mentioned."

I will tell you why genius is so often accompanied by a lack of self-control. Because genius is unsymmetrical evolution, unsymmetrical development, one-sided. This unsymmetrical development is usually reflected in the human body, for the human soul molds the body in which it lives. But do not mistake genius for spiritual grandeur. Genius is, as theosophists say, the karmic fruitage of intense efforts in other lives along one line, and it manifests as cause and effect. In life after life the instinct has been to concentrate on one line of thought and action only.

After a while such a man becomes a master on that line as compared with his fellows, and they say: Behold, a genius. Yes, but an unsymmetrically developed being. He is one-sided, he is both weak and strong. To use the old English joke, it is like the curate's egg at the morning meal: "A most excellent egg, sir — in spots!"

Whereas real growth, steady development of all parts of the inner being of man, such as the Raja-Yoga system of education tries to bring about — symmetrical growth, a harmonious development — finally will bring forth the sage and seer, the manifested Christ, the Buddha, who is a genius in every line because fully and wholly and completely a man — spiritually, intellectually, psychically, astrally, vitally, physically — manifesting and expressing in more or less perfect measure the powers and faculties of the immortal god within.

"The following question is one which I have often puzzled over; can you please enlighten me? Which is the more highly evolved — the man or woman who is sensitive to beauty (whether in nature, in music, art, poetry, or any other form) even though his character may be unbalanced to a degree; or the steady plodder, who is good-hearted and does his duty, but sees nothing but the plain outer facts of everyday life about him?"

Why suppose, friends, that either the one or the other of the two cases suggested in the question is the more evolved? Either might be the more evolved; but as it so happens, the lover of beauty is passing through that especial phase of his evolutionary growth; and the other, the steady, good-hearted plodder, is likewise passing through that phase of his evolutionary growth; but the reincarnating ego passes from life to life to life to life, learning each time lessons appropriate to the respective lives, and thus



growing stronger and wiser and better, and manifesting more fully the transcendent powers in the core of its being.

Therefore, either of the two cases suggested might be the more evolved. Of course the sense of beauty is, in itself, a beautiful thing. It shows that there is an inner harmony of a certain kind. All geniuses are keenly alive to beauty, but only on one side of their being. They do not see the larger and more supernal beauty which comes from a symmetrical development.

The man who is a genius and sees beauty in sculpture or poetry or music, for instance, and follows these, and produces masterpieces along one of these lines, may be the very man who will commit some vile and ugly action; but if his heart were fully attuned to beauty he could not do so, for what men call evil-doing is vile, it is unsymmetrical, it is unclean, it is offensive, it is ugly. No man who has the full sense of beauty in his heart guiding his footsteps through life will ever do ugly acts.

Here is an odd question:

"'He that is greatest among you, let him be servant.' Why is there such a mad rush for servant positions?"

It seems to me that this question answers itself, because men want to be great, or to be thought great, before they truly are great. I suppose that this is the answer. But let me add just one thought to what I have said. I don't like to condemn a man because he aspires high. I rather admire him for it. It is true that a man who wants to be a king when he has no kingly character would probably make a fool of himself on the throne; but nevertheless he has the hunger for betterment within himself: he wants to be, to become, to grow. He sees the higher man, socially speaking or politically speaking, and the greater chances that that man has to live a free man's life and to do good, and he wants to

go and do likewise.

So there is another side to it, do you see?

I will close our study this afternoon by reading the following: It is a beautiful thing. I don't know where it comes from. The question is prefaced with a long preamble, and the question itself contains only eight words. Here, then, is the preamble:

### THE PEACE OF GOD

Gather up in one bouquet as thou wouldst gather roses rare, the loves of all the creatures of all worlds, of man, of animal, of plant, of whirling planet, sun, and nebula — the love that rises as perfume to the skies. Add to these all shades, and combinations of all shades, that light hath flashed to color. Then bind them with the force of every note and tone which ever gushed from throat of man, and bird, and beast, in song and praise; the chords of that sweet song the morning-stars have sung since dawn of life: the rustle of the winds, the moaning of the waves; and if thou hast no name for such a marvel, thou mayest call it God.

Then, if thou canst see and know the spirit of those loves, those rays of color, perfumes, notes, and chords, and feel it fold thee close when one short day of time is closed as, at the setting of the sun, the mother folds her little one and hushes it to sleep and only lays herself to rest when the great Bird of Life hath folded close its wings: then and only then, shalt thou — the offspring of that God — feel and know the PEACE of God. (Excerpt from *The Mountain Top*)

"Question: Does the above concept conflict with theosophical teachings?"

In spirit there is no conflict. In form of expression, theosophists

would probably differ. The ideas embodied in this preamble and question are beautiful, however. The kindness of thought and the loftiness of inspiration behind it would strike a responsive chord, I am sure, in every theosophical heart. But why ascribe all things that are good and beautiful to "God"? Why make yourself a mental and spiritual idol? Be free! Remember that you yourself are a god, a spark of the universal life, inseparable in your own inmost being from that universal life, and that within you is a living Christ, an awakened Buddha.

Why look without, except to see the glory and splendor in other things like unto you? Look within. Find peace, happiness, wisdom, inspiration, and love, within! See and understand the great beauty and love in your inmost parts, and express that almighty love to all that lives.

Then, following this pathway to your own inner god, you will reach all the mysteries and wonders of boundless infinitude through infinite time; and such happiness and peace and bliss and beauty and love and inspiration will fill your whole being that every breath will be a blessing, and every thought a sublime inspiration.

O men, be yourselves! Take your spiritual heritage. Awake! Be the god which you are in the core of the core of your being. Ye are gods. Try to realize it!

**No. 35 (May 27, 1930)**

**QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK**

(Lecture delivered February 16, 1930)

I am happy to be here this afternoon. I did not expect to be able to be here, and I had provided three most excellent speakers to carry you in thought into some of the beautiful realms of theosophical consciousness; but then I was told that the day was beautiful, and that the Temple would be filled with visitors; and I said to myself: These kind hearts, these friends, who have come from afar to hear what the theosophical Leader has to say, ought to hear him. So, despite my cold, which has nearly deprived me of a voice to speak to you with, I came.

As usual, I am going to answer questions this afternoon. I have been answering questions for almost a year, and as I said once before, I am beginning to feel as if I were a perambulating encyclopedia. I am asked questions on all kinds of subjects: from the best way to obtain a wife or a husband, or from how to grow rich very quickly, up to what is the best way in which to reach spiritual illumination.

It is the latter kind of questions that I prefer. I do not want to tell some other unfortunate man or woman how he or she should choose a partner in life; or perhaps give you counsel which in itself might be excellent, but if followed by someone with whom it did not originate, might lead him to the penitentiary — not, I mean, that in telling you how to grow rich quickly, you will become a criminal. No. I do not mean that; but I do not think that any human being is so godlike in the present age that he can safely be told certain esoteric and secret mysteries regarding recondite forces of nature.

But I do want to tell you, and I am here to deliver this message to you, you who you are, what you are, what you have within you, to tell you something of the splendid powers and faculties as yet undeveloped in the average human being: delivering to you the message of the ages, which is older than thinking man, because it is rooted in the very operations and truths of the universe; operations and truths which have been seen by great seers, known by great sages, who have sent the spirit of themselves behind the veil of the outward seeming into the abysses of Mother Nature, and have brought back from behind the veils of material substance, and from that inner supernal light, the messages of truth, and have formulated these in human tongues. That is theosophy.

I want to tell you that each one of you is an incarnate god feebly expressing its transcendent powers at the present time through the enshrouding veils of the lower self, which is the human soul and the gross physical body which hems this glory in. I want to tell you the same sublime message that all the great seers and sages of the ages have taught to men. It is my message because it is common truth. And when you understand it, it will become of right, *de facto*, your message; and it will be incumbent upon you as normal human beings to pass on the glad tidings. Tell others, then, what you have experienced and what has come to you. Give them then the light that you have received; give them the hope, the encouragement, the illumination that you have. Tell your fellowmen what they have within themselves, what they are.

"Ye are gods," says the Christian Scripture, re-echoing the wisdom-religion of the ancients; and it is true. Each one of you is an incarnate deity, a living god; and from this source it is that spring forth and flow through your brain-mind as best they can — stepped down, so to say, on to our gross physical plane — all

the messages that make men great, that make the great man, the greater man, and the still greater man. All the inspirations of genius, all the great thoughts which have made and unmade civilizations (provided they be great thoughts) — all the wonderful messages that have been delivered by the great ones of the earth to their fellow human beings — all these come forth from within.

The first step is to recognize the truth and to believe it. The battle of union, towards union, for union, with your own inner god is more than half won when you recognize the truth. And oh, how splendid is the pathway seen after that! How glorious is it! Leading ever more inwards and inwards, which is the same as saying upwards and upwards, ever higher and higher, till you become at one with your own kin — the gods — who are the governors and rulers of the universe, and of whom you are the children — O degenerate children, feeble expressions as yet of your divine ancestry, but still showing it in divine faculties within you, in the love in your hearts, in the compassion which moves your souls, in the divine feeling of pity. Think!

Every man, I tell you, is in the core of his being an immanent Christ, a living god; or, if you like to change the figure of speech, he is an awakened Buddha within.

Or, do you prefer the other theory, now in abandonment, believed in no longer except by the few die-hards, that you are nothing but a more or less evolved ape — a theory of which there is no proof whatsoever — and that the ape in its turn is nothing but an aggregate of physical atoms, moved by chemical energy, as they call it. Words! Theories!

What we do know is that man is and has these divine faculties within him, and expresses them. These things we do know. Theosophists are evolutionists through and through and through

and through, but we are not Darwinists. We believe that progress is endless, that we go continuously on forever, from worse to better, from better to better, from better to still better. However, there is never a best and thereafter an ending.

I want these thoughts to sink into your minds. They are not mine. They are not invented. They are truth: the same old wisdom-truths, coming only the immortal gods know from what distant epoch in the past when spiritual beings walked among men and taught them, a fact which all the scriptures and great philosophies of the world allude to when they speak of the gods having lived among men and walked with them and taught them.

So you see, knowing this path within, this divine path of union with your inner selfhood, with the Christ-spirit within you, with the Buddha within as the Oriental would say, you have a true key to the mysteries of your being, and can open doors within you and see the vision beautiful on the mountaintops of the Mystic East; and seeing this vision beautiful, you can translate it into words for the benefit of your fellowmen who have not received these primal truths; or, having received them, who did not understand them.

You can go into yourselves, O friends — you can go into yourself, O friend — and know ever greater truths progressively in proportion as you penetrate more and more and more inwardly, approaching always this divine source. And why can you do this? Because this god within you is rooted in the universe of which it is an inseparable portion. It is a spark of the cosmic Fire. It is fire of the fire of the universe, blood of its blood, flesh of its flesh, bone of its bone, life of its life, individuality of its individuality — using these human terms merely in order to get the thought into your minds; and therefore in proportion as you evolve and enter inwards into the recesses and arcana of your own being, you can

self-consciously gain in ever greater degree this union and sense of oneness with the entire universe.

Do you see the thought? Therefore have all the ancient sages and oracles taught man: Know thyself, thy spiritual self, for in knowing yourself you can know, and will know, the universe.

I tell you that the greatest difficulty a theosophical teacher has is in breaking the crystallized molds of mind, the prejudices, and the unwillingness to hear sympathetically. All truths seeming new have met with the same cold shoulder, instead of the hand of welcome. It has been the same with theosophy during the past thirty or forty years; but now, in our days, after nigh upon fifty years of lecturing and book writing, and giving up our lives to this wondrous philosophy, theosophy is coming into its own. Our Society is now growing rapidly, and its influence, in teaching and in thought, is spreading all over the world. Such ideas as our Theosophical doctrine of karma — the doctrine that ye reap what ye sow — and such theosophical doctrines as reincarnation, are becoming common talk among thinking people today. Even the movies use them as themes for their dramas. Books, romances, are written around and about these theosophical teachings, and karma and reincarnation are but two of our theosophical doctrines, although two important keys of thought.

During the course of my lectures I have received many interesting questions. I try to answer them all, and injustice to those who send these questions to me, I will say that I have not yet received one frivolous communication. Here is the first question that I will answer this afternoon. It is one that I received on last Sunday, I think, but did not have time to answer it then.

"Is hypnotism, even when used for ostensibly good purposes, a dangerous practice? For instance, when quite a young child, I suffered from an acute physical difficulty until I was



apparently cured of it by a form of hypnotism. The difficulty did not recur until after I was twenty; but I have always felt that this use of hypnotism in my case had a deleterious effect, in that it prevented me from being able to use my willpower when I wished to do so and felt that I ought to do so."

Most certainly do I believe that psychologization, which is commonly called hypnotism, is a very dangerous power indeed. It is a power. The misuse of any power is an evil thing, and any man or woman who uses a power which he or she does not understand, is misusing that power, running risks, doing a thing which may readily eventuate in evil; and no hypnotist, to use the popular word today, knows anything certain and real of the nature of the very dangerous and subtle force which he blindly tries to use, and does use to a certain limited extent.

The danger in hypnotism is this: it is an outside control of the intermediate nature of the constitution of the human being — of what is commonly called his mind and emotional part. Do you like that idea of someone controlling you? I do not. It is not the way in which to grow naturally. It is utterly immaterial that the hypnotist may have a good motive; utterly immaterial that his intentions may be altruistic; quite beside the mark that his wish may be to do good. That condition betters the situation, but the situation itself is bad. The so-called hypnotist puts his own will, his own thought, his own mental energy, into the psychological economy or apparatus of some other human being; and how does that really help that other human being? The victim's own inner economy, inner apparatus, is shoved aside to the extent that the power works. Are you going to lean all your life, have someone carry you all your life?

Remember, man is a composite being. To use the old Christian trichotomy — that is, a division into three parts — he is said to be

composed of a spirit, a soul, and a body. Theosophists use the same division for convenience, but we have a far more scientific way of dividing the inner constitution of the human being; but at any rate, the soul here spoken of is the intermediate part of man's constitution which I have already mentioned. This intermediate part is the human soul: the average man whom you meet, that part of him which is between the ordinary physical body and the god within.

Suggestion is one of the forms of psychologization. You can suggest a man into doing almost anything. You can get control of his will; you can send him to sleep, send his body to sleep, as well as his mind; and this latter state is hypnotism, properly speaking, and it is not nearly as dangerous as gaining control of the man's will, of his mentality, of his emotional nature. When you do this, you change the action of that intermediate nature of the human constitution, because actually you have introduced a new current, a new impulse, a new motive, a new energy, into that intermediate nature of the human being upon whom you are operating, and you can apparently dam back, perhaps even apparently cure, disease. But you do so at great risk. You are doing that human being a great moral and psychological injury. He is thus prevented from himself working out his destiny, prevented from using the splendid powers of his own will, prevented from using his own inner spiritual and mental energies.

Jesus did not work in that way; the Buddha did not work in that way. No great sage or seer ever has acted in that way. I tell you again that it is a very dangerous thing to do. You are not helping the individual at all. The time will come, in this or in a later life, when that human being, weakened as he has become by your operating upon him, will be in a worse fix than he is at the present time. Remember the doctrine of karma: what ye are now,

we have sown for yourselves in the fabric of your character in the past, and therefore you are today reaping what you then cast into your character as seeds. As ye sow, ye shall reap. Then, when the psychologizer dies, do you know what happens to the unfortunate victim? He is worse than ever before.

Fortunately, the psychologizers, those who use psychologization, the so-called hypnotists, have very little real power. This is a fortunate thing. Consequently the damage that they do to their fellowmen is much less than it might be. But I would as lief go to the top of a high cliff and dash my body to the rocks below, as ever to think of passing over the control of my soul to some other human being. I am a man, and I must live a man's life. It is my duty so to do. I consider it a moral crime to psychologize another human being, even with his consent. The consent in this case means really nothing at all, because human beings today know scarcely anything of what psychologization or so-called hypnotism is. The consent therefore is consent given in utter ignorance of the facts.

You will find hospitals employing professional hypnotists, not only for the purpose, apparently, of quieting patients, but also, it would seem, for rendering them insensible to both major and minor operations. While the motive here is good, and the results as a rule are less evil than they would be in the cases of indiscriminate meddling, nevertheless, the principle is the same.

Read our theosophical books; you will get the whole theory of the matter that we are discussing laid before you. Psychologization is radically wrong. The truth is that people as a general rule are afraid of suffering and reaping the consequences of their own acts, reaping what they themselves have sown in the past, and they think that in psychological phenomena, such as hypnotism so called, they can avoid going through the karmic or

consequential results of their own former actions; but it is foolish, because nature herself one day will take account even of this attempt to escape the just consequences of one's own former actions, and the results will be worse than what may be in the present a deplorable condition of body and mind.

Psychologization or hypnotism was not in the teaching of Jesus, nor in that of any other great seer and sage. Theosophy teaches us that as we sow, we shall reap; and these indeed are the words of Jesus. Therefore, be careful what you sow, for nature is not mocked. You will be called to account for everything that you do and think and feel, because each thought is a seed sown in your character, and it will bear its fruit when the time comes for it to bring that fruit forth. You will be the sufferer as well as those who are linked with you in destiny.

The next question before me is as follows:

"Does the fall of the personal mark the ascent of the spiritual?"

I think that this is quite a common idea; but I don't think that it is true, unless perhaps it may be said to be true in a very general way of speaking. It is our Theosophical teaching that every part of the human economy is useful if devoted to its proper purposes, and in its proper sphere. It is not part of our teaching that certain portions of the human constitution should be killed. Not at all.

Nature knows better than that. Nature is wiser than that. It is not the fall of the personal which frees the spiritual man; it is the raising of the personal into becoming spiritual, which is the work of evolution — what the Christians do not understand but have in the back of their minds when they refer to the sublime teaching of their Master, Jesus, in speaking of salvation — which is not a killing or a falling down of a part of you, but is a raising or salvaging of your lower portions to nobler and superior uses.

You have will; you have intelligence; you know what the teachings of the Law are. The great sages and seers of the ages have told you these teachings: raise the personal, so that it shall become a fit vehicle, a clean and pure channel for passing into the human consciousness the rays of glory streaming from the god within, these rays of glory being rays of consciousness of the spirit, of the spiritual or divine consciousness.

What we are trying to do is the same thing that natural evolution in its slow age-long process is trying to accomplish — to raise the lower up to become higher — not to kill it, not to down it; and when the personal shall have become transfigured, when the personal shall be able to manifest more or less fully the sublime inflow from the god within you, your own inner, spiritual-divine splendor, then you will have men walking the earth like gods, thinking like gods, acting like gods, behaving like gods. Ye are gods in very truth!

Do you understand the idea? It is as simple as it can be. It is a teaching of all the great religions, of all the great philosophies. As Jesus himself said: "Greater things than I do shall ye do." Jesus, called the Christos, never claimed anything for himself which he did not promise to his fellow men, and he taught the same theosophical message that we teach today, but conveyed in the phrases of the period, in words fit for and appropriate to the men to whom he was speaking.

You know what evolution is, I presume, according to our theosophical teachings. when I use the I have frequently said that theosophists are evolutionists through and through and through. Theosophists mean by evolution the bringing forth of what the evolving entity is in its inner parts. As the acorn brings forth the oak, as the apple-seed brings forth the apple-tree — not a thistle or a fig or something different from its own life-stream — so do

all entities, animate or so-called inanimate, during the course of the ages, evolve what is lying latent within them.

Evolution, therefore, with theosophists means the unwrapping, the unrolling, the unfolding, the bringing forth, of what is inwrapped, inrolled, infolded, within — in the core of the evolving entity; and this after all is but another way of saying growth, for evolution and growth are fundamentally the same thing.

A microscopic seed becomes, in right circumstances, a little child; and the little child grows, evolves — for growth and evolution are the same — into a six-foot man, expressing in his daily life, in his efforts, in his thoughts, in his actions — good or bad — what is within, therefore expressing his character. That is evolution.

It is the same rule and procedure in the small — that is, in an ordinary human life, in one human life — as it is in the great, that is, in the evolution of a sun, of a planet, of a human race, of whatnot. Everything that is grows, advances, develops, progresses, and can bring out nothing, can be nothing, except what is within itself, in germ, in the beginning; and later this germ expresses itself as faculty and power in an increase of consciousness, in an increase of vision, in an increase in intelligence: in a higher development, in other words, of the inner, real man. That is evolution.

Here is an odd question: I wonder how you would answer it.

"Every one can master a grief but he that hath it.

(SHAKESPEARE: *Much Ado About Nothing*, Act III, Scene ii)

"Was Shakespeare right?"

Well, it depends upon how you construe the statement: "Every one can master a grief but he that hath the grief." I think that

Shakespeare was right in one sense; but if you interpret this saying of Shakespeare's literally, implying that a man who grieves is such a weakling that he cannot master his grief, then I will say I do not agree with you. I will say that if Shakespeare meant that, he was a fool. But I don't think that Shakespeare was so foolish as to imply a meaning of that kind. The great English poet's remark is simply a statement of a common fact, that those who have no grief find it easier to master it than the sufferer, with the further implication that we are all prone to give advice to other people who are in distress.

Everybody is very willing indeed to give advice to another who has a grief. Of course, he who grieves feels that he does not need advice so much as a little kindly sympathy and a helping hand. Nevertheless, he most certainly can master his grief, if he will; and just here we may see one difference between the real man, the man who is beginning to feel within his own inner consciousness the working of the god within him, of the immanent Christ, of the glorious Buddha, and the man, on the other hand, who yields weakly to his sorrow, perhaps without even a struggle to overcome it. Is this last case admirable? Of course not.

Furthermore, let me tell you a little secret. I have found that every time I exercise my inner faculties and powers and my will, I grow, I gain. What an expansion of consciousness I have gained, even in this present life, simply by mastering passions, overcoming emotions, and asserting my manhood over those things that otherwise would have mastered me. This really is one of the easiest things in the world to do, once that you have the will to do it; and the results are wonderful, truly wonderful.

"It is written: We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars. Are the stars in any way perturbed by our

fractional scrutiny?"

Answering this question, it is exceedingly easy to answer with one word: No. But even from the scientific standpoint, I believe that in so answering you would not be stating a fact. The truth is that since nature is one vast organism, everything is connected with everything else; therefore you cannot breathe, you cannot think, without setting in motion energies, forces, which ultimately will reach to the very uttermost limits of our home-universe, and pass beyond those limits to the frontiers of other universes.

Therefore, even a thought about a star touches it in due course of time, with infinitesimal effect, to be sure; but nevertheless this fact instances a wonderful truth. Furthermore it is a truth which makes one reflect.

Yes, the stars are perturbed even by your thought; and for you who think that a star is naught but a mass of blazing gas, even to you, I tell this same fact, for it is even the dictum of our ultramodern science. But to you whose inner vision is more opened and who realize that the glorious luminaries scattered over the blue vault of night are but the physical garments of an inner and brilliant flame of consciousness, manifesting as the splendor of these cosmic suns, even as your consciousness manifests through you as human beings — to you who are thus beginning to be seers, I will tell you that your thought reaches the suns, the stars, and also that each one of you is a child of a sun, therefore an atom of spiritual energy; and what father does not know his child, and respond to its feeble cry?

Ask, and it shall be given unto you. Knock, and it shall be opened unto you. I mean this. If you believe, any one of you, that there is something more in the universe than appears in the outward seeming, and if anything that you have heard in this our Temple of Peace this afternoon gives you an idea that you can gain light,



then I say to you: Come, knock, and it shall be opened unto you. This is a promise.

Here is an interesting question:

"In your Sunday afternoon answers to *Questions We All Ask*, I have gleaned the impression that the theosophical interpretation of Christ's teachings ennobles them, and perhaps returns to them more of their original splendor than is to be found in some of the Christian churches. Would you, please, state clearly the theosophical view concerning Christ in comparison with the conception that is known as Christian?"

Gladly, as far as I may do so in the short time that I have to speak to you here this afternoon; and I regret that I have to touch upon this question so briefly, because it is one which must interest all people of the Occident. You have been brought up, most of you presumably, in one of the churches of Christendom, and know something of what Christian theology has taught, and of what the Christian professors teach today. In this connection I must be truthful with you in answering this question. I must tell you that I am not a Christian. It is only fair that I should state this. I cannot be one, because I have received the grander light; but nevertheless I have many, many good friends in the Christian churches, and for an earnest Christian I have true respect.

My father was a clergyman of the Christian church; he was a devoted man, a very earnest, sincere, and as he expressed it, speaking of his fellow clergymen, he was a pious man; he was a good man. But perhaps because of the fact that I am not a Christian, I can tell you the unbiased truth about Christianity as far as I know it, because my mind is not colored or swayed by any sectarian prejudices.

You know, of course, what the Christian view of Jesus, later called

the Christ, has been, and you know perhaps to what that view later changed; and also what it is in our own time. At any rate, I suppose that you do know something of the modern view of Christ. I do not know it fully at all, because the Christian conception of Jesus, called the Christ, has been changing so rapidly within the last few tens of years that I do not know just where to find a definition of that view that would satisfy everybody.

The theosophist has a deep reverence for Jesus called the Christ. You will never hear a true Theosophist speak of that grand and sublime character in any other terms than in words of reverence and of profound respect; and the reason is that we know who he was, and what he was. He was the incarnation of *a* divinity — I repeat it: the incarnation of *a* divinity — and was simply one in a long list of outstanding spiritual great ones, the fine flowers of the human race, who have lived and have taught their fellow men, and have ennobled their fellow men; have given hope to millions and millions; have inspired great and noble deeds; and, alas, in each and every case, their character and nature have suffered degradation from a misunderstanding of them by later generations of men.

Just because the theosophist knows who Jesus was, knows why he was called Christ, do we revere that glorious figure of story. However, we say that he was not the sole, the only, Son of God, and this he never claimed for himself. "Ye are gods," was his word to his fellow men, and also did he say: 'Greater things than I do shall ye do.'

And when you remember what I told you in the earlier part of our study together here this afternoon, that each human being is the manifestation in human flesh of a living god, that each human being is an incarnate divinity, with unknown and unsuspected

splendid faculties and powers which evolution in time will bring forth into manifestation — when you remember this, you will understand why theosophists speak of Jesus the Christ as one of the elder brothers of mankind, because he was more advanced along the evolutionary pathway than ordinary human beings are. So was Gautama the Buddha; so were many other great men — all of them splendid characters in human history. Oh, how many have there been! And you, each one of you, can be the same, because each one of you in time, if you make the grade, will develop forth the Christlike powers latent in your nature, and when this is accomplished, then you too will be Christs walking the earth.

Jesus the Christ was merely a forerunner of what each human being in the future is destined to be. So was the Buddha; so was Lao-tse; so were Sankaracharya and Krishna, both of India; so in smaller degree but yet in high degree, were Orpheus, Musaeus, Olen, Pythagoras, Apollonius of Tyana, and many others.

The teachings ascribed to Jesus in the New Testament are not new. You won't find a single new thing in all the alleged teaching of Jesus: not one new thing; and in that lies the splendid proof in one sense of the mission of Jesus on earth. He taught the same old wisdom-doctrines that were given to the first human protoplasts aeons and aeons and aeons and aeons in the distant evolutionary past by the spiritual beings who descended among men and worked with them and guided them and taught them. And the man is either degenerate or willfully blind who, after studying the records of history, religious and philosophical, does not see the traces, the insignia, written across and through human life in spiritual flame, setting forth the ideals, the spirit, of what these great beings taught.

Jesus taught theosophy in a manner and in words appropriate to

the men of his era; and because what he taught is theosophical, therefore theosophists claim him as one of us. He was the Theosophical Teacher of the people to whom he came in his era, but a very great and noble one; for theosophical teachers vary among themselves, just as ordinary men do. There are the average teachers, then the greater, then the still greater, and finally the greatest, if you like to call them so; but their hierarchy does not stop there. Theosophists speak of Jesus as an avatara. Although the subject is a little difficult, I am going to devote a moment or two to this matter, because it is so important. An avatara is one — and the word is a Sanskrit word — who has a combination of three elements in his being: an inspiring divinity; a highly evolved intermediate nature or soul, the channel of that inspiring divinity; and a very pure, clean physical body.

The difference between an avatara and a sublimely perfected human being who expresses his own inner god is the following: an avatara is one whose intermediate nature has been loaned to him. This is a mystery! Theosophy explains it; and although my time this afternoon is too short to give you the full outline of the meaning of this mystery, nevertheless I cannot allow this matter to pass without giving you some inkling of the truth. I don't want you to go away today, and perhaps read at a later date, in some theosophical book some statement to the effect that I have just made, and then think: The theosophical speaker whom I heard when I was at Point Loma should have told me this — at least he should have alluded to it.

An avatara, then, is the manifestation of this inspiring divinity, through and by means of some great and sublime human being who is the channel for manifesting some of the powers and faculties of this inspiring divinity. On the other hand, in cases where a man's own inner god shines down through his own intermediate nature and he thus manifests the faculties of his

own inner god, then he is a human god walking on earth; and such a being we call a Buddha. A Buddha is one who has reached this stage of quasi-divinity in human expression through self-devised efforts lasting through many ages towards union with one's own inner god.

There, then, is the difference between these two classes of great human spiritual luminaries. The One, the avatara, is a sublime natural mystery — not a mystery in the sense of inability to understand it, but a mystery in the sense that the average man has never heard the explanation; while a Buddha is one who has attained the lofty spiritual stature of buddhahood through self-devised efforts lasting through many lives, and thus, in one sense, is really — if the phrase can be used — superior even to an avatara.

Returning, then, to the question, before closing our lecture this afternoon: the theosophist looks upon Jesus the Christ as one of his own theosophical teachers of the past. The theosophist has reverence for him. The theosophist reveres the teachings of Jesus, because those teachings were a part of the theosophy of the age in which Jesus lived. They are the same old wisdom-religion, but not all of it, because the records of Jesus' teachings are still very few. We have only a bare remnant of what Jesus taught, and even according to the New Testament, that is to say, in the Christian records themselves, we note that Jesus taught his disciples in private, but to the public he spoke in figures of speech, in parables.

Never think, then, that theosophy is unsympathetic towards Jesus, or to the teachings of Jesus. Not at all. The contrary is the case. But I personally am not a Christian. For Jesus, my heart is as full of reverence for that sublime being as the most fervently convinced Christian's is; nevertheless I am not a Christian, I have received a

still greater light. This greater light has taught me to understand the hearts of my fellows; and I shall be happy, when my time comes to pass on, if I can have won happiness and peace for at least some few thousands of Christians now torn with doubt, whose hearts bleed with the agony of mental indecision. I long to give to them light, to give to them peace, to give to them hope; and therefore I say to them: Go to the records of your own religion, to the original records, if you can find them. Study them with the keys that theosophy gives to you; keep your own religion if you wish, revere your own Jesus Christ; but go to the roots of the religion that you follow. Be, if you like, a Christian theosophist. We have such in our Society, even as we have Buddhist theosophists, and Brahmanist theosophists, and theosophists of other kinds.

So far my success has not been very great. The hand of welcome extended to me in my mission of love has not been cordial; but love, almighty love, which is the cement of the universe, flows in every human heart, and it is to that love that I am going to appeal. Love works magic and wonders. It penetrates all barriers and subverts all opposition.

Love and I have formed a conspiracy. In the words of Edwin Markham, even if they treat me as they have treated my great predecessors — as an outcast — and flout me and the message that I bring, even though they call me heretic, rebel, and what not, nevertheless listen: This is what love and I have determined to do:

He drew a circle that left me out — heretic, rebel — a thing to flout.

But Love and I had the wit to win — we drew a circle that took him in.

# Contents

**No. 36 (June 3, 1930)**

**QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK**

(Lecture delivered February 23, 1930)

I bring a message to you on every Sunday afternoon, a message of peace and of rest and of hope and of joy; a message which must appeal to the heart of every thinking human being, for it is in no wise based upon human dogmas nor upon the opinions of any sectarian body of thinkers, but represents the essentials of a great and splendorous system of truth translated into human language by the great seers and sages of the ages past. It deals with the most recondite mysteries of the universe, this message does. It deals with the why and the wherefore and the how of manifested being, and therefore also of men: why they are, and what they are, and why men are here; and it shows why some men almost resemble incarnate gods on earth, and why some other men play such antics, such pranks, on the stage of life, as suffices even to make the very angels weep.

Man is an inseparable part of the universe in which he lives. There is, between his roots and the roots of the universe, no separation whatsoever, no distance between them. The same universal life flows through all things that are. The same stream of consciousness which flows in the mighty whole and through the mighty whole of the universe, flows therefore through man, an inseparable portion of that universe. This means, of course, if you think just for a moment, that there is a pathway by which, or along which, in treading which, you may come into intimate relation with the heart of the universe itself; and that pathway is you, your own inner being, your own inner nature, your spiritual self. Not the self of ordinary physical man, which self is just a



poor reflection of the spiritual brilliance within, but that inner self of pure consciousness, pure love for all that is, unstained by any earthly taint — your spiritual being.

For the inmost of the inmost of you is a god, a living divinity; and from this divine source there flow downwards into your human mentality all the things that make men great, all the things that give rise to love and mighty hope and inspiration and aspiration, and noblest of all, self-sacrifice. For all things are rooted in the divine, in the universal life-consciousness or consciousness-life. You, each one of you men and women, is an incarnation of a divinity, each one being the representation on earth of his own inner god — not that you are gods, which is an absurdity, but you represent on our own physical sphere as much of the divine essence streaming through your being as your evolution permits you to manifest.

That is why we have great men among us, men not only of the present, and the great ones of the past, but also they who will appear in the future: the great seers and sages, the great philosophers, the great leaders of men, the great thinkers, those who have swayed the hearts of multitudes, and have captured their minds with the majesty and splendor of true thought. All comes from within, and each one of you is, therefore, an imperfect incarnation of such a spiritual-divine being, or divine-spiritual being, which is your own inner god.

Go through the streets of our great cities, examine the men and women whom you will see, and, do you know, there are times — and I say this in all kindness — when I feel that the Darwinists have some justification on the surface of things for their otherwise wholly mistaken theory, because, alas, too many human faces express ape-attributes and monkey-thoughts, rather than the grandeur of true spiritual humanity.

Nevertheless, there is not one drop of ape or simian blood in human veins. No ape ever was the ancestor of our noble race, of our humanity. Human beings are the only race of entities on the earth which thinks high and noble thoughts, which aspires towards divine things, which gives birth to world-stirring ideas, and which understands what almighty love, compassion, pity, self-forgetfulness, and self-sacrifice are. These are all inflowings from the god within, the god within each one of you.

I spoke in similar vein a week or two ago, and a very kindly and faithfully truthful little report appeared next morning in one of our San Diego papers, *The San Diego Union*. Some kind friend saw this report of what I had said, clipped it out, and sent it in to me, with the note that I shall now read to you. The report was headed "Every Person is Incarnate God, Claim" — American journalese style. Here is the comment:

Yes, "every person is an incarnate God." Should any one doubt it, he has but to peruse the pages of history, particularly of the years 1914 to 1918, and recall the tragic record of slaughter and carnage: of the broken bodies of survivors; of millions of widows and orphans; of the slavery of those upon whose bent shoulders the financial burden of war falls — and unhesitatingly indorse the statement that "men are incarnate gods." But we have strayed so far from the godhead that we are a rather bedraggled, hopeless, pathetic-looking coterie of gods.

"Let us seek out some desolate shade and there weep our sad bosoms empty."

Even birds, beasts, and fishes, hurry away, terror- if not horror-stricken at our approach. *They know!*

Yes, alas, they do know! Men know it too; for I tell you in all

truthfulness that no beast can be so beastly as a human being who prostitutes the divinity within him to ignoble, material uses; for in so doing he uses his innate godlike intelligence, his innate willpower, his discrimination and insight. Yes, men are a poor manifestation of incarnate gods, because men are fallen gods, fallen from their high estate. Nevertheless, they are manifestations of incarnate divinities — using the word *incarnate* here in a relative sense of course.

All that this kind-hearted friend, whose heart bleeds with the truth of what he so tragically writes — all that he says is true. Take it to heart; realize facts, and do not let your minds be swayed by propaganda of any kind. Hold fast to the truth. Test that which is good; give up never that which appeals to the soul of you; and even though your judgment may at times be at fault, even though your mind may be swayed at times by prejudices unknown to yourself, nevertheless this exercise of willing discrimination gives you strength, for it exercises the faculties and powers of your mind.

What this kind-hearted friend says is true, but it is not a real argument against the other truth. In fact it proves the other truth, for no inferior thing could do what man does. It is man's willful and willing prostitution of his divine gifts which produces the horrors of the world. Imperfectly manifesting gods misusing powers — that is the truth of it; and sometimes so that the very beasts are afraid of us, hurry away from us in terror. What a commentary on us humans!

Men spend their time on things of small importance — all except the enlightened few; and they, the very salt of the earth, spend their time in raising the spiritual and intellectual level of the race. These last are the leaders of men, the true leaders; they are the ones who manifest the innate powers of the indwelling divinity.

I now take up the first question of those that I have before me: I might say here that I try to answer these questions in the order in which I receive them, and I make a rule of doing so; but occasionally a question comes in with an urgent mark on it, asking me to answer it surely on next Sunday afternoon, possibly on account of some friend who is going to New York or to San Francisco, or for some other good reason; and I try to acquiesce in such a request. Here are two such questions — two questions with the same urgent request. The first one is:

"Does the karmic law operate on the spiritual plane?"

I take it for granted that most of you know this theosophical phrase "the karmic law," the law of karma, the law of consequences, that is, the law of cause and effect: that what ye sow ye shall reap inevitably, that what ye think ye become; that what ye strive for and long for, ye shall obtain sooner or later; that if ye sow tares, tares ye will reap; for such is nature's inevitable process.

Here is the question: I will read it again:

"Does the karmic law operate on the spiritual plane?"

If the question is asked from the standpoint of the human being, then the answer is No. If the question is asked from the standpoint of universal being, then the answer is Yes. Karma exists; the law of adjustment, the law of consequences, the rule that effect follows cause, prevails inevitably throughout the boundless universe, and on all planes, high and low, within and without.

But so far as any one hierarchy on the ladder of life is concerned — that is, any one range of life, from the spiritual to the material — then the answer is No, for this reason: What we call human karma is karma or consequences or effects brought about by our

ignorance, our ignorance of natural law, our ignorance of our own being. Once you learn, once you have truth, once you allow truth to flow through your being, then you act in accordance with natural truth; you act with the law of nature; you act in accordance with nature's processes; you then are a collaborator and co-operator with the gods who oversee and control the universe. And being such a collaborator and cooperator, all the seeds that ye sow in thought and in action are in accordance with nature's law, and ye then reap spiritual things; ye reap peace and happiness, because ye have sown them; and peace and happiness are the very nature of the spiritual world. Consequently, being identic with nature, you do not destroy the equilibrium of the sphere in which you then are; and we can say that you have risen above the karma of your sphere.

This is a technical theosophical question. In the philosophies of the far Orient, you will sometimes find it stated: When a man reaches spiritual perception and wisdom, he rises above the action of the karmic law; he rises above, in other words, the action of the laws of natural equilibrium or readjustment, acting for the restoration of harmony in nature, which evil acts interrupt and change.

Such is the explanation of the former part of the question to which I have just alluded. When you act in accordance with your spiritual being, with the laws of your spiritual being, then you act in accordance with the source of the harmony of the spheres to which you belong; and karma ceases to operate against you.

Nevertheless, while this is a fact, there is a higher kind of karma which operates or belongs to even the divine planes of life, the planes where the gods are and live; and thus even they have karma, according to and appropriate to their own spheres, acting and reacting according to their lives and acts. They, too,

therefore, reap consequences in accordance with this higher karma.

Therefore I say again: In the general sense, in the cosmic sense, in the universal meaning, the answer is: Yes. The law of karma in this general sense operates everywhere.

The second question is:

"What relation exists between karma and the law of compassion?"

This is a new one to me. I have never heard of a law of compassion, except as a metaphorical expression. Compassion is not a law. Compassion is the very nature and fabric of the structure of the universe itself, the characteristic of its being, for compassion means "feeling with," and the universe is an organism, a vast and mighty organism, an organism without bounds, which might otherwise be called universal life-consciousness. Its very nature, the very structure of it, is that every part feels what every other part undergoes; and this, in its higher reaches and when expressing itself in human hearts, men call compassion. You can speak of the law of compassion only in the same sense in which you may speak of the law of squares.

Now, what relation is there between that operation of nature which men call karma — the adjustment of broken equilibrium, the repaying what you have done — and the 'law' so called of compassion: that operation of nature's own heart, which is compassion, its intrinsic quality? My answer is that the twain are one: two sides of the same thing. Karma is rooted in harmony. Compassion is rooted in love. And harmony and love are fundamentally the same.

If your hearts have ever been swayed by the workings of almighty love, your hearts will interpret to you all I could say, and

a thousand times better than I could say it, for the messages will come to you from the inner fora of your own being as the whisperings of the spirit within you, the whisperings of the love at the core of your being.

I will leave the matter here. Just take the thought. Words fail in attempting to describe so sublime a thing; and therefore let the voice of the silence steal into your heart with its own answer to this question.

The next question is:

"To what do you ascribe the present trend of college students towards materialism? Is it a revolt against rapidly decaying dogmas? How long will that trend last?"

Why blame everything on the poor old churches? They have enough to carry as it is. Make their burden a little lighter whenever you can. No! I don't think that the past trend of college students towards materialistic thought was based upon the influence of decaying dogmas, but upon scientific dogmas which have already been forgotten — forgotten, discarded! — the ideas of our fathers once preached as gospels of natural truth by the scientific luminaries of our fathers' days — forgotten, but the influence of which yet remains in the textbooks — those teachings which set forth that man is nothing but an animated machine at best, a higher kind of beast — an echo of those days when the very thought that there lived within the heart of man, or within his mind, some surviving entity was taboo and was taken to be a mark of superstition. Those were the days when any philosophy of idealism was considered to be the mark of a feeble mind. Oh, what insane folly! What insane folly!

Today we have ultramodern scientists, the greatest among them, teaching idealism in order to explain the very fabric even of the

material universe. The old Darwinistic theories have gone; but the echoes of them still are in the textbooks. That is where the present materialistic trend of the students in our universities originated, and it was suggested by those old scientific books, those old scientific, dogmatic fads. I am speaking strong language, because I know what I am talking about. I have looked into the question, and have studied it. I challenge you to look into the question and see if I am not telling you the truth.

When our modern scientific luminaries talk about the fabric of the universe as being a fabric of consciousness, thereby echoing the teachings of the age-old wisdom-religion, today called theosophy, and the idealistic philosophies of all times, you see how the thoughts of men have changed and how the scientific materialism of our fathers is dead.

"How long will the trend towards materialism of our students in the schools and universities last?" I don't exactly know; but I don't think that it will be for long. I see signs already of a new spirit: a new wine of the spirit, which is bursting by its natural ferment the old bottles of the textbooks into which they tried to put it; and in a little while these old bottles will be bursted; and then, if I am a good guesser, if I see aright, you will see this younger generation become a nation of idealists, become a people, a race, of idealists, teaching idealistic doctrines. May the immortal gods hasten the day!

I tell you that our Theosophical Society has not been working for more than half a century in vain; and I will tell you why I make this statement. Because ultramodern scientific luminaries are today teaching doctrines regarding the explanations of the universe and of man (in other words of course), nevertheless the doctrines, the essential philosophical points, that we have been proclaiming on the public platform and writing about in our



theosophical books since our Society was founded in 1875. Sometimes these great modern scientists use our very phrases.

Now, I do not say this out of theosophical pride. I do not wish to set our Theosophical teachers on pedestals, not at all. But I am telling you this in corroboration of other statements that I have made to you: that in the ancient wisdom of mankind today called theosophy, you will find a true explanation of the universe and of man. You will find truth.

Here is a question of somewhat the same type:

"Why does the average moving picture give beautifully false concepts of life? Is it because that is what its patrons want?"

It would be very easy to say Yes; but I don't think so. I do not think the cinematographic theater purveys, gives, to the public what the public wants. I think the people behind the movies have made and are still making a capital psychological mistake. The mere receipts in dollars is no proof, because in our days so hungry is the heart of man and so common is the belief that people cannot find truth that they will go anywhere in order to forget themselves, in order to forget their worries. They would go to the devil if they knew how, and sometimes they do!

Look at the beautiful things that real drama occasionally gives to the public, and in these cases you will find the theaters packed. Now, that is a proof of what I say! I verily believe that if the movies showed pictures in any wise like the beautiful pictures that they could show, the receipts at the ticket offices would be doubled, trebled perhaps. The movie houses would be packed, and packed with the best people. I verily believe it.

Anything will succeed in these days that will enable our poor men and women just to forget themselves, to forget their worries, and to forget their troubles: above everything else to forget

themselves. Is it not pitiful? Therefore I keep telling you, and I repeat it on every Sunday when I speak here: O men and women, if you knew what is within you! If you knew how (and it is so easy) to follow this pathway of consciousness inwards and ever more inwards — this pathway of consciousness leading to the very heart of the universe — you would realize that there are adventures, real adventures, grand, splendid adventures, of the pilgrims of truth, like nothing that has ever been given to you in fiction.

It is possible for a man to explore his own inner consciousness, to go within, to realize all that lies behind the outward veils, behind the outward seeming; to go within, which is the same as behind, these veils, and thus reach reality. One who knows how to do this can send his consciousness to other planets (and I mean this, literally); he can explore the abysses of our majestic solar orb; he can pass outward to the brilliant stars; and grander still, he can go into the invisible worlds, which are the roots of the physical universe; for the physical universe is but the outer garment of these inner and invisible realms.

He can go to these inner worlds, and become familiar and friendly with the hosts of living beings therein living on their own globes and orbs of life: the inhabitants of mansions of splendor, yea, and of other mansions which are more material than our own. He can pass inwards along the stream of consciousness flowing through him, which is he himself, until finally he can confabulate with the gods who are the governors and overseers of our own home-universe.

I mean this literally, and I know whereof I speak; and any other man or woman who is devoted to truth and wills to succeed at any cost, and who is ready to cast aside lower and more ignoble things, can experience this revelation too, if he or she will. I mean

exactly what I tell you, and I tell you truth; and as Leader of The Theosophical Society, I will tell you this much more: that if you want to begin the greatest adventure that life holds, which is the adventure of life and death — knowing the secrets of being — come, knock, and the doors of truth shall be opened unto you.

Here is another question:

"Please explain forgiveness as between man and man. In the application of forgiveness between one human and another, it appears difficult to keep it from becoming forbearance, or the condoning of the offense or weakness of another, or a cloak of humility — as for instance in family life where one member, from a sense of duty or habit allows himself to be imposed upon to an extreme degree, thinking that this is a part of the act of forgiveness. Often the result is a lowered morality of all parties. How can this be avoided?"

But this is not forgiveness at all. It is merely being weak. You do not forgive a man if you allow him to impose upon you. You become a party to the same moral crime, and you are thereby helping him on the downward path. This does not mean that you should be cruel in resentment, or that you should hate. Not at all. It merely means: do not permit wrong to be done to anyone else, nor to yourself, and prevent it, if necessary, with violence — not physical violence, but, to use the figure of the Christian scripture, that violence which taketh the portal of heaven by storm. It is the violence of a loving heart.

Love, love is a mighty force. There is no heart so stony, so adamant, that it will not give way ultimately under the influence of a steady flowing love directed by a wise intelligence. For love steals into the heart and mind, and works magic there. I had liefer suffer a thousand things, than give another pain. But it would be wrong in me to permit, tacitly, quietly, from a mistaken

sense of duty, another to do wrong if I could prevent it.

Forgiveness is something else than what the questioner supposes. You have been wronged, let us say. Which of twain will ye do: nourish resentment, cultivate hatred, abide the time when you may pay back in the same coin, thereby increasing the trouble and heart-agony of the world by double, by twice; or will you say: No, come to me. I myself have laid the way open for this, for I myself in the past have brought this pain upon me. I will forgive. Unhappy man who harms me! I will forgive him.

The idea I have in mind is true forgiveness, but it does not mean the allowing of a wrong to be done, either upon yourself or upon others. That should be stopped, for if you permit it, then there are two wrongdoers: the wrongdoer and you. You become accomplices and conspirators in evildoing. Check it. Check it with your own example; check it with your forgiveness; check it with your love; check it by refusing to be a participant. Set an example!

You little know human beings if any one of you, man or woman here, thinks that the rule won't work. Never mind the get-rich-quick spirit — supposing that you can change a man's heart overnight! That is a totally wrong idea, and it is a foregone conclusion that if you have it you will fail. That is not my idea. My idea is to forgive; to love.

And I tell you that it is part of my message to my fellowman, and will be as long as I am Leader of The Theosophical Society: to teach them to learn to forgive and to learn to love. Both are manly efforts. Both are high-spirited, and both require strength of character. Both require real manhood, real discrimination, and intellectual power.

Learn to love — but not sentimentally. Do not be mushy; but let your heart expand with the feeling of your common humanity,

and you will very soon understand the message of all the great seers and sages of the ages, such as that of Jesus, as he expressed it, addressing his own inner god — not an outer god — but his own inner spiritual being: Father — his own inner self — forgive them; they know not what they do!

I tell you that the evildoer does not know what he is doing. He is blind. He is weak. Therefore see and be strong. Learn the mighty, the magical, power of love, and of a forgiving heart. It is your duty as men to do this. It is your joy as women. Forgiveness is the refusing to bear resentment, to nourish a grudge, to cultivate hatred; and forgiveness means also to clean your own heart of these vile and degrading impulses. Be strong. Be men. If any one of you thinks that it is an easy task, then go to it. You will have your hands full; but, immortal gods! the rewards for doing it are wondrous beyond human speech to tell; for, among other things, you will gain peace, you will have happiness, you will have the sense of duty well done; and last but not least, you gain incomparably in self-respect. Your heart fills with the glory of almighty love, and thereby you become truly a man!

"Jeans the astronomer says if the universe could be explained to us accurately, it would be more incomprehensible to us than it is now, as though you explained the differential calculus to a hop-toad. — *The San Diego Union*, February 12, 1930

"Question: Are there any short cuts in the development of comprehension?"

Didn't I say a little something a few moments ago about the get-rich-quick spirit. Here it is again! Everybody wants a short cut and to be shown an easy way. But I can tell you that to know how to take short cuts is knowing something! Comprehension itself is a short cut. If you don't comprehend a thing, you have the long

road of learning about it.

But let me tell you what short cuts, so far as human consciousness is concerned, are: short cuts in consciousness are the things that you have gained, learned. Before you have gained them, you have to learn them. Once you have learned them, they become easy, automatic: short cuts, the easy way, in the real sense, in the best sense.

Nevertheless, despite what I have just said, there are in fact in evolution certain short cuts or quick methods of attaining proper results. It is possible to shorten the long, long time that the average human being takes in making the journey of evolution. This shortening of the time period occurs when a man is initiated; and I use the word in the old, mystical sense of the Greeks, of the Greek mysteries of antiquity.

Evolution, as theosophists teach it, and as it is in nature herself, evolution is the bringing out of what is within: the unrolling, the unwrapping, the unfolding, through development, through growth, of what the evolving entity has locked up in the core of its own being. How can it become anything except what it is within? Isn't it obvious? Now, evolution and growth are two words signifying the same thing.

There is a way to stimulate evolution, to stimulate growth, therefore a short cut to comprehension, to higher things. It is through initiation, and there are many kinds of initiation. Some are very difficult indeed, such as only the greatest and strongest men can take, for the road is thorny and beset with pitfalls, simply because we human beings are weak; we are growing; we are not yet fully developed; but there are other initiations which are much easier, and which nevertheless, while they do not produce the great fruits in the increase of consciousness, in the gaining of comprehension, that the great initiations do,

nevertheless are very helpful.

Shall I tell you what these easier initiations are? All the great seers and sages of the ages have told you one, and it is the best and it leads ultimately to the greatest of initiations. It is as follows: Look within! Man, know thyself, for thy self is a divine being, rooted in the universe of which the human being is an extension, so to speak. Therefore, by looking within, by following the roots of your own inner spiritual being ever more inwards and upwards, you come to understand naturally the mysteries of Mother Nature. It is a great and wonderful adventure. Every man is capable of doing this, and therefore you can do it. You can begin to do it. You can gain wonderfully just by cultivating a few simple rules of mental and practical conduct.

Be kindly; refuse to hate. Learn to love; learn to forgive. Let your heart expand. Be yourself, and expand your sympathies; touch with the tendrils of your consciousness the hearts of other human beings. Oh, what delight to feel, as it were, the inner and electrical quiver that your own soul experiences when you have touched the heart of a fellow human being! Practicing these rules of morals and of noble ethics, you begin a short cut to a comprehension of yourself, and ultimately you touch the mysteries of the universe. These words are solemn truth.

Now, I do not know that I believe that Dr. Jeans is right. It is easy enough to say that the mysteries of astronomy today are so great that to explain them to the average man would be like trying to explain the differential calculus to a hoptoad. I don't share the opinion. I know the human heart, and I tell you that I have found sometimes, in the most unpromising human material as it appears on the surface, great things, great possibilities. No one knows what is in the heart of a fellow human being until he searches therein.

Do you mean to say that the average man or woman cannot understand and feel that the universe is an organism? That it is filled with life, with bright and flaming intelligences which keep things in order? Do you mean to say that the average human being cannot understand that he is an inseparable part of the universe in which he lives, and that there is just one thing which he cannot do, and that is to go outside of it, for there is no outside? Do you mean to say that the average human being cannot understand that the nebulae in space are the beginnings of future worlds — in other words the manifestation on the physical plane of the striving towards self-expression of a re embodying cosmic entity? Of course he can. But some of these scientists are so mentally wrapped up in mathematical formulae that they think that mathematical formulae are the all, the be-all and the end-all, of truth.

Now, I am not denigrating or decrying the use of mathematics at all. Mathematics are one of the most valuable instruments of thought that we have. But they are an instrument. The way to understand things is in your consciousness, and every human being is conscious and can understand, by developing and striving to develop this consciousness in his heart. It is a most fascinating thing to do. It itself is a wonderful adventure.

A great mystery is a human being. There is infinity in his heart of hearts. Man is a child of eternity, and eternity is in the very structure of the consciousness of his being. Man is an incarnate god, albeit a fallen god, misusing his powers; nevertheless by that fact can he rise again, and will rise again; and every normal human being must know, if he studies himself, that in his consciousness there is a beaming light, a star of glory, and that he can follow this light to ever greater expansions of splendor, for the entire universe is his playground, is the stage of his adventure, which is cosmic life; and as a pilgrim passing from the



eternity of the past into the eternity of the future, he plays many parts on the stage of life. A quondam god; at the present time a man; in the future to be a self-conscious god walking this earth; and then manifesting in fullness, no longer as at present imperfectly, but then in fullness, the divine attributes of his own heart of hearts, the god within him.

Ye are gods. I say unto each one of you: Be it!

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[Vol 1, No 37](#)

[Contents](#)

No. 37 (June 10, 1930)

QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK

(Lecture delivered March 2, 1930)

It may interest you to know that in looking at a gathering of human beings like this, and in studying the faces, I never see the physical bodies really. The eye of course sees, but the mind comprehends something else, far more beautiful, even more beautiful than the handsomest man or the most beautiful woman here this afternoon — something splendid — for I tell you that it always seems to me, when I speak in our Temple to a public audience, that I am talking to an audience of gods. I sense the spirit in you. I sense the cosmic life. I see the flame of a burning, bright intelligence; and it is to this nobler thing within each one of you that I make my appeal here as a theosophical teacher on every Sunday afternoon.

My message is not one that is founded on anyone's say-so. It is not a message of a merely syncretistic system of thought — that is to say, a system put together by taking from the various great world religions and world philosophies certain beautiful portions and combining them together into one systematic whole, with more or less success. No!

But I always try to talk to you about *real things*, based on the operations and structures of the Universe, concerning which these various great world religions and world philosophies are merely formulations in human tongues, and formulated after the fashion of the founder of each one of these great systems of thought; but not one of which comprises as a whole the entirety of the archaic wisdom-religion of humanity, today called

theosophy.

Can you imagine a universe which is consistent throughout itself, an organic whole, which is enlivened with a burning intelligence and a vital flow which ceaseth not at all, nor ever; because the universe, as theosophists understand it, is without frontiers, boundless, without a beginning, and without an end; and furthermore, the physical universe that we sense around us is but the outer veil or garment or sheath, the reflection of the invisible worlds behind the scenes; because what men call physical laws — the laws of physical nature — are but the reflection, the copy in our physical world, of the willpower and of the vital essences of the spiritual beings who guide and control the universe, and who infill, fill full, these invisible realms behind the physical universe that we see.

Consequently, the universe being thus an organic whole, and strictly coordinated, can be interpreted. It is not a senseless and crazy dance of fortuitously driven atoms. The universe being thus subject to law and order, can be expressed in human formulation, so far as its structure and operations go, as a system of thought which human beings can understand.

Great intellects, titanic spiritual seers, have sent their consciousness behind the veils of the outward seeming, deep into the womb of invisible nature, and have brought back what they have seen, and have formulated their knowledge into a grand system of thought. This system of thought is what we today call theosophy. It is the mother of all the great religions and great philosophies of the past time, and will be so of them of the future, for this reason: that everyone of these other great systems of thought has been founded upon the teaching of some great spiritual seer and sage, who did precisely what I have just spoken of — sent his spirit behind the veil of the outward seeming, deep,

deep into the mystical arcana and abysses of the invisible worlds, and brought back and interpreted to his fellow men what he saw. Therefore were such men called seers.

There is a band, a company, a brotherhood, an association, of these great seers and sages living on the earth today. They are relatively perfected men, men who through evolutionary progress have reached a state of consciousness far beyond that of us ordinary human beings: they are living men who are the evolutionary fruitage of past ages of ceaseless striving towards a larger degree of perfection, and who have reached it.

We Theosophists call these great men the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion, also the Elder Brothers of the human race; and it is they who founded the Theosophical Society. They send forth at different times, as the centuries fly by and become engulfed in the ocean of the past, messengers from among themselves. Sometimes at very rare intervals one of themselves personally comes forth, and then you have the outstanding spiritual Titans of human history, like the great Buddha Gautama, like Sankaracharya, like Krishna, all of India; like Lao-tse of China; like Empedocles, Apollonius of Tyana, and many others of Greece; like Jesus the Syrian sage. The annals of history are full of the records of the work done by these great men.

Do you know why and how men can reach such a state of spiritual elevation? It is by becoming more fully what they are within themselves, by evolving forth what is within; for evolution is the bringing out, the unfolding, the unwrapping, what the evolving entity has in the core of its being. There can be no other evolution. A thing cannot become that which it is not in its inmost; nothing, no entity, can bring forth something which is not locked up within, lying latent, it may be, for the time being. Think! This is evolution as theosophists understand it, and we are

evolutionists through and through.

And what is this locked up splendor? It is the inner god within you, the immanent Christ, the Buddha. As the Orientals put the phrase: "The Buddha comes forth" or manifests himself. The name by which we call this inner splendor matters nothing at all. Seize the idea, because the idea is the important thing. It is an idea pregnant with wonderful thought, and it will give you keys to many sublime avenues of consciousness, have you the wit enough to seize it.

Every one of you human beings is an incarnate god, an incarnate divinity, locked up in flesh at the present time, and therefore but feebly expressing the divine powers within you. Every one of you, every normal human being, is such. Yes. And when evolution, which means unfoldment, interior growth, allows this body of flesh to manifest the transcendent powers of the god within, then you have your Christs, you have your Buddhas, you have the spiritual and intellectual titans of the human race.

This is one part of the message which I ring into your ears on Sunday after Sunday, because it contains the very essence of hope, of comfort, of consolation, and explains the cosmic powers that be. It keeps men morally straight, for men can forfeit what is rightly theirs by evil living — which means living contrary to the laws of nature. The rewards of success, which means merely obeying the laws of spiritual being, are wondrous. It is a pathway, this pathway of evolution, which is endless. Sons of the Sun as ye are, every one of you a manifestation of a divine spark, having your parent-star, every one of you can express these interior spiritual powers, if ye will.

"Greater things than I do," said Jesus, called the Christ, "shall ye do." And in the same Christian scriptures you will find the expression: "Ye are gods!" How true! Our theosophical doctrines

are true keys, explanations of so-called religious problems which, because men understood not the explanations of them, have drenched fields with blood and have given birth to enduring hatred and misunderstanding.

Theosophy is hermeneutic, as the old Greeks used to say — that is to say, it is the interpreter. Theosophy interprets the old religions and philosophies of the past, and shows that in the background of each one is the same identic message. It shows that the divine powers within men have been working from untold ages in the past. It shows men their divine origin, that they are incarnate gods, that all kinds of possibilities lie before the man or woman who seizes this truth and lives in accordance with it.

Not only does theosophy fill men's lives with hope, but death — that bogey which, out of ignorance, frightens men — loses all its terrors. You can march through life unafraid; you can face what men call death not merely with a smile, but with your heart singing a very paeon of victory.

Knowledge is a sacred thing; knowledge is not only power, it is more than power: it is a thing which belongs to the gods. But knowledge can be misused. Mark you: it is not the beasts who misuse their bodies, unless these beasts be spoiled by contact with man and feel the vibrations emanating from him, more or less touching and ruining their lives. The beast in the wilds lives a natural life; he abuses no powers.

It is men who abuse the faculties and energies and powers within them and who fill the earth with sadness and grief. And how unnecessary! How utterly wrong it is! Instead of cooperation and helping each other, they fight each other and strive, the one against the other. If the Theosophical Movement with its grand teachings, with its sublime doctrines, does nothing else except to do a little towards changing men's hearts, it will have achieved a

mighty success.

This question of death: I met a man the other day. His face was lined with pain, and gloomy. His atmosphere literally exuded gloom. He made me very sad. I had to struggle against the feeling. And, do you know what was on that man's mind more than anything else? It was: "What is going to happen to me when I die?"

I said to him: "Aren't you satisfied?"

"Satisfied? What on earth do you mean? I don't know anything about it. I cannot be satisfied unless I know something about life."

"Well," I said, "you have just been talking about your wonderful theories, which you say the scientists teach. You are evidently not satisfied just to become a peck of dust, perhaps to stop a bunghole, as perhaps even Caesar's dust did."

"No, I am not satisfied. I think that life is just a great, big, horrible nightmare."

"Well," I said, "my dear boy, if I were you, I would not live in a nightmare. I simply would not! There is no necessity for it. Do you think that your intellectual power is greater than that of the great seers and sages of the ages? What have you done to prove your intellectual superiority? The fact is that you are a mere follower of theories. You are not thinking thoughts of your own. You are adopting someone else's opinions and ideas. No wonder you are gloomy. You are making your own interior holy of holies a perfect — " I won't tell you the word that I used.

"Well," he said, "what do you know about it?"

I said: "I won't tell you what I know about it. You would not believe me, and I would simply set your mind against me; but this I do know, and will tell you: that I know enough to know that I

know less than the great titan-men who have made and unmade civilizations by the thoughts of splendor which they have brought forth. Those men are big enough for me. Their doctrines I have studied with sympathy, and I am going to study them more, and if I like them, I am going to make them a part of my own life."

He said: "Whom do you mean?"

I said: "I mean such as these: Jesus the Syrian, the Buddha-Gautama, Sankaracharya, Lao-tse, Plato, Empedocles, Apollonius of Tyana — in fact, all the great seers and sages, and I have just named a mere few."

He said: "You expect to live after death?"

I said: "What do you mean?"

"Why," he said, "you know what I mean."

I said: "Yes, I know what you mean, but I want you to understand what I mean; and therefore, in order to clarify your ideas, I ask you to explain to me what you mean by death, and what you mean by life after death. Define your words. Let us have our words definite, and then I will talk to you."

"Well," he said, "life and death — while we are here, that is life, and when we are no longer here, that is death."

I said: "That is wonderfully clear." I said: "What happened before you came here? Is that death?"

"Well, I didn't come here. I just was — or was not. I don't know."

"Well now, look here, " I said. "I have already made an impression on your mind. You are not quite so set in the notion that your ideas are the end-all and be-all of the vast universe. I am going to lend to you a few of our theosophical books. Will you promise me that you will read them?" He said: "I will!" And I hope he does. He



will get hope and consolation and explanations of things; and I think that that awful exudation of gloom that I met with when I last saw him won't afflict me when I see him the next time. If it does, I will give him another jolt.

Now, here is a question that was sent in by a dear friend:

"What may the average person, neither very good nor very bad, expect after death? How soon does he regain consciousness? Is life on the next plane unfolded to him all at once, or gradually? Is his coming there known so that he is expected; just as when born here? Seeing that everyone must die sometime, one would like to know 'where one is at' — to use the vernacular."

How would you answer that question, or rather, this series of questions? You see what this friend wants. He wants to go on being just himself. From his words only it would appear that he does not want to improve, and that he does not want to grow to be something else than his present imperfect self. Apparently he does not want to evolve to be something far grander and greater. He does not want to change. He just wants to continue as now he is. Merciful gods! Does any man or woman in this room want to be for ever just what he is now? I see that you are not all speaking at the same time, so the answer is obvious.

I tell you that I do not want to be for ever the same as I am now; I want to grow; I want to become what is within me, to bring forth the god within; and I cannot be a god as long as I am a poor, imperfect, feeble-willed, half-baked human intelligence. Now, that is what we are. Let us face the facts. What is going to happen to me after death? Just to continue along the same old rut of imperfect personal consciousness? No! Not for me!

Furthermore, does any one of you really believe that, even in this

one life, you are the same person that you were twenty years ago, ten years ago, five years ago — that you have not learned anything, that you have not expanded, that you have not changed? You cannot help yourself: you are changing all the time, growing, expanding, becoming greater, enlarging. And the whole pity of it is that with ordinary human beings this evolution, this change, is so terrifically slow.

And the reason is that you cannot wake men up. You prod them a little bit; and then they stir uneasily in their sleep; and then the snores begin again. I don't mean this unkindly, but you know it is true. And then when something comes along that does give a man a real jolt and wakes him up, bless me, what a howl he raises! He makes the very welkin ring; or else he goes and broods, and becomes gloomy — simply exudes gloom. Aren't we queer folk!

Let me tell you: you are not two consecutive seconds of time the same being. You are changing with every second, and you have been changing since evolution began on this earth, with every second of time. And when sorrow comes, when grief appears in our life, when pain comes upon us, oh, I tell you, friends, take them to your heart; for they are the awakeners of us! Pleasures send you to sleep; the so-called joys send you to sleep. It is sorrow, it is grief, it is change which you don't like — it is precisely these three things which are our awakeners. Oh, get the truth! It will give you strength; it will give you peace; it will enable you to meet the problems of life with an illuminated mind; it will bring you help and comfort.

It is a natural law that as a thing grows it changes. So then, how strange does this question sound! Not only this question, which springs from a very kindly heart, but any question alike unto it.

"How soon does he regain consciousness?"

Now, let me tell you something. Nature is far kindlier than we humans actually seem to want her to be. We humans want nature to run along the lines that we humans think are best, and nature does not do it. She runs along her own lines; and the sooner we realize it, the better. For then we shall understand that we human beings, as inseparable parts of the universe, shall find peace, shall find happiness, shall find real growth, when we become cooperators and collaborators with the great laws which rule the universe.

When you die, when the body dies, the human part of us lapses into a peaceful, blessed unconsciousness. Nature is very, very kindly; but that high, divine flame within us, the god within, the product of aeons and aeons and aeons and aeons of cosmic evolution, is always awake. It is a god. And we humans are not yet it. Man is a bundle of energies, and this bundle forms his consciousness. We have within us a divine part, a spiritual part, a human part, an animal part, and a physical part. Now, the divine as yet manifests in us but very slightly indeed; the spiritual slightly more, but still in so small a degree that we humans are merely living in our ordinary consciousness, the reflection of the divine-spiritual.

When a man dies, the human part of him — that part of him which loves, which hates, which aspires, which goes down, which longs for things of beauty and splendor, and which is attracted to the pigsties of matter, where he eats the husks — the human part of us, with its ups and downs, passes into merciful unconsciousness; and the lower part remains so until the next incarnation on earth. Nature is merciful. Just as you do in your sleep at night — you forget the troubles and sorrows of the day — so does this lower part of the human consciousness rest in quiet unconsciousness, in quiet and in unconsciousness.

But the higher human part, the part of you which loves, which is pitiful, which is compassionate, which finds such peace and joy in helping others, the part of you which understands self-sacrifice, all the nobler part of you, is, after death, in a perfect dream of unspeakable bliss — just like a dream, when a man lays himself down in bed at night — a dream of bliss, and so remains until the time comes for the reincarnating ego again to take up a human body on earth. The laws of nature then draw it back to its former field of action; and thus the little child is born, and a new life on earth for that ego begins.

I tell you that nature is very merciful. There is no pain after death. For the average man there is but bliss in a sweet and peaceful dream. You lay yourselves down in your bed at night. You have a beautiful dream, and then you awaken in the morning. You don't know anything of the passage of time. You are precisely the same man as when you laid yourself down in your bed the night before, so far as any great change is concerned; for the interval of time has been too short for any change to take place. So it is with the between-lives period. The last life on earth and the present life; and the next life, and the next incarnation. You see?

So the answer to the question: "How soon does the human ego regain consciousness?" is: In its higher part it never loses it; and its lower part, the unhappy part, the unpleasant part, the imperfect part, sleeps in utter quiet and unconsciousness. How merciful! No heaven on the one hand, and no hell on the other hand. No unmerited state of bliss; no unmerited state of everlasting pain.

Nature is utterly just. Ye shall reap in your next life what ye have sown in this one. Ye are now the fruit of what ye yourselves have made yourselves to be in your last life.

The other questions contained in this particular question are thus answered. Or perhaps — I wonder! Do you like the idea that when you die you are going to be raised a "spirit"? Just like you are now? That you are going to retain your present imperfect human consciousness, and all that you call your present imperfect personality? Growing perhaps, perhaps evolving, but remaining always the same person. I call upon you to think, and you will realize that this is impossible. You are not two consecutive seconds of time the same personality. Nature's fundamental law is change. You could not grow if you were statically immortal. You know what immortality means. It means continuing just as you are forever and forever and forever and for ever. No change. No improvement. No real evolution, because that would mean a change in yourself, which would mean that you are no longer the same. What a horrible outlook to believe in such static, unchanging immortality. Nature does not tolerate it for an instant.

Theosophists say that there is change and growth from better to better, to still better to still better. There is never a best; because there is never an ending. There is a continual enlargement of consciousness, a continuous expansion of the bundle of consciousness which man is. He goes to all the invisible worlds of the universe one after the other, during the eternities which are required for evolution. The cosmic life is full of mansions of experience. Growth is endless; there is endless improvement, but never an end.

Oh, how happy I am that I am changing, that I am not forever the same imperfect individual that I have been in the past, nor will be forever what I am now! What a blessed thought that is, I leave it with you.

These thoughts are new to the Occident. They have not been

taught in the Occident for thousands of years. They are to Occidentals unaccustomed ideas, and therefore they puzzle us Occidental men at first, but only at first. When we see their real meaning, and understand the steady trustworthiness of these teachings, then they steal into our hearts and minds, and capture us by storm; and how willingly we surrender — to ourselves, to the awakening consciousness of better things.

You will come back to earth all right. And let us hope that you will be a little better than you are now.

Here is a question of quite a different type:

"Scientific men tell us that energy and mass, or force and matter, are not essentially different, but are only two different kinds of some underlying reality. Can you tell us what is that one thing from which force and matter both spring?"

This is an old thought that I have often spoken about here in our Temple of Peace. It is our theosophical teaching that substance and energy, that force and what men call matter, are fundamentally one thing: two aspects, two phases, of the same underlying Reality. This was a revolutionary idea in our Occidental world when the Theosophical Society was founded in the Occident in 1875. The scientists would none of it. They said: "It is utterly heretical, scientifically impossible. We have probed into the very abysses of nature, and we know better. Force is but an offspring of matter. There is no force *per se*. There is nothing but dead, unimpulsed matter." But if you asked them probing questions, they would say either: "We do not know," or "Well, force is a mode of motion," or some other equally unilluminating thought.

But now we have ultramodern scientists telling us the same thing that theosophists have been teaching for so long: that force and

matter are fundamentally one thing; and some of the great scientific theorists today, great men in their own lines, are telling you that the fundamental thing in the universe is — what? That this reality, of which force and matter are but two phases and aspects, is just what theosophists have been teaching it to be, and what our predecessor theosophists have been teaching it to be for innumerable ages in the past, to wit: consciousness.

Consciousness, mind as some call it. I prefer the word consciousness. Mind-consciousness, they say, is the fundamental thing in the universe. Therefore our science today, from having been materialistic, has become idealistic.

Consciousness is the underlying one thing of which force and matter, or spirit and substance, are merely the two aspects. We may call matter crystallized forces, if you like. We may speak of force as etherealized matter. The manner of expression matters not, for it comes to the same thing. But both matter and force are phases or aspects or expressions of the underlying reality — consciousness.

Now, mark you the following: This very vague and general, this very abstract, way of speaking of the fundamental reality in the universe, theosophists do not particularly like. We see objections to it — not to the idea so much, but to the phrasing. We say — and we have all antiquity with us, the most illuminated intellects, the most penetrating, spiritual, intuitive men of the past with us — we say that you may speak of the underlying reality as being consciousness or mind, if you will, when you use this as a mere manner of expression. But actually the fundamental thing is vast hierarchies of spiritual beings — gods, cosmic spirits, call them what you like. The universe is filled full with gods; and we human beings are but a minor hierarchy, a minor family, a minor expression of the same rule of nature.

Look at the host of men. Is there one man on the earth, just one big man? No, there are *men*. Is there consciousness and is there mind in the Universe? Yes, considered as a mere abstraction of actuality; but it is really consciousnesses and minds which are back of the manifested universe: the directing powers, the guiding intelligences, the bright and flaming spirits, which infill the universe. It is these which give such variety to the cosmos, which produce manifestation, which produce the individualities of all the hosts of things that we see everywhere around us.

Do you catch the thought? Men are but a copy in the small of what exists in the great. Just as the universe is infilled with gods in the invisible realms, each god existing in his own hierarchy, and on his own plane or in his own realm, or in his own sphere; so are we men on this our own planet earth, and so are the self-conscious inhabitants on other planets.

Our own little planet is not the only inhabited globe in the boundless spaces of the universe. Our own little dust-speck called earth is not the only one which bears intelligent and conscious beings. How could you explain it, if that were the case? It would be a perfectly unsolvable enigma, if in all infinity — and remember what that means, frontierless Being — consciousness, will, and the splendid faculties that the human mind and heart lock up within themselves, exist on our own little planet only.

This last idea of our human uniqueness is an insane one. The very fact that we humans are here, that we humans manifest the transcendent powers of the human spirit, is a proof that they exist elsewhere. Some two billion human beings compose the population of the earth today. We are, each one of us, a god, a living divinity, in our higher parts, and how wretchedly and feebly that divinity can express itself through our imperfectly evolved intelligence and heart and moral sense!



So far as we humans are concerned, we are but poorly evolved vehicles, carriers, transmitters, of what the higher part of us has locked up in itself; but evolution will bring it all forth, and in the aeons of the aeons of the future men will walk the earth like gods, for they will manifest the transcendent powers within them.

In this connection let me read to you at this point a quotation. It was kindly sent in to me by a friend. It is taken from an article: "The Progress of Physical Science," by G. B. Brown, M. SC., published in the January, 1930, *Journal of Philosophical Studies*. The author writes in this extract:

Progress in physics consists in a progressive pushing of visible, tangible, ponderable bodies into an invisible, intangible, and imponderable space. So far, in fact, has this process gone that the problem of establishing any connection between physics and sensuous perception has become one of great difficulty.

This means that the roots of things are in the invisible worlds. That is the meaning of these scientific remarks. The causes of things are invisible; and now that the scientists are beginning to know something of what real physics is, they cannot find those causes in the physical world which is builded up mostly of holes, so to say, somewhat like a sponge, and they have to press their researches for causes behind into the invisible, the intangible, the so-called imponderable spheres.

You see, our scientists are becoming idealists. They are in fact idealists.

My next question is as follows:

"According to the principle of reincarnation, we spend a great deal of time in babyhood and childhood. Having to go through similar experiences for innumerable lives seems a great waste of time. Is it true, as I have heard, that theosophy teaches that,

as the race develops, the proportion of time spent in babyhood and childhood will greatly diminish and that we shall attain far more *quickly* to adulthood, as well as to a far higher grade of intelligence?"

Yes. As the years drop into the ocean of the past, and the secrets of the future become known to us, we shall find that we humans have changed, *pari passu*, with the years. We advance with equal step with the passing centuries, and the future will show us men for whom childhood and babyhood will be very much shortened. This shortening will be a result of evolution.

Let me tell you one or two or three theosophical secrets that really do not belong to a public lecture, but which I have an urge in me today to tell you about. The time is coming in the future when babies will be born almost adult. We may not like that idea at present. The reason is that we have cobwebs in our brains, for our brains cling to old and present-day customs and habits, and find it difficult to envisage a future where things will be differently arranged. We cannot move out of the old ruts. We think that nature ought to be always just as she is now. Isn't that brilliant!

The time is coming in the distant future when children will be born almost men — not full-grown, of course; will be born bearded, with a full set of teeth, and practically adult, although this does not mean that they will be born of full adult size. Any baby born otherwise will then be considered a monstrosity, a monster. The time is coming when children will walk practically from birth, and take part in the world's affairs within a short time after the date of birth — much as the chick at the present time leaves the egg, and almost immediately begins to walk around the barnyard.

Compare the human baby at present: a poor, helpless little lump

of human flesh, often afflicted with disease, attackable by disease at every turn, utterly helpless, which cannot even feed itself — a miserable, often wretched, poor little thing. Consider this, and then think of what I have just told you; and which seems to you the better of the two?

Some other strange things are going to happen to humanity in the future. Before our human race leaves this planet, which will then go into its obscurity until the time of its reawakening comes: before our human race leaves this planet, I say — and this will be in the far distant future — man will have evolved forth two backbones. He will shed his skin every year, somewhat as the snake now does at its own cyclical periods; and in addition to shedding his skin, he will likewise shed his nails annually. Man, in those far distant periods, will no longer be born with the so-called manly ornament of hair on his face, or on his head, which we present humans think so beautiful; but hirsute adornments of the present kind in those days will be considered as monstrous, much as if a man were to grow today a beard from the middle of his forehead.

Move out of your ruts of thought! Let the imagination work! Dream of the future! Things are not going to be for ever as now they are. I will go even a little farther than I have hitherto gone this afternoon. The time is coming when there will be no men and women on the earth; they will simply be human beings. Children will no longer be born as now they are born; for sex is but a passing and transitory phase of human evolution; and the race will outgrow it and come to some far nobler and better, loftier, and in every way more human, method of propagation.

In those days there will be no men and no women; there will simply be godlike human beings, sexless, walking the earth like gods and acting like gods and behaving like gods and thinking like

gods. Indeed, our physical scientists tell us that some of the lower creatures even today do not bring forth their young as the mammals do. Nature has many ways of doing things, and we humans are going to change in the future just as much as we have changed in the past.

Furthermore, I will tell you that the time was, in the far distant aeons of the past, when human beings, the then races of that far, far distant time in the past, were androgynous. In that particular period that I am thinking of, which is the period of what theosophists call the latter part of the third root-race, human beings were hermaphroditic, double-sexed; and even today each sex bears remnants in the body of what the other sex normally develops at the present time.

Nature is constantly changing; change is growth; change is evolution, which means progress and advancement. Yes, the time is coming when babyhood and childhood will be extremely restricted. And so far as this sex-matter is concerned, I will tell you that if in those far distant days of the epoch of the future which I have in mind, a single human being is then born as (what do the biologists call it — a throw-back?) a sexual human being, he will be considered a monster.

I will answer one more question this afternoon, and then I shall take leave of you:

"Is not evolution a very costly process, seeing that it entails so much suffering in the elimination of the unfit? And not only for men, but also for the countless millions of beings inferior to him: birds, insects, animals, who have suffered for millions of years before his appearance on this earth? Life seems to be ever demanding new and higher forms in which to express itself. [That is true!] Is progress possible only through suffering? It is a great mystery: what light does theosophy

throw upon it?"

I will say first that evolution is quite possible without suffering, and in the higher worlds, in the higher realms, evolution proceeds as normally and as easily and as painlessly as is the growth of a beautiful rosebud into the full splendor of its bloom. But we humans of the present are deeply sunken in matter, we entities of this our present Mother Earth. We prey upon each other; and nature reacts correspondingly. That is why suffering surrounds us and other beings on earth.

It is not a supposed cruel nature which forces it all upon us. Evolution itself is painless, because evolution is growth, development, progress; but in order to complete the thought, there is one minor phase of evolution which does entail a certain amount of suffering and pain, and this phase includes the cases where men are initiated, and of will and of deliberate purpose force the evolutionary process in order to attain the goal more quickly. In these cases there ensue what might be called growing pains.

But in the normal course of evolution, it is utterly painless. There is naught but the steady sense of expanding faculty, a lively feeling of inner growth and of expanding consciousness. No, evolution is neither costly nor painful *per se*. We humans at present live in a world of dense physical matter; and I tell you — and this is mystical, but it someday will be found to be scientific also — that we human beings are responsible for most of the suffering and misery on the earth today. Our emanations, streaming forth from us, affect the animals more than I dare to tell you from this platform. Our emanations, our vibrations, actually guide their lives. We are like gods to these lower things beneath us. They look up to us unconsciously, instinctively. And alas, how men, fallen gods as they are, do abuse their divine

powers, and abuse the unfortunate beasts beneath them! Think it over!

Have pity, therefore, and be merciful. These qualities are godlike. Forgive your fellows. Learn to love your fellows, and let that love which fills your heart with its holy light and illumines your mind with its divine splendor, let it go out to all that lives, without bounding it, without laying frontiers for it; and your reward will be very great.

You will then become a beneficent power on earth, not merely beloved of your fellow-man, but a blessing to all beings. You will then be making a beginning in the proper use of the sublime faculties and powers native to the god within you. Ye are gods: each one of you is an incarnate god. Be it!

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[Vol 1, No 38](#)

[Contents](#)

**No. 38 (June 17, 1930)**

**QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK**

(Lecture delivered March 9, 1930)

You will get an inkling of what I have in my heart to tell you today, when I say that I am bringing to you an old, old message out of the far horizons of past time; a message which is ever new, always welcome, bringing peace, consolation, and happiness, to human hearts; a message which is not founded on the say-so of anybody, but is a formulation in the language of men of some of the most recondite and abstruse mysteries of the universe, telling us men who we are, what we are, whence we come, why we are now here, and whither we go. It is the message of the great, illuminated, titanic, spiritual seers and sages of the human race, a message which is in the background of every great religion and philosophy that the world has ever known: an identical message, expressed in different forms and in different tongues in different ages; but the same message of truth always.

This theosophists call today theosophy, or the wisdom-religion of humanity, or the ancient wisdom; but the name is entirely unimportant. This ancient wisdom tells us, in the first place, that the universe and man are fundamentally one, that the roots of things are the same in all; and that these roots of things and of all the hierarchies of conscious and self-conscious entities are the cosmic life-consciousnesses or consciousness-lives; that, therefore, each human being has a pathway which he may tread, and by which he may reach the heart of the universe: the pathway of his own inner spiritual self, to use the phraseology of archaic Hindustan; for as each one of you is an inseparable portion of the cosmos in which we live and move and have our

being, and of which each one of us is an atom of life, so to say, therefore, being such an inseparable part, everything that is in the boundless, frontierless spaces of space, of beginningless and endless infinitude, is in you also, latent or active, or partially active, as the case may be; and that the whole process of evolution is the bringing forth in ever larger measure of what is within.

The universe is not a lunatic universe. Its very essence is harmony, its procedures are rhythmic, and the destiny of man is a sublime one; but that destiny is not an end. When he shall have reached his sublime ending on this planet, he then passes to other mansions of life, ever moving, because activity, motion, in other words change, which is growth, progress, evolution, is the fundamental law of universal being. There is never a stopping place anywhere beyond which there is naught. The idea is inconceivable.

Therefore, thus it was that the Delphic oracle, as interpreted by the ancient Greeks, bore engraven on the portico of its temple: *Gnothi seauton*, "Know yourself"; for in knowing yourself, you are on the way to know all things, and to know them, not merely to think thoughts about them; to *know* them, because real knowledge is being, and in the core of your being you are the boundless All, for you are inseparable from the universe of which you are a particle, a god-spark. You have all within and above you.

Do you catch the thought of this sublime archaic teaching? If you do, then life possesses a meaning henceforth; living becomes a noble exercise of all the faculties, active or latent, in the human constitution; and growth is seen to be but an unrolling, an unwrapping, a pouring forth, of what lies still latent within: as the oak lies latent in the heart of the acorn, until circumstances cause



it to grow, or allow it to grow, and bring forth, unwrap, unfold, what is within.

Furthermore — and please listen carefully — this means that every one of you is, in the core of you, a living god; that every one of you is a divine being manifesting, alas, but feebly as yet, its transcendent powers, but nevertheless manifesting them; and imperfect as this manifestation is, it is a fountain, the source, of all that is noble and great within you — inspiration, aspiration, the working of almighty love in the human heart, compassion, pity, self-forgetfulness, self-sacrifice.

Oh! what a sublime destiny is before the human race, for we shall, in the future aeons, in the aeons of the aeons of time to come, be collaborators and co-workers with the gods which infill the universe — with those spiritual beings, those cosmic spirits, call them by what name you will. Let us not be worshipers of words, but followers of sublime ideas.

Even now we are such collaborators and co-workers in our small human way; even now the host of men, the human host, takes its part in the cosmic work on this earth: plays its part — as best it may? No, no, alas, but plays its part nevertheless. They who play the part nobly, recognizing the divinity within, are the great heroes of humanity, the great sages and seers; they are the movers of men, the makers and the unmakers of civilizations; they are they who sway men's souls; and their message always is: Come upwards, be yourself; and they who are more feeble, who do not, because they will not, express the transcendent faculties within, are the average men; and beneath these are the men who prey upon each other.

We are a very imperfectly developed host as yet, we humans; so imperfectly developed, indeed, that up till a very recent time, a certain large proportion of our physical scientists — the biologists

in particular I am speaking of — thought that men were but progressed apes, evolved beasts; and I have often wondered — I have lectured upon this subject here in this our Temple of Peace before, and I cannot go into all the details of what I then said because today I have no time to do so — I have often wondered, I say, if these theorists ever stopped to think whence came the sublime faculties and powers that man manifests, and that no beast does.

Does man possess these uniquely in the boundless spaces of frontierless infinitude? What an extravagant idea! The very fact that men think, and think nobly; the very fact that men can forget themselves, and live for others; the very fact that men can love and aspire, can feel for others and forget themselves; the very fact that men know what inspiration and aspiration are, and are never satisfied, is a proof of similar entities feeling and thinking and acting similarly elsewhere.

We prove the case, we, the human host. Think! Otherwise shall we drop back into the old familiar egoism of the days when the Darwinian theory had its scientific sway, and say that there may be other planets and other solar systems, and that they may be inhabited, but that we don't know where there is any proof of it?

I answer: All we do know is that this earth is inhabited by self-conscious, thinking beings. Yes, we do know that. Why should we be singled out as the only instance of self-conscious and intellectual and spiritual power in boundless infinitude? Is this a lunatic universe? What is there about this dust-speck of ours, this little earth of ours, that it should bear the only thinking, feeling, self-conscious beings in boundless infinitude?

I put the proposition in that way, and your whole logical instinct carries you off your feet, and you admit: Of course it is so; we are not and cannot be exceptions, we humans merely prove the rule

that consciousness is universal; and were our faculties more fully developed, we should sense this truth so strongly that we would not even argue about it.

I am here to answer "Questions We All Ask." The fact is that I want you to answer your own questions. A man addresses a question to me. I try to answer it for him. In doing so I may satisfy myself, but have I satisfied him? Yes, on one condition only: that I strike a responsive note in his consciousness, vibrating synchronously with the vibration of my own soul. Then he is convinced. *But you never know anything that does not come from within yourself.* Do you get that truth? I repeat it in other words: you cannot know anything with knowledge certain and real until you are it. And you can be anything that you make yourself to be, for boundless infinitude is in the core of your being.

So, by talking to you in this way, I am trying to give to you ideas which will give you food for thought, so that you may answer your own questions in the silences. No theosophist ever tells you that you must believe a thing. Theosophists tell you: Here is the theosophical teaching. Is it clear to you? Is it logical? Does it answer the questions of your thinking mind? If it does, then study theosophy more fully. You will receive immense help.

But do not believe anything on blind faith, for neither will you be helped by attempting so to stultify your intellects, nor can you then give help to others.

What kind of mind has a man whose corridors of consciousness are filled with the empty echoes of other men's words, instead of being filled with the vibrating energies of his own life-thought? *Be!* That is our Theosophical teaching.

The first question — and I have many before me, I will take them up in the order in which I have received them — thus reads:

*The San Diego Sun*, January 29, 1930, page 3, reads: In the depths of the ocean off the Bahama Islands, lies a fantastic world. Few men have seen it. Its forests are of coral trees — golden, rose, and mauve, their branches as transparent as the lace fans carried to bull-fights by señoritas of Seville. Weaving in and out among the coral branches are tireless schools of fishes, some small and brilliant in color, some large and voracious, all hunting or being hunted.

"Question: Is it a universal law that every form of life must prey upon some other form of life?"

And then follows a quotation from Shakespeare, which is:

"Master, I marvel how the fishes live in the sea." "Why, as men do a-land: the great ones eat up the little ones." — *Pericles*, Act II, Scene i

It is true. It is quite true. Taking it by and large, everything lives on some other thing in this our material world; and the saying of a modern poet that nature is red in tooth and claw, stated as a matter of mere fact, is true; but stating a mere fact which everyone knows, in significant words, is not an explanation, and not being an explanation, it should not be accepted as philosophy in aphoristic form.

Nature is by no means a bloody-mouthed Moloch, devouring its own offspring. Nevertheless it is a fact in our material world that everything lives on some other thing, or on other things; and every human heart sensible to compassion, with feelings of pity, must have been wrung in looking out upon the world around us, and seeing what takes place. And oh! how our human hearts leap in gladsome recognition when some great man comes among us, one of the saviors of men, and preaches the gospel of pity and compassion, of mutual helpfulness instead of mutual strife, and

shows that nature could not endure, the framework of Being could not endure, a fugitive instant, if nature were based on chaos, and if the heart of things were naught but discord and strife.

The heart of things, as the noblest seer in human history, Gautama the Buddha, has told us, is harmony sublime; and compassion and self-forgetful service in pity are not only a duty of every self-conscious thinking being, but bring their own unutterable, ineffable rewards; for by so doing, you become a collaborator, a co-worker, with the divine powers which hold the universe in rhythmic harmony. It is in the things of low, material existence — it is in the low material worlds — that discord and strife are found; the reason being that these worlds are so far away from the spiritual center of our hierarchy that they feel its divine rays of harmony but feebly.

This greatest and noblest seer of the human race, of whom I have spoken, is known in the Orient by the name of Gautama the Buddha. Sakyamuni, the sage and seer, with his gospel of boundless love and pity, showing the reasons of things, merely echoed the wisdom-religion of immemorial antiquity today called theosophy, for he was one of our greatest teachers. He came from the same great Brotherhood of the Masters of Compassion and Wisdom, and was one of the noblest among them.

Everything preys on everything else, if you keep your gaze on the mud; but lift your eyes to humans, and already you begin to see in them the striving of a nobler spirit; already you begin to perceive in the nature of man, however feebly they may yet be manifest, sublime self-forgetfulness in the service of others; compassion, pity, love. And I tell you, as I have told you before, that these things are but adumbrations, foreshadowings, of what is to come in the future, for future mankind on this earth will be a race of

human gods.

I will tell you the truth: they will be human Buddhas, every one of them, or, as you Occidentals are accustomed to hear, Christs, walking the earth. We have not yet reached that sublime evolutionary stage, alas, but we shall reach it. Every one of you in his inmost parts is a Christ; every man of you, every human being of you, every woman of you, in the inmost parts, is a living Buddha.

Yes, imperfectly evolved things act imperfectly. Small minds think little thoughts; and most things on earth at present are imperfectly evolved; and in those lovely vistas of the future which even now the seer can discern, we know that to these future noble humans, the men of today will seem like monsters, with our ungoverned passions, with our unholy and often beastly thoughts.

Think! Ally yourself with the god within, rather than with the outward, exterior, physical animal; and raise the lower into becoming one with the higher. Think! This is the message of all the great seers and sages of the human race. Not one of them has varied an iota from this identical truth. Man, know thyself, for in you lie unspeakable beauty, powers indescribable, and the energy of almighty love which is the very cement of the universe — that which keeps things in order, in rhythmic, harmonious movement; each working for all, and all for one.

But as I have said, in our grossly material sphere, things prey upon other things. But we humans can mitigate this horror greatly. We have arrived at the point already when we are beginning to discern a new and brighter vision, a vision sublime of the future; and we can so live that instead of injuring our fellows, we can help them; and instead of working against them, let us cooperate with each other, and in cooperation find peace

and happiness. Thereby you set your feet on the path leading directly towards illumination. You are evolving by exercising your own will, by what my beloved predecessor Katherine Tingley called self-directed evolution; and you are thereby playing a truly human part in the great drama of human life on this planet.

I would that I had time to develop this thought more at length. Almost every word that I have here uttered has brought to me, as I spoke, new vistas to left and to right, of beautiful things to tell you. Think of them yourselves. You have all the faculties in you necessary to do so.

The next question is very much alike unto the first:

"It was about two weeks ago that I attended a lecture. The speaker said: 'We are all each the other's brother; men are the elder brothers of the animals, the animals are the elder brothers of the trees and plants, etc., etc.' If all this is true, what are we going to eat, or have we to go on eating our younger brothers?"

You know, friends, some of the questions sent in to me are real posers. I could spend a week answering that one question, talking to you for three hours, if my voice would stand it, every day, and I should not feel, at the end of the twenty-one hours, that I had done my duty in full.

Let me ask you a question: If you don't eat your youngest brothers, what will you eat? And our youngest brothers are the minerals and the vegetables. You can, at least those of you who wish to do so, no longer prey upon the bodies of the helpless beasts. Meat-eating, however, is not a crime. I do not mean that. Many theosophists eat meat. I have been a vegetarian, a confirmed, almost an enthusiastic, vegetarian, for many years.

Only a little while ago I began eating a little meat on the doctor's orders. But I hate it. I do not like it; and I am going to stop it again just as soon as I myself feel that I can.

Man is naturally frugivorous, a fruit eater. Do you know that the strongest beasts on earth today are the vegetarian beasts: the most muscular, the most powerful, and the longest lived? Long life, in a certain sense, depends upon the food that you eat. Nevertheless, meat eating theosophists do not look upon as a crime. We do not like it, we hate it indeed; but in view of all the circumstances involved, we do not look upon it as a crime.

I am going to let you into a little theosophical secret. It belongs to our higher teachings, to those teachings which as a rule we do not give out in public, simply because one has to be trained through long study to understand them; but I will try and make this secret somewhat clear. Everything in the universe lives for everything else. In our view, the greatest heresy and the only real heresy: that is, a wandering from natural fact and law — is the idea that anything is separate, distinct, and different essentially, from other things. When we look out upon the nature around us, we see nothing but coordination, cooperation, mutual helpfulness; and we see that this rule of fundamental unity is so perfectly universal that even living on the bodies of other things nature permits, because there is a deep, a familiar kinship.

Do you know what this cosmic, so-called law of strife is, manifested for instance in the slaying by men of beasts and eating their bodies, and in the striving of man with man, and of thing with thing? Do you know what it is significant of? Listen carefully. It signifies almighty love prostituted! Now think! What is it that men commonly call evil? Is there such a thing as evil *per se*, that is, evil in itself, so fundamental that it is a part of the essence of the universe?



No. Evil is the misuse of forces, of your faculties, of your intelligence: the misuse of them, the crooked use of them. And by so acting, you make, as theosophists say, bad karma, which you must reap. You have put things out of equilibrium, and you must restore that equilibrium. This is nature's fundamental law.

This fact illustrates how all things are linked together, woven together. You could not live unless other things gave up their lives to let you live; and I mean this. If you did not eat one particle of food, if it were possible for a human being to live on air and on nothing else, he would still be living at the expense of the hosts, innumerable hosts, of entities, atomic and other, which are in the air, and which form his body.

Think! I want you to think over these things. I am not showing to you a gloomy picture. I am showing you a helpful one. I am showing you that even the evil in the world, the suffering and the sin, the misery and the pain, are overseen by almighty love, and that these things are distortions, evil usings of faculties for which the misusers, the perpetrators, will have to pay. And yet, so beautifully is the universe balanced, even in its grossest parts, that this disruption of entities by other entities, gives to these disrupted entities an upward urge.

A tiger leaps upon and kills a man and eats the flesh. What is it that the tiger eats? The flesh. Do you think that the tiger eats the thought, the love, the hope, the aspiration, the divine possibilities: all the faculties and powers and energies that make a man man? A dreadful occurrence this is in fact, but there it is. In these grossly material worlds such things exist; and I tell you that we men are largely responsible for it, even for what the beasts do. You may notice how a beast is modified by his close association with human beings. A man can ruin a dog; he can ruin a horse, a cat, a bird: spoil the natural intuition, the instincts, and the

impulses, and thus debase the beasts who trust him and live with him.

Yes, and I will tell you more. It is very mystical what I am going to say, and perhaps I should not go into it, because you may think that the matter is too deep; but I am trying to answer with some fullness the question I have read. The author of this question is more or less of a true mystical mind. The animals are the offspring of human beings, even as men are the children of the gods. Now think! You Occidentals are not accustomed to these thoughts; they strike you as strange, outlandish, weird. But think, I repeat; get the keen, rigid, inflexible logic of these thoughts. Note how they fit into each other and explain each other; and your Occidental egoism will die a natural death.

I tell you that the beasts are the offspring of the passions of men, for every thought is a thing, every human passion is a movement of matter, and is ensouled with energy; and man, in expending this energy out of the fountain of his being, casts it forth. Do you think that it is lost forever, or annihilated?

There is no such thing as annihilation. The thought had a beginning, as we say; it is ejected; the man acts and thinks, and the thought, the emotion, is cast into the thought-atmosphere of the world, and it ensouls a beast, a tree, a flower, just as human beings are sired by gods, for we are offspring of the cosmic spirits. Think!

I am not telling you anything strange and new; I am telling you what all the great seers and sages of the ages have taught; they have all taught the same truths; and this afternoon the mood has come upon me to tell you some few of these truths. I want you to think about them.

When you leave this Temple this afternoon, if you can do no

better in understanding me than to say: "What was that man talking about?", even then I shall feel that I have already aroused thought in your mind; and if I can arouse even an antagonistic idea, I shall be glad. I challenge you! I am a fisher for men's souls, as every theosophical teacher has been. Give me the person whose mind will protest, if he does not understand, rather than the person who will sit like a stock or a so-called senseless stone when he hears matters spoken of that he does not understand. Friends, get the understanding heart!

So my suggestion is that if your soul is moved with pity at the idea of eating the flesh of the unfortunate beasts whom so many human beings live upon, then live upon clean and sweet food, the vast range of the vegetable kingdom, pure water, fruit-juices, and you will have amply sufficient to sustain health and strength, and your sleep at night will be peaceful and quiet and blessed.

"Our personality, as I understand it, is the vehicle through which we express ourselves on this earth-plane; hence, to use it rightly is not so much a matter of subduing it — and certainly not of killing it — but of transmuting it into harmony with the higher self: all its energy being still retained, but correlated with the purposes of the higher self.

"I think many devoted students have stumbled over this, and have allowed themselves to become inactive, when the personality with all its powers should have contributed all its energy to the purposes of the higher self under its guidance.

"Am I wrong in this?"

The questioner is absolutely right! There is a totally wrong idea in the world that the way to obtain the kingdom of Heaven is by giving up your manhood; that the way to grow strong is by becoming a fool; and that the way to attain divine peace and

harmony is by becoming an imbecile on the earth. The so-called ascetic is on the wrong path. The body is but the instrument of the spirit within; and it is the genius within, the thinking entity, conscious, feeling, aspiring, with sublime thoughts — this is the thing which should discipline the lower personality into making it a fit vehicle for expressing the transcendent powers of the spirit.

Don't kill your personality; don't annihilate your personality in the sense of wiping it out. Nature gave it to you, or rather, to speak more truly, you have brought it into being yourself; it is a part of you, the emotional and psychical part of you, the lower mental part of you, the passional part of you.

Now, instead of killing the evolutionary work of aeons upon aeons in the past, cleanse it! Raise it! Discipline it! Make it a man — the temple of a living god! Oh, the picture that I have seen of men subduing the body, as they thought, and yet with minds crooked and degraded with corruption!

I tell you that wickedness is not in the body; evildoing is not of the body. The body is an irresponsible instrument of your will and of your intelligence. It is your will and your intelligence which you must train; and then you train yourselves and you become truly men and are on the pathway to human divinity.

Raise the personality. Cleanse it; train it; make it shapely and symmetrical to your will and to your thought. Do you see the idea? Do you see it? A man will never attain the kingdom of Heaven, to use the ordinary Christian phraseology, merely by living on potatoes and carrots, nor by sleeping only half an hour a day or night, nor by lying on a bed of spikes, nor by abstaining from this and doing that merely with the physical body.

Evolution is from within outwards. Train your mind; train your will; train your heart; train your intelligence. *Be* the holiest and

noblest and purest that you can think of. Then you can forget your body. You can forget your personality which the body expresses — and by personality I mean all the lower faculties of you, the lower mental and the emotional part of you: your whims and your little this and little that. They won't bother you any more, and you will walk the earth like a human god, and behave like a god. Therefore, begin even now to express the god within. You can, and oh, the reward that comes from this is unspeakably grand and beautiful!

By all means, do not kill out the personality in the sense of destroying the evolutionary work of ages. That is not nature's will; that is not nature's intention. Her intention is to bring forth men, high-minded men, and to turn them into gods. The questioner is right all through.

"A broken, crooked, physical body often contains a beautiful mind, while a beautiful body sometimes houses a crooked mind. Why?"

That question, to most men, is a problem, isn't it? I have seen beautiful women, I have seen handsome men, and I have rarely seen a nobly-shaped body shelter a shapely soul. Isn't it strange! And I have met ugly men and plain women whose features were irradiated with splendor and beauty. I will tell you why this is. It is dependent upon what theosophists call karma, which is the teaching of the fundamental law of natural being, that what ye sow ye shall reap, sometime, somewhere, in this or in some future life on earth.

The average human being expresses pretty well just what the state of evolutionary development is that he or she has attained; and in most cases, the accumulated karmic tendencies, the accumulated karmic thoughts, prejudices, will, faculties, etc., all that you have built up yourself to be in the past, are more or less

evenly balanced; and because there is no strong or predominating influence among them, therefore the human being thus produced is more or less of an average human type, with few or no outstanding or strong tendencies, either upwards or downwards.

But, on the other hand, there are certain cases where there is an overpowering or predominant tendency in either direction, upwards or downwards, for good or for evil; then when this bundle of energies called man reincarnates, this predominating or overpowering tendency will manifest itself preeminently, in other words come out into manifestation the first, and before the other characteristics or traits. This is obviously only natural.

Now, if that strongest characteristic or predominant trait happens to belong to the lower part of the sevenfold constitution of a man who is, nevertheless, without a strong psychomental attraction towards matter or towards evil-doing, then it may be that the energies inherent in that human being sweep out with ease and more or less symmetrical flow, and build up a human body which is unusually attractive and good to look at. But of course any such mere physical body is very transitory, and after the passage of a few years, will slowly fade away. Thus it is that some bodies show a more or less evenly balanced bundle of energies in a man's or woman's constitution, and thus produce a symmetrical and shapely form.

On the other hand: why is it that so many great men of genius — not the great sages and seers who are godlike — but so many men of intermediate genius — poets, scientists, philosophers, artists, musicians, whatnot — are so often decrepit or ugly, or even unpleasant to look at? I ask you why? It is one of the easiest things in the world to understand why. In these cases there is a pent-up energy of greatly predominant character which is urgent

in its desire to express itself through the man's personality, and it rushes forth during the man's lifetime, even from childhood, without easy, harmonious, symmetrical flow, but as it were in surges; and this injures the body, deforms it possibly even in feature and limb, because the growth, due to this sweeping and overpowering influence, is unsymmetrical and one-sided, and the body as always responds slavishly to the power or powers working through it.

Do you now grasp the thought which I have so briefly attempted to portray, to set forth as a picture? Overmastering, pent-up energy in a sense deforms the body, injures it, and this produces what we human beings call ugliness, plainness, unsymmetrical features, etc., due to the rush of and usually intermittent flow of the pent-up energies within. It is a case of a predominant energy called genius seeking to express itself through human flesh.

But in future ages, as evolution perfects its work, things will not be so. The time is coming, as men improve and evolve, as they learn to control and to conquer their energies, their inner faculties and powers, by the sweet and refining influences of the spiritual consciousness and will, when growth, even in one life from childhood to manhood, will take place easily and quietly and symmetrically; and beauty of body will be the result, thus properly and adequately expressing the transcendent beauty and harmony of the spirit-soul within.

I deeply regret to have to answer such interesting questions in so offhand and brief a way, but my time is so limited in any one of these Sunday afternoon lectures that I can do little more than give you a bare outline of an idea, and a few helpful and illuminating thoughts. I therefore leave with you the sketch of the explanation that I have given to you. I want you to take these thoughts home and think them over. If I have aroused even your mental

antagonism I shall not be unhappy, because I shall feel that I have made you begin to think; and if I have aroused your sympathetic interest, then I shall be happier still; because then I know that you will soon be one of us theosophists, helpers in our beautiful, in our sublime, work for human betterment and intellectual liberation.

"Thomas Carlyle said: 'Nature, what art thou but the living garment of the Infinite?' That being so, how can we best live in order not to mar this garment, but to be in harmony with it?"

I have already told you this afternoon in answering other questions what the real answer to this question is. Briefly it is this: By being and by expressing what you are within, in your own higher parts, in your spiritual nature. Be harmonious, be kindly, be sympathetic, be loving, be forgiving. Learn to forgive; learn to love. Love and forgive. Then your body, and even nature outside, will automatically follow suit and react with sympathetic concordance of vibration with the vibrations issuing from you.

But let me tell you that there is something far higher than merely trying to live in accordance with physical nature. What is the use of living merely quietly and having a symmetrically developed body, a so-called beautiful body, if there is no shining splendor within you? Oh, give me the fire of the spirit, give me the inner faculty and power to express the god within, and I will gladly let the body go. Let me be a man, and feel myself on the pathway to becoming humanly divine. Then all exterior nature, and my body also, will need no further especial care or attention from me.

When a man's heart is filled with the beautiful peace of love, and with the love of peace; when he realizes his oneness, intrinsic as well as extrinsic, with all that is; when he feels that he cannot even breathe without affecting the outermost bounds of the universe; when he feels that he is an intrinsic and inseparable



part of the kosmic whole, vibrating in unison with the energies of boundless infinitude, if I may so express it — Oh, how imperfectly of course — when he feels these things, his whole outlook on life is changed, for he consciously feels the god working within him. Correct, refine, dignify, and clarify your personality by letting the god within it shine through it, and you need bother not at all about any other things of good, for they will all automatically and naturally be added unto you.

One last question:

"Which is the greater sin, or harm, to our spiritual unfoldment: *Selfishness*, or weakness of mind that allows selfish souls to rule, often against our higher judgment?"

Can there be any question about which is the more harmful? It is selfishness, of course, for even weakness of mind is the fruit of selfish action in the past. Selfishness, the foundation of all degeneration, of all moral decay, of all mental and physical weakness, is restrictive; it is crippling; it binds you in, and leaves you no room to expand and to grow. Selfishness is the root of all evil, and therefore of weakness of mind, of lack of faculty, of lack of power, of lack of judgment, of lack of discrimination, of lack of a feeling heart. Everything that cripples the native facilities of the human constitution, arises out of what we humans call selfishness. It brings about a deplorable and evil-working view restricted to your own little circle of thought. You are then a prisoner, imprisoned in your own selfishness, and therefore are you fearfully crippled in life's noblest battles. Selfishness makes you a prisoner — and your prison is your lower self!

Oh! the feeling of freedom, of true manhood, when one leaves the prison of the lower selfhood and feels one's oneness with the All; for in very truth I tell you that you are that All in the mystic arcana of your own inmost being. In you is everything in germ;

and your pathway in the future is towards divinity — not to some vague personalized divinity, not to God; not that, *not that* — but towards the divine faculties and powers of your own heart of hearts, the core of the core of your being, what the Hindus call the atman, the spiritual self; for that self is rooted in the self of the universe, and therefore the life of the universe is your life, and the future of the universe is your future, is your destiny.

I tell you that each one of you is an incarnate god, although manifesting but feebly its transcendent faculties and powers. "Ye are gods," as the Christian scripture truly says. Each one of you is a divinity expressing at present but feebly its sublime powers, it is true, but nevertheless expressing them in some degree. Be a man, and look to the Mystic East where you will see the sunrise: and in that East which is your own higher nature, I call upon you to see the vision sublime of the god within you — the immanent Christ, the living Buddha. Be it!

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[Vol 1, No 39](#)

[Contents](#)

No. 39 (June 24, 1930)

## QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK

(Lecture delivered March 16, 1930)

I see many friendly faces before me this afternoon. A theosophical speaker always looks to the souls inside the bodies that he sees before him. And after a little while, do you know, I no longer see the bodies. I really do not. I see instead something fine and splendid in each one of you, which I know understands what I am talking about, even though your brain-minds may pause and hesitate perhaps over my words.

Therefore, as I have already told you, it actually seems to me that I am talking to an audience of gods. For each one of you, in our theosophical teachings, is a divine being, a god, to use the good old Greek word; and there is no reason why we should remain blind, be enshrouded in veils of personality which hinder and becloud, which cripple and imprison, the divine splendor.

There are, at the heart of things, all the causes that the exterior universe expresses; and the marvelous variety, the amazing beauty, and the interesting diversity of the life that we see manifest all around us, are but the manifestations or the resultants of the outflowing of the currents of life and intelligence arising in the heart of the universe; and that heart is not centralized; it is not localized; it is not in any one place; but is, as the French philosopher Pascal so finely puts it in speaking of his conception of divinity, the center of a circle, or rather of a sphere, whose circumference is nowhere, because everywhere, and whose center therefore is everywhere, because localized in no one particular spot.

This means that every mathematical point of the universe is a center of consciousness, a center of universal life, and is what theosophists call a monad; and the heart of that monadic center is a god — not created by some still more grand entity, but the fruitage of evolution through aeons upon aeons upon aeons of time; and we human beings, as we evolve forth what is locked up in the core of our being, as we grow and progress and become grand, shall be cosmic in consciousness, instead of remaining merely human; and thus we shall evolve into being divine entities, gods, collaborators and co-workers with those other evolved entities who are merely ahead of us humans on the pathway of everlasting growth: evolution.

That is why I say that, when I speak to an audience, it seems to me that I am speaking to an audience of gods: not gods according to the old mythological conception of the Greeks or of the Hindus, or of any other ancient people: but gods in the primal philosophical sense of the word, as meaning the cosmic spirits, divine beings, the children of the cosmic life which is boundless, frontierless, beginningless, endless, because it is all that is.

What grand thoughts these are! Not imagined recently, not the product of any single human being's intellectual powers, but — call them a revelation if you like, in the sense of merely being revealed to those who have not yet understood truth, much as any science when first understood is a revelation of natural truth. These thoughts therefore are a revelation in that sense, brought to mankind, brought to their fellow men, by the great seers and sages of the ages, those titan spiritual luminaries some of whose names are known at the fireside of every civilized home.

You know their names — a few of them at least — just as well as I do. I will repeat some of these names again, simply as examples of what men I have in mind, and there are hundreds of them indeed

in history: Gautama the Buddha, Sankaracharya, Krishna, all of India, as instances; Lao-tse and even Confucius, both of China; Pythagoras, Empedocles, even Plato and many more, of the Grecian lands; Jesus the Syrian: all these were titanic seers of human thought and genius. Such as they are the great seers and sages who have sent their spirits behind the veils of the outward seeming, penetrated deep into matter, into the heart of things, and then have brought back what they saw, and who gave their revealing to their fellow men formulated in human language; and therefore are they called seers, because they saw.

These formulations in human language are the great religions and the great philosophical systems of the past; and they all have, every one of them has, as a background, one identical Truth; and that identical truth today is called theosophy. Nobody has imagined theosophy; nobody has thought it out; it is not the fruit of the lucubrations of men who burned the midnight oil; and, do you know, we are having recently, that is, within the last fifteen or twenty years, corroborations by the greatest minds in modern scientific research and thought, of our theosophical doctrines — of teachings that theosophists have been giving out for fifty years more or less last past, ever since the modern Theosophical Society was founded; and these teachings are in some instances almost uncannily corroborated by modern scientific thinkers and researchers.

Such things, for instance, as these: force and energy, or, as we say, spirit and substance, are fundamentally one thing, not diverse, not in eternal contrast, but both of them phases, manifestations — two phases — of one underlying reality, which is the cosmic consciousness-life. Second, that electricity is material or substantial, an idea which would have been a scientific heresy of the first rank thirty or forty years ago, but is now a commonplace. Third, that matter as we know it — that is, the hard, physical

matter which seems to us so solid, so seeming substantial — is the most immaterial, if I may use the word, the most unsubstantial, thing that we know of, built mostly of spaces, of holes; in other words built up of molecules which are composed of atoms, which atoms, as you know now, according to the ultramodern theory of science, are composed of a protonic center or atomic sun, and of electrons whirling with immense rapidity around that center, and that atomic center and those atomic electrons are separated by enormous spaces, thus reduplicating our solar system in each atom; and indeed the spaces inside the atom are relatively as great as are the spaces in our own cosmic sphere or solar system.

Where then is your matter as a thing-in-itself? Every step forward in the research and attempt to find a substantial basis of matter as being something distinct from energy, brings another proof that there is naught but energy, or spirit as theosophists say, and that matter is but one of its manifestations. Matter is holes, spaces, unreal, illusory. And just as a final thought: as one of the scientific corroborations of our old theosophical teachings, we have now some of the most eminent scientific thinkers telling us that the basis of things is — what? Matter as it once was supposed to be? No, but consciousness, or mind as some scientists call it. We won't quibble over the word.

So the fundamental reality is just what I have told you, according to modern scientific philosophy: the cosmic life-consciousness, or consciousness-life; and all the universe surrounding us is but expressions, manifold, diverse, of the hosts of living entities, of the individualities, pervading and causing this bewildering diversity which infills the cosmic spaces. That is to say the worlds visible and invisible — the realms exterior and interior; for I tell you that the universe is filled full with gods, and that the heart of everything is a divine being, manifesting feebly, ill, poorly, as yet, the divine energies within; but nevertheless the exterior entity

could not exist unless it had its roots drawing life from the cosmic life of which it is an intrinsic, as well as extrinsic, and in both cases an inseparable, part. Now, please get this thought clearly. It will be very helpful to you, a real key to understanding others of our theosophical teachings.

I was asked the other day: "G. de P.," said this friend, "why is it that you talk to us so much about gods and about ourselves being gods?"

I said: "Why not? Why shouldn't I tell you a beautiful truth? Don't you see that everything of beauty becomes more beautiful as you understand it better, and that a good thing will bear repetition over and over again? And that if I can give you hope and enable you to know yourself, and to look upon life as a man should, to live as a man: and then tell you that behind the faculties and powers of your manhood lives and tries to express itself through your manhood a divine being — cannot you see that I am giving you a key to marvelous mysteries?"

He said: "Yes, I see it. I wonder if others do."

I said: "That is not my affair. My business is to deliver the message that I was sent to deliver to you; and I shall keep at it until my place is finally taken by someone else."

Here is the first question that I have received this week. It is a quotation from a theosophical book:

" 'When a man realizes his own divine nature, he will see divinity in everything.' — Can this be true?"

I ask you: Can it be untrue? The question is: If a man knows that he has a divine entity locked up in himself as the root of him, how will he look out upon the outside world, and how will he look within? That is the gist of the question. Recognizing himself to be

essentially a divine being, he will see divinity everywhere, because he will see that all other beings are like him. Every atom then becomes to him a marvelous mystery of consciousness, and a mystery only in the sense of something grand and sublime, to understand better; not a mystery in the sense of some non-understandable problem which no human ingenuity can solve.

When a man sees and feels the divinity within himself, when he realizes the source of the mighty powers which he as yet manifests but feebly: it may be that when he realizes these truths, then, when he looks into the eyes of his fellow, he no longer looks into eyes of dull and unillumined flesh, but he sees a visible mystery in his fellow's eye; he senses the life behind; in fact, he sees a god looking at him out through the windows of his fellow's eyes, and he knows this, because he knows himself to be divine in the essence of himself.

It takes divinity to recognize divinity. It takes greatness to recognize greatness. You cannot recognize a great man unless you have greatness in your own heart. You cannot understand a truth unless you have that truth in yourself. If you have it not, you can be preached to and taught till the crack of doom, and your apparatus of consciousness will always give an unready response. You do not understand. But when you have it within you, then instantly comes the response! Ha! I know, it is so! Divinity recognizes divinity. Greatness recognizes greatness. This then is the meaning of the theosophical saying: When a man recognizes the god within himself, he will see divinity everywhere, because he will know that the same cosmic life working in his own being works everywhere.

Therefore, when I address an audience, I always feel that I am speaking to an audience of gods. A god myself in my highest parts, I recognize my kin, and my appeal is to the god within you.



Understand this, and then you will no longer ask: Can it be true?

Sometimes people do not fully understand what I say. Possibly that is due to lack of perfect fullness of thought in any one lecture, but this is inevitable. However, these lectures are printed, as you understood from the announcement that was read, by The Theosophical Club here at Lomaland; and of course no one lecture can possibly contain all the facts which I have adduced in support of our theosophical arguments, nor all the illustrations that I have at different times brought forth to clarify our theosophical truths. Consequently, when some individual reads one of these pamphlets, it may be that he sees but one little glow or sparkle of light, and naturally he does not fully understand; but if he desires more light he will ask me questions, and that is good and fine.

Here let me read to you the comment of an English lady, quite eminent as a scientist in her own line, which is astronomy, I believe, who recently read one of our pamphlets entitled *Questions We All Ask*, and sent her comment in to a friend who had sent her this pamphlet to read, and this friend sent the lady's comment to me. The daughter of the late Sir Edward Fry, an English astronomer, made the following comment on *Questions We All Ask*, Number 4, as my friend reported in substance the comment that was made:

"Your writer seems to mix up ethical assurance with scientific proof. But I expect you would differ from me here, and I should prefer to say that Spirit is all-pervading rather than spirits — though I doubt if our human category of number applies at all."

This comment does not seem to be very consequential in thought, but I get her idea, I think. I would now like to comment briefly upon this comment. She says that I mix up ethical ideas with

scientific proof. In the first place, will someone please tell me what scientific proof is, or means? I know what they call scientific proof; but after a thing has been scientifically proved, then along comes some uneasy sort of man and upsets the whole fabric of proof, and shows how wrong it was; then they have to prove something else, seek another kind of proof.

For instance, everybody in science was comfortable and happy with the nature and structure of the universe as these were understood, until Brother Einstein came along and upset the whole foundation of science, knocked the props out from under the structure — and there was much scientific dust!

So you see that this talk about scientific proof leaves me rather cold. I am a great student of science; I love reading scientific works. It is, in fact, my favorite reading — partly for my amusement, and partly for my edification — and I have learned a great deal from my scientific study.

Next, I would like to know if this scientific blue-stocking, this kind and gentle Miss Fry, would venture baldly to state that science is immoral or unethical. My, what a hullabaloo of protest there would then arise! Every scientist would be rushing to the rescue with all the scientific apparatus at his disposal in order to fill the breach made in the scientific wall by a bombshell of that kind.

Now, which do they prefer: to have an immoral, unethical science; or what they claim that science is — the very foundation of ethics, because they claim that science is classified truth as far as that truth is understood. Therefore, when I am accused of mixing up assurance of ethics with scientific proof, who is right and who is wrong? Who is the real friend of science — I, who recognize that all truth is fundamentally ethical, and therefore refuse to divorce natural harmony or what we humans call right, from the facts of natural being; or people who say that science is one thing and

ethics is something else, and that there is an impassable gulf between them? I for one positively refuse to accept the natural existence of such a gulf. To me, science is fundamentally religious; it is a research for truth; it is an attempt to probe into and to sound and to understand the structure and fabric of the universe and the laws which make that universe understandable by men.

Therefore, the very essence of science is ethical, its very essence is moral; that is what I, the Leader of The Theosophical Society, say; and I refuse to recognize any science or any branch of science which is unethical and immoral as being founded on natural truth. I claim that it is not true science.

Now, to jump, as this gentle lady does, from this thought to spirit and spirits makes me desire to say the following: You Occidentals are awfully fond of dealing in lovely abstractions. You think that if you can abstract an idea from a collection of data, you have achieved a wonder. But have you learned anything? Now, please understand me. I do not deny the value of abstraction considered as a process of thought. It has its value. But which do you prefer: to say that length, breadth, depth, exist *per se*, or to say that there are long things, broad things, deep things? I prefer the latter. I have never seen, heard, or in any other wise ever sensed, such a thing or entity as length apart from things which are long; and I make the same comment with respect to all other abstractions so commonly used in the place of concrete realities. Do you get the idea?

We talk of the cosmic life, or of the cosmic consciousness; but these words life and consciousness, when so used, are admittedly abstractions, and we use them as such; but we do not make the mistake of thinking that there is such a thing as cosmic life or cosmic consciousness apart from beings which live and which are

conscious. Life as such is an abstraction; the actual thing is that there are living entities. Consciousness as such is an abstraction; the actual truth is that there are conscious beings. Man as such is an abstraction; the actual fact is that there are men. Do you get the idea?

Therefore does theosophy teach that the universe is infilled with, filled full with, conscious beings in all-various degrees of evolutionary development: high, higher, higher forever; and low, lower, lower, so far as we humans are concerned — both series reaching endlessly in the respective directions. Theosophists do not deal in abstractions alone and make the mistake of thinking that we are thereby thinking something, nor do we cheat ourselves with words.

I hope that you understand this thought, because it is a very important one. On it is based a number of vastly interesting ideas. Had the Occident remembered this truth of philosophy and religion, it had not wasted centuries of religious thought in disputing about the nature of what it is customary in the Occident to call God, nor covered fields with blood, human gore, shed, alas, in an attempt to convince others that certain ideas held by their proponents were the very nature of the cosmic spirit.

Instead, there would have been no persecution, there would have been no theological squabbles and arguments and bloodsheddings about the nature of Divinity; but men would have realized the primal truth that God as such is merely an abstraction, a word signifying, as an easy way of speech, that the universe is filled full with gods, cosmic spirits, living beings of high spiritual stature or evolutionary grade.

On earth is there one big man, whose name is humanity? No, but there are hosts of men. Polytheism is true when you really understand it, and understand what it means.

Therefore, in answer to this kindly-hearted Miss Fry, I would like to suggest that she take a course in theosophical study before she criticizes, and that she realize that dealing with abstractions in the favorite Occidental way is less wise than thinking thoughts of concrete reality, and having courage to face the truth when it comes into the heart. Study a thing before you criticize it.

I prefer to think and believe, because I know, that the universe is filled full with gods, cosmic spirits, divine beings, bright and flaming intelligences, call them by what name you like — for the name matters naught — rather than to think that there is naught but one huge cosmic spirit, the maker and creator of the universe — who made an awful mess of it, by the way! — and that we exist by sufferance, and perhaps will be saved, or perhaps will be damned; and furthermore that we are to throw all the burden of the irregularities and miseries, the wretchednesses and imperfections, with which the world is filled, onto the shoulders of some supposititious entity whom men have created in their own image and called God! Think about it, and you will see a profound reason for our theosophical beliefs.

The very imperfections that you see in the universe — it is not perfect, as is obvious — show that they are the results of the operations of the lives and thoughts of the thinking, yet imperfect intelligences, which nevertheless are growing and evolving.

The same remarks along this line that could be applied to us unevolved, imperfect human beings, apply with equal force to the vast diversity and multiform range of finite characteristics which the universe contains. We humans are not perfect, but we are evolving; we are growing; and the same remarks apply to all other entities, high and low, with which the universe is filled. There is a sublime future before us; and the universe shows exactly the same thing. It shows sublimity, grandeur, and it also

shows imperfection. Pray get the idea and dwell upon it in your hours of quiet meditation.

These cosmic spirits, these gods, these bright intelligences, these cosmic lives — call them by what name you will — are in all the grades of evolution, from high to low; and we human beings are but one of the hosts, one of the armies, of living and conscious beings which fill the Universe; and therefore do I say that, having the same origin as all other entities, the heart of the heart, the core of the core, of each one of you is a god, a living entity, seeking to express itself on this plane; and as time passes it will express itself continuously with ever larger measure of success; and this is evolution: the bringing forth, the unfolding, the bringing into manifestation, of what is locked up within the evolving entity.

"Is there a universal law of gravitation such as is spoken of on earth as gravitation?"

Yes, I am sure there is. The scientists assure us that there is, as far as they know. Here we see one of the lovely things about our scientific thinkers; they positively refuse to be dogmatic, except some of them! And some of them are. Such men have cobwebs in their brains. They simply cannot move away from the thoughts of their fathers of the preceding materialistic generation of scientific thinkers; but every now and then the Good Law sends along somebody like Brother Einstein, and — things happen!

There is a universal law of gravitation, and I will tell you a little theosophical secret just here. What we know about gravitation in the physical sphere is only one half of gravitation. The other half of gravitation is repulsion. The scientists have not discovered this other half yet, but some are suspecting it; and this bipolar gravitation exists on all planes; and there is a proof of the truth of this other half of gravitation, which we call repulsion, in the fact

that whenever a comet approaches the sun and whirls around it, its tail invariably points away from the sun; away from it as it approaches the sun, and away from it as it leaves the sun.

It is true that our scientists ascribe this fact of the extraordinary behavior of the comet's tail to other causes, such as the effect of incident light on the particles of the comet's tail. But there are, furthermore — and I will let you in to another little secret of ours — several kinds of gravitation: spiritual gravitation, and astral gravitation, and physical gravitation, are three kinds only. I suppose you know that the great Greek philosopher Empedocles, among others, spoke of the fact that the two elemental or primal forces of the universe are what he called love and hate, or, as our modern scientists would say, attraction and repulsion, which, in one sense, they feebly express under two other phrases, centrifugal and centripetal action.

Doubtless the scientists may have other explanations, or think that they have. At any rate, this question that I am answering is asked of a theosophist, and my answer therefore is: Yes, there are many kinds of gravitation, but all have the same fundamental principle of bipolar action, as it were; attraction and repulsion. Electricity illustrates it.

"Does purity conduce to lightness and impurity to heaviness?"

This question is a little vague. I don't know whether the questioner refers to ethics or limits his idea to physical bodies; but I think that a general answer could be given according to our theosophical teachings to the effect that purity does indeed produce lightness. It etherealizes things; and impurity or adulteration has the contrary effect — at least morally. I don't know quite what the questioner had in his mind, and consequently my own answer is of necessity a bit vague.

Here is an interesting question.

"Many persons who are sympathetic with the principles of theosophy dislike the idea of joining an organized society of any kind, and disapprove of the principle of leadership. They say such things hinder the development of individual responsibility, and are not necessary for the discovery of truth within oneself, which must be done by personal efforts. Mr. J. Krishnamurti, for instance, has lately disbanded his organization as unnecessary for sincere truth seekers.

"Can you explain the fallacy in this, and give your reasons for building up a great organization under a single head?"

Yes, the reason is the easiest thing in the world to understand! It is the difference between an army and a mob; the difference between having a source of information, of truth, on the one hand; and merely hunting for it, on the other hand. It is the difference between organization, law, order, and their contraries. There is the gist of the answer. I tell you that union is strength and that disunion is weakness.

Mr. J. Krishnamurti, an earnest young man, a Hindu, brought before the world by one of the Theosophical Societies having its headquarters in India, has my sympathy in some ways for the very difficult task he has undertaken. I like always to seek the points of contact, of friendship; I detest casting mud or making slurs, and I never do these things. But that fact does not prevent me from telling what I feel it my duty to tell.

In the first place, how many times here, from this platform and elsewhere, have I not said that the road to divinity lies within yourself. That sublime knowledge each one must seek for himself within himself; for the pathway to divinity is exemplified by the Greek maxim: Man, know thyself, for thou art a living god, and in



knowing thyself thou shalt know all the mysteries of the universe.

How often have I not pointed out that you should believe nothing, naught, in nothing, unless your own conscience tells you, and with no uncertain voice, that such or another thing is true! But why is the world filled full with heart-broken searchers for truth? Why do men quarrel and fight with each other? Because they have not the truth, nor have they a Leader in whom they can trust, and to whom they can go for enlightenment. Teachers they know not, because they will not know them.

There is no reliance on anything today — not even on the inner light, which every true theosophist teaches it is our duty to follow. Men today do not know whither to turn for help and light, for solace, for comfort, and peace. And do you think you can answer that insatiable hunger of the human soul for light by saying: "There is none except in yourself"? It is perfectly true as a bald statement; but it is not the whole truth.

Theosophists are members of a Society which was founded by the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion as an organized body to gather into its ranks all hungry human hearts and minds, to give them teaching which would bring them light and help, having a certain source of knowledge, called a leader and teacher, who is duly and properly authorized and qualified to communicate the light. That is why it is my duty to teach as I do, and to organize as I do. I am a fisher for the souls of men. Every true theosophical teacher is.

And one of my first lessons is this: Look within! Within you lie all knowledge, all wisdom, all peace, all comfort, all love. Within you, locked up in the god within each one of you, are all the faculties and powers which the divinities themselves possess, and which you must bring forth and will bring forth in the course of ages. But I am pledged to help you. Knock, and the door will be opened

unto you; ask and ye shall receive.

Why send your children to school if teachers are not needed and if children can learn all that they need without having teachers? Why have your land dotted with institutions of learning, if every man can know everything without preceptors and guides? Do you see the point?

Therefore I tell my brothers this: Accept nothing that you hear from me which is contrary to the dictates of your own conscience. You may fail in so doing; you may lose in so doing; nevertheless the rule is good, and should be followed, because in following this rule, that is if you make a habit of obeying your sense of right and wrong, however mistaken your judgment may be and however often you may mistake, nevertheless in following that rule you are on the pathway leading to light. You are thereby exercising spiritual faculties. But this is not all that could be said.

I have spoken of what I may now call the anarchical side, where there is no body of students with a teaching head, no centralized organization. But I could also speak of the other extreme, which theosophists likewise avoid; and that is the extreme of excess of organization and blind credulity, which is as wrong and as morally weakening as is the other.

I tell you that we Theosophists want no dogma-ridden men, no dogma-ridden world. Do you see my meaning? I make no invidious criticisms. I am not pointing my finger in any specific direction. I cast no slurs and throw no mud. I seek the points of contact and of unity. I merely point out, in answer to this question, what it is my duty to tell you: that we are neither anarchical on the one side, in the sense of believing that no organization is the right thing, nor are we ridden, on the other side, with the idea that an iron-bound, hide-bound, spirit-stifling organization is the right thing.

We F.T.S. say that organization is strength, that union is power, that a centralized organization, a centralized authority, makes for progress, if that authority be exercised by one who knows how to do it and does it impersonally and with love in his heart; and this same rule holds with even greater strength in the case of a teacher, and particularly of a teacher of the esoteric wisdom.

As a matter of fact, this problem so called that I am now speaking about to you is no new one. Every human being is faced with it in his own home, in his own land. Whither shall I send my child to be educated? Shall I allow him to run the streets and let him grow up as "nature" will have him grow — running wild, with no control, no supervision, no instruction, no grand ideas, just a little human beast? Or shall I send him, on the other hand, to some school where he will be drilled, so that all individuality is drilled out of him? Neither, we say. Send him to some place, which you will examine first and will feel to be a place where there is an illuminated authority — as far as you can find it — someone who knows how to teach, who knows what to teach, and who will neither cripple the child's soaring intelligence and growing willpower on the one hand, nor allow him to run wild on the other.

That brief picture shows you where we stand. We believe in organization; we believe that union is strength and power; we believe in teachers — in fact in a succession of teachers, one coming after the other; and this is the ancient idea, the archaic idea of humanity universal.

I pity this Hindu youth, Mr. Krishnamurti; for, however sincere he may be, to my mind he shows a lack of reflective wisdom and a lack of knowledge of essential human nature. In disbanding the trusting hearts who look to him for comfort and help, as I understand is the case, I cannot feel that he is following the ideal

imbodied in The Theosophical Society, established by the Masters of Wisdom as a nucleus of universal brotherhood, and as an organization energized and with a desire to help mankind.

I pray that, as long as I live, and whatever may be the success that I shall have, I may be true to the pledge that I have taken: to bring light and comfort to my fellow men and to be worthy of the trust put into my hands. I have a duty to perform in the world, given to me by those who sent me here, and I will do it; and I know that my fellow men will recognize the appeal, the logic of it all, and will see the difference between inflexible authority on the one hand, and utter lack of centralized guidance on the other hand. That is where theosophists stand — in the middle place.

There is light to be had, because there is system and order in the universe, the results of flaming intelligence and cosmic compassion; and anyone whose heart impels him to carry on the search indefatigably and with a mental refusal to take discouragement at any turn, but to carry on, will receive that light. This is a promise.

I will answer two more questions this afternoon, of which one requires but a brief response. It is this:

"In view of the present interest in and attitude to the Bible, please tell us the theosophical interpretation of the *Book of Daniel*."

I was not aware that there was any particular present interest in the Bible. There may be. I am not aware of the fact. But I can say this with regard to the *Book of Daniel*: this is a work written partly in a dialect of Aramaic, and partly in Hebrew; it is usually included in the bulk of the Hebrew scriptures, and is commonly called one of the Hagiographa, that is to say, one of the so-called holy books, holy writings, which are not considered to pertain,

however, either to the Jewish Law or the Jewish Prophets. It is one of the books forming the third part of the sacred Jewish writings. It is a book which probably dates from the second century before the Christian era, and was undoubtedly, I think, written by some Jewish or Palestinian mystic at the time of the persecutions under the Maccabean domination.

It is not a particularly interesting book. Personally I prefer, however, the *Book of Daniel* to some of the other books which are considered quite canonical in the sense of belonging either to the Law or to the Prophets; and for the following reason: the *Book of Daniel* contains in symbolic form an excellent specimen of the mystical thought of Palestine in the second and third centuries before the Christian era; and this is shown with especial clearness in the angelology of the *Book of Daniel*, that is to say, its teachings to the effect that the world is filled with angels, as the word goes, in other words with gods, but in this Book called angels and spirits, existing in hierarchies, that is to say in grades or rungs on the ladder of life, from low to high, or from high to low.

That is also our theosophical teaching, and it is also the teaching of all the wise ancients; and that fact, I think, is the most interesting thing about this particular book. I do not know that it has any especial importance to a theosophical student. Of course, the Christians and the Jews like to think that the Prophet Daniel was especially favored by the Lord, by Jehovah, but — how about it? I don't see any proof of it, you know. Don't you think that we had better let the matter go at that? I do not like to say anything that will hurt the feelings of anybody belonging to some other faith. So to speak always seems an unkind thing to me; and yet there are times when, being asked questions, I hesitate as to how to answer them, because I hardly know how to tell the plain truth without stepping on somebody's toes, and I don't like to do that.

This is the last question:

"Answering on Sunday, February 2nd, at the Temple of Peace, a question pertaining to races living in cycles previous to the present time, and their predilection for looking without rather than within for the divine, and the creative source of things physical that everywhere confronted them, the statement was made in substance by the lecturer: 'It is not true that man in the past looked solely without; he searched within his own heart for a solution of the mystery of cause and effect and for the divine.'"

I did say something like that.

"Question: Will you please explain why so many ancient temples and other buildings in various countries, long buried and now being excavated and examined, reveal bronze and stone images of gods and godlings, also inscriptions cut deep in the mute marble 'To the unknown God.' How long would man have to look within for power and wisdom to create one original grain of sand, or a radiant sun rushing through space at incredible speed, ripening grain, painting rich tints on trees, fruits, and flowers, showering vitality and warmth on man and beast, with unwavering loyalty and punctuality as it speeds along its appointed orbit?"

Isn't this a beautiful thing — beautifully expressed? I am exceedingly sorry to have to say something that may destroy the feeling of beauty that this question has brought to you. But first, I must say that the questioner has not understood what I did say on that occasion. The idea of the inner vision is not that by looking within you are going to "create suns." The idea is that by looking within, in other words by knowing yourself, by following the inner pathway in thought and feeling to the Divinity within you, you become at one with the life of the universe and with the

flaming fire which is the universal intelligence; that is to say, become at one with the lives of the gods and the intelligences of the gods of whom we humans are children, their offspring.

Furthermore, I have never heard of many inscriptions on mute marble, addressed to the unknown God. I have heard of one only, mentioned in the Christian New Testament, where it is stated that St. Paul, according to the legend, disembarking at the port of Phalerum, told the men of Athens when speaking to them from Mars Hill: "As I came along the road to your city, I saw an altar by the wayside, and on it was engraved this inscription: *To theo agnosto*: 'To the Unknown Deity.' "

That is the only inscription that I have ever heard of addressed to "the Unknown God"; and I may say that this unknown deity was simply the nameless mystery of boundless infinitude, because no human being, nor even the highest god in highest heaven, can ever understand it and therefore never can give it an appropriately descriptive name, for this mystery is the life-universal, the consciousness-universal; in other words the unknown God is an abstract phrase signifying That which is beyond human or even divine comprehension; and the gods and godlings that the questioner speaks of, the statues of bronze and of stone and of wood, were simply exemplifications of the attempt of the men of ancient times to figure a divine thought by a thing of beauty, or by a purely conventional form after the manner of the Egyptians in their pyramids and obelisks, wherever they tried to figure the same type of thought in a purely conventional and symbolic way.

It is possibly true that the ignorant, the uneducated, the illiterate and thoughtless of the ancients worshiped the images of the gods. But may I ask you what has been happening in the Occident for fifteen, sixteen, seventeen hundred years or more last past? How

about the Occidentals who worship images also? Where is the difference except in name? Again, and I am addressing our Occidentals in general, how about the numerous mental images that you worship, such as success, power, wealth, personal preferment, etc.? Ye bow down to them and worship them, images graven on your hearts; and they are the more subtle and dangerous in that the physical eye does not see them, nor see their paltriness and material character.

It was human weakness and human love of figures that brought forth these statues of gods and godlings, and precisely because we know this do theosophists teach: Look within, turn your gaze away from the things of the material world; look into the deeps of your own spirit, into the Formless where naught but consciousness and light and love exist. There lie peace, wisdom, knowledge, power, strength, hope, compassion, pity — all the things that make men great.

And in conclusion, I tell you, as I have told you every time since I have been speaking here during these last months: Remember, and try to realize, the truth, that ye are gods in your inmost being, and the children of gods. Every one of you is the expression, imperfectly manifest because our vehicles are so imperfectly evolved, of a divine entity which is the source of all that is great in you, of all inspiration, of all your aspiration, of your love, of your hope, and of all the other things of human grandeur that I have spoken of. The pathway of evolution lies in following this truth, by realizing what is within, and this is the true way, the easiest road, along which human evolution proceeds most rapidly.

Evolution is the bringing out of what is within. Therefore, realize this truth: that this divinity within you is all you will be in the future. Ye are gods: each one of you is a living flame of



consciousness and intelligence in the core of the core of your being.

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[Vol 1, No 40](#)

[Contents](#)

No. 40 (July 1, 1930)

## QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK

(Lecture delivered March 23, 1930)

As I have told you before, I am a man with a message to give to my fellow men, a message which is sublime. It is not mine; but is, in all verity, the message of those who sent me and who sent my predecessors into the world to carry this message to mankind, and to all who attend our theosophical gatherings or read our literature.

A man with a message in these days is no uncommon thing: "The woods are full of them." The streetcorners know them well. According to the old saying, every soapbox on a street corner has a human and animate statue on it; and the voices that you hear, leathern-lunged, strong, but not usually convincing, are the voices of men who tell you things that they believe to be true, or say that they believe to be true.

I do not bring to you something that I merely tell you that I believe to be true. That would have no permanent effect on your minds. You do not know me; you do not know anything about me, except in so far as you can judge of my sincerity and earnestness from my voice and my manner of speaking, and the ringing conviction which I try to put into my voice; but if I were to tell you that this is what I believe, and this is the message that I have been sent to give to you, I would be telling you not even half of a truth, and thus far I would be misleading you.

This message is not mine. It is not the own message of any theosophical speaker. It is not the own Message to my fellow men of all my predecessors of all past time. It is not theirs, because it

was not imagined by them, not formulated by them. It is not the result of burning the midnight oil; but first — and you can prove this for yourselves if you will study theosophy honestly — it is, I say, the formulation in human language of the truths of the universe; for truth can be known. That is the first teaching that theosophists have. There is such a thing as truth, and therefore it must be in its very nature a formulation of natural law, dealing with the structure and composition of the universe, exterior and especially interior.

How is this truth arrived at? How is any truth arrived at? I ask you again: How is any truth arrived at? Can a man take a pencil and sit at his desk, with a sheet of paper before him, and by making marks on the paper arrive at the realization of a sublime truth? Most enormously unlikely. I say it again, most enormously unlikely. But truth is light; it comes into the human mind of those who are prepared to receive it, as invigorating flashes of illumination; as intuition, as ideas, hunches some men call these. When these hunches are experienced, those who receive them usually experiment upon the nature surrounding them in order to test the hunch, and thus they prove that the hunch is true.

In other words, truth is from within, from the spiritual nature within you; and men are great precisely in proportion as they receive these interior flashes of illumination. They are common to all human beings, but some men have them more frequently and see the vision sublime more clearly than others; and these latter are the men who are more evolved, the greater men, they who can put their consciousness in vibrational unison, so to say, with the vibrating energies and forces of the universe. Then their minds automatically become true interpreters of natural law. That is one way by which truth can be gained. The reception of teaching under an illumined teacher is the other way, and in our theosophical life and training the devoted student follows both

these methods.

Not a single discovery of science has ever been made — not a single discovery in psychology or in religion or in philosophy, has ever been made — except in one or the other way, or in both these ways. This is one of the commonest known facts, that some of the greatest discoveries in research have been made intuitively or by what men call hunches; and you must have heard this fact stated again and again, for it is usually thus that they who have discovered great truths have begun their work. In this way men have come upon some Ariadne's thread, by following which they have laid bare some of nature's secrets, and have walked out from mental darkness into the great light.

They all will tell you, these discoverers: "I did not do it myself. The light came to me suddenly. I had an idea and I followed it out."

But theosophy is very much more than merely a collection of hunches received by different men in different lives. Evolution has produced men greater than the average humanity. These greater men are the mental and spiritual titans of the human race, the great spiritual sages and seers, the expounders of truth, the great ones whose thoughts have made and have unmade civilizations. The names of some of them, as I have so often told you, are household words at the fireside of every civilized home. It is these great spiritual sages and seers, the receivers of light, who have formulated into human language this system of the ancient wisdom today called theosophy, and who in their own time came forth and taught their fellow-men what they themselves had both learned and received from their teachers.

After this manner was founded this system or that system — all the great world-religions and world philosophies. Jesus the Syrian sage, Gautama, Sankaracharya, Lao-tse, Confucius, and, in fact, all

the great mystic sages and seers of the world — such men are they.

But theosophy is something still more. There is such a thing as so training the faculties and energies of the human understanding, of the human mind, of the human heart, that these become enormously receptive of natural truth. This procedure in ancient days was called initiation into the Mysteries. Specially trained men, trained by others who had been previously trained and prepared, sent their spirit into and behind the veil of exterior matter, deep into the abysses of the cosmic heart, and consciously brought back what they had there seen. I am now speaking of the great initiates of the ages.

This truth which they thereupon revealed — a larger revelation in this sublimely human sense — to mankind, is that system of natural law and fact explaining the existence, the structure, the fabric, the origin, and the destiny, of the universe, and therefore of man. We call this system today theosophy. We likewise call it the ancient religion of mankind, or the ancient wisdom. The name by which we call it, however, matters not at all.

If you look at the background — if you study the foundations — of every great world religion and world philosophy, you will find this wonderful system there. It is that universal system of natural truth which is the foundation and background of all the great religions and philosophies of the past, and will be the same for them of the future.

Occidentals are not accustomed to hearing things like this. You Occidental men and women do not like to be told what capacities and powers you have within you: that the spirit of man is supreme over matter, and that its evolution is endless. You do not like to be told these things. You like to be told: Cast your burdens upon a Savior, let him save you. Or perhaps you like to be told: Go

to the beasts your ancestors; that is where you belong.

Theosophists tell you, on the contrary, that you are the makers of your own destiny: that what ye sow, ye shall reap; for nature, spiritual nature in especial, is infinitely just, infinitely harmonious, infinitely true in her balances. There is no chance; there is no haphazard action anywhere. Occidentals do not like to be talked to in this way. That is precisely why I am now talking to you in this way. I am jarring you, jolting you, waking you up! — or trying to do so. That is a part of my duty; and I tell you frankly that I win hosts of friends by doing it.

You do not like it at first, but oh, how you do like it afterwards. When once you understand it, how your heart leaps with exultation when the truth once strikes home; and then you say to yourself, in the calm silences of the nighttime, perhaps it may be a month or a year hence: "By Jove, that chap I heard at Point Loma was right after all! I have just got his idea." How often that has been proved to be true!

No, most of you don't like to be told that you have divine powers within you, waiting to express themselves. You don't like to be told that you are something more than a groveling worm of the dust. You don't like to be told that the spirit of man and the human will, when trained, are sublime, with almost unimaginable capacities — capacities, faculties, powers — to come forth as and when evolution and growth bring them forth. As a rule you don't like to be told those things. But I tell you them just the same; and I tell you — and I tell this to my audience on every Sunday, in our Temple of Peace — that each one of you, man or woman, is the feeble expression in your ordinary humanity of a divine being overshadowing, locked up within you so to speak, and trying to express its transcendental beautiful and marvelous powers through you.

I tell you that each one of you is an incarnate god, child of the gods who guide and rule the universe, offspring of the cosmic spirits — call them by what name you like, but do pray get the idea. The idea is the important thing — that your spiritual and mental ancestry is divine, and I do not speak here of your bodies. Your bodies are mere transitory events in which you are passing one phase of your long evolutionary pilgrimage in both space and time; but you, the thinking man, the feeling man, the consciousness-sun within you, expressing faculty, power, intelligence, love, compassion, pity, wisdom, feeling — all the things which in their aggregate form the real and lofty human being — these are all manifestations of the transcendent spirit within you, and because humanity is still imperfectly evolved, these manifestations are still feeble and imperfect in their expressions.

I repeat that Occidentals, as a rule, don't like to be told these things. You don't like it; and you don't like it because you don't believe it; and you don't believe it because you are not accustomed to being told it. It is a bad habit of mind that enchains you. Your brains are full of mental cobwebs, and oh, how pitiful it is! They are merely cobwebs of miseducation and mistraining. Clean these cobwebs out. Sweep them away. Let in the light. Appeal to your own inner forum of consciousness, which is the supreme arbiter, the supreme consciousness-center of each one of you — and then you will see!

Through the message that I have to bring to you, I bring you vision; I bring you light; I cannot help you except in showing to you the way, so that you may follow that way and thus help yourself to become yourself. I cannot otherwise help you. Can I walk for you? Can I eat for you? Can I grow for you? Can I learn for you? No. But I can show you the pathway, that sublime pathway of wisdom and illumination which begins, for each

human being, in any one incarnation on this earth, in the present life and thereafter leads inwards, for it is the pathway of consciousness and spiritual realization leading ever inwards, more inwards, still more inwards, towards the Mystic East, which is the rising sun of spiritually-divine consciousness within you.

This is not poetry; it is fact. I direct your minds towards the Mystic East which is the heart of the universe, and it is in the core of you. You are not separate from the universe. Every one of you is an inseparable portion of the universe. You are here, and there is just one thing that you cannot do, and that is to go out of the universe. You are an organic part of the whole, and therefore everything that is in that whole is in you, active or latent. Every faculty, energy, everything, is in the core of the core of your being, which is your road, so to speak, by which you grow out from the heart of being, your spiritual selfhood. Oh, how simple all this is and how willfully blind are people that they will not see it.

Here is the first question that I have before me to answer this afternoon:

"What should be the attitude of the theosophist to the practice of mental healing in general, and to Christian Science in particular?"

Now, I think that this is an unkind question. Why should I speak for other theosophists? I do not know what all my fellow theosophists think. In our Society they may think what they please. I know what I think, but I cannot answer for all the Fellows of The Theosophical Society. I am the Leader of the Society but I am most certainly not the guardian of their consciences. They can believe or disbelieve as they will. That is their affair. Theosophists have no dogmas in The Theosophical Society; in joining us you don't have to sign any creed.



We have, in our Society, F.T.S. — Fellows of The Theosophical Society — who possibly are believers in Christian Science. I don't know, and I don't care. And there may be those who disbelieve in it: and this I don't know, and I don't care about it. My duty as a teacher is to show the light, to show the pathway. Then my duty is done — except to give help if I can when help is asked of me. But I am not the guardian of anyone's mind or conscience. For myself I can say that I have been taught the wisdom-religion. Being taught, I have a responsibility, and that is to teach and to teach aright. But once I have taught and have done my best, then even the very gods can ask no more of me than that.

Supposing this question were otherwise framed, thusly perhaps: What do *you* think of mental healing, and of Christian Science in particular? I will tell you just what I personally think, but that need not affect anyone else. I have known many people of beautiful character who are mental healers, and Christian Scientists; but their belief is no concern of mine. They have their own beliefs. They are entitled to them. I have respect for them if they are sincere, but that does not mean that I believe as they do. That does not bar at all their joining The Theosophical Society. All that you need in order to join The Theosophical Society, and to become at one with the band of workers whom the great Masters of Wisdom and Compassion head, is an honest belief in the principle of universal brotherhood. This is the sole and only prerequisite to joining The Theosophical Society.

Really I don't know enough about mental healing, and Christian Science in particular, to talk to you at length about them. These two beliefs have no particular interest for me personally and therefore I certainly am not going to stand here and tell you merely what my opinions about them are. What earthly good would that do to you? It would not do me any good, except,

perhaps, that I might clarify my own ideas by trying to express to you what I have in my mind. I do not mind saying that I have rather firm convictions about these two beliefs, but they are not based so much on what the Christian Scientists or mental healers do, as on what they preach. But what of that? Those opinions are my own opinions. I am entitled to them. You may have other opinions. You are entitled to them.

So you see I cannot answer for what attitude other theosophists may take or have with regard to these two beliefs. They are entitled to assume any attitude towards Christian Science and mental healing. My own attitude therefore is briefly this:

If these good people are sincere, are kindly, do what they believe to be their duty in a spirit of fraternal goodwill towards their fellow men, I do not care a snap of the fingers what their philosophical or religious beliefs may be. Those beliefs do not personally concern me. It is precisely opinions which separate men, which keep men asunder from their fellow men. I do not want to emphasize opinions. Contrariwise, I want to call you together on common grounds of truth. I seek the points of contact and union, not the points of disunion and discord.

I hate hate, and I love love. I read with disgust attacks by any man on the religious or philosophical feelings of some other man. Nevertheless, this does not prevent me from having very definite and convinced feelings and opinions of my own. But I know something of human nature and I will not allow my opinions to crystallize unless I happen to know that I am right; and then I am not easily moved.

There is much of good in Christian Science and in mental healing on the following point (and I think it is fine), that their followers have helped to bring into the world an idea new to the Occident, but a very ancient idea, regarding the illusory nature of this so-

called dense, material world. That idea, which is one of our theosophical teachings, has helped theosophists enormously. Our teaching is that the whole physical world is illusory. It is also the teaching of ultramodern science. But when we say illusory, we do not mean nonexistent; we merely mean that the average human being does not understand what it really is; but as we in our bodies are also composed of physical substance, therefore we in our bodies are illusory in the same way.

These mental healers and Christian Scientists have also helped to give men courage. Personally I would seek courage along some other path, and I think a far higher and nobler path; but these kindly-hearted people have found this their own path; they have comfort in walking that path; and do you think that I would throw one particle of mud or say one word that would hurt a kindly heart? Never!

My attitude, therefore, towards mental healing and Christian Science is simply one of kindness and goodwill; and of particular kindness and especial goodwill where Christian Science and mental healing meet, contact, our own majestic theosophical philosophy. I cannot say what other theosophists think; and that is not my affair at all. In our Society we have members of all religious beliefs, I suppose, and Fellows who believe in no religion at all except theosophy, which is Religion *per se* — the very heart of religion — without dogmas, without crippling mental or spiritual bonds.

Question Two:

"What is the theosophic distinction between physics and metaphysics?"

This question is a bit vague. However, I think that I have the questioner's idea, and my answer is that fundamentally I think

that there is no difference at all. Fundamentally I see no difference whatever. From the standpoint of a mere category, yes, certainly. Physics are the things which deal with the material universe. Metaphysics are supposed to be the things which deal with the spheres unseen. There is the formal, categorical, distinction; but do not cheat yourselves with words nor with categories. Our theosophical teaching is that the visible world is naught but the expression of the invisible: that the visible physical world is rooted in the invisible, and merely expresses the powers, energies, forces, pouring out of, so to say, the invisible spheres, and expressing themselves in these physical realms.

Therefore, fundamentally there is no distinction at all, because physics is merely an expression of the operation of metaphysical laws and substances; and, as always, ultramodern science is now beginning to teach precisely the same Theosophical truth — is now beginning to declare that universal nature, exteriorly and interiorly, visibly and invisibly, is builded throughout upon an identically similar, structural plan, as I have just pointed out.

I think it was on last Sunday, or on the Sunday before, that I read to you an extract from some eminent English scientific writer, in which he pointed out that physics, from having been formerly believed to be based upon tangible, material, and very concrete physical realities, is now discovered to be, and held to be, founded entirely upon intangibles, immaterials, and invisible foundations. The fact is, our science is becoming mystical. It is beginning to become spiritual. It is beginning to realize that the things of the external, physical world which scientists are now studying are but the expressions on this plane of the energies and powers inherent in the worlds invisible; and it is really these invisible spheres which compose ninety percent of the universe.

Our physical sphere, so to speak, is just one narrow crosssection,

like a line, like a plane, dividing an apple into halves, and the superior and the inferior spheres may be represented by the two halves of the apple. Matter is but concreted forces, crystallized forces. You can put it in the inverse way if you like, and say that force or energy is but etherealized physical substance; but theosophists prefer the former way of speaking. We think that it is a truer way by which to express the natural fact.

Therefore matter and energy or force are one. Fundamentally spirit and substance are one, and that is precisely why spirit or force can control substance, matter. Spirit is the superior pole of which physical matter is the nether pole. All things begin in spirit as energies, and return to spirit at the great consummation of evolution, the end of the manvantaric cycle as theosophists say, or cosmic life period of any universe, after which ensues a period of rest, and then a new universe, the child of its predecessor. The karma, or child, or consequence, of the last universe begins a new course of evolution.

So the distinction, from the theosophical standpoint, between physics and metaphysics, is merely one of form, of human category, but in natural being there is no difference whatsoever. It is impossible to understand the smallest physical act, unless you explain it, and you can only understand it by putting it on a metaphysical foundation. Otherwise you cannot do it; and the scientists are all beginning to realize that now. The materialism of our fathers and grandfathers is as dead as a corpse.

Here is an interesting question: it begins with two quotations:

"'If men were as faithful as dogs.'

"'Believe me, friends, a dog understands the language of the soul.'

"Question: Do dogs reincarnate?"

Why not? Why not? I ask. How is it they are here — not only dogs, but all the other ranges of the beasts and of the plants? What produces the variety, the diversity, the heterogeneity, in the universe? Chance? What is chance? When a man does not know how to explain a thing, he says: it is chance. There is no chance. Nature is governed and ruled by inflexible and ineluctable law from beginning to end, and throughout the eternities; and therefore everything that is was caused, and anyone of you who knows anything of a beast, especially our household pets, knows that the animals have the beginnings of individuality, the beginnings of character: that two dogs are not alike any more than two trees are alike over the entire forests of trees of the world. The variety, the diversity, the heterogeneity in nature of which I have just spoken, is simply the consequence or resultant of the hosts, multitudes, armies, hierarchies, of evolving beings which infill the universe and indeed of which the very universe itself is builded. And these express themselves even on our physical plane in the vast and bewildering medley of diversity and variety around us.

Of course dogs reincarnate, just as much as human beings do. The dog is an involved expression — and so is any other beast, so is any plant — an involved expression of pent-up energies, fundamentally spiritual at their core, attempting to self-express themselves outwardly. What brings the oak out of the heart of the acorn? Chance? What is chance?

Of course animals reincarnate, just as human beings do, in the broad and general way of looking at the wonderful operation of the natural law of rebirth. But not exactly as human beings do, simply because human beings are more evolved than are the beasts.

Now, what I have just said contains no contradiction. I will try to

explain more accurately what I mean. A man is more evolved than a dog is, or than a horse or a pig or a cow, or a rose or any other plant. But will you tell me, please — and if you know, you will tell me — in what is a human being so vastly superior to a dog? I mean fundamentally. I have just said that a man is more evolved. Of course he is. He is like a god to the beasts. But essentially, in the core of each, there is no difference whatsoever between human flesh and the wood of this platform, or the flesh of the beasts. They are formed more or less of the same chemical elements, and are all rooted in the same universe.

What, then, is the difference between a man and a dog? A man has evolved, brought forth, from within himself, more or less of the divine splendor locked up within, of which I spoke when I began talking to you this afternoon: in other words, of the inner god: of that divinity within which it is human destiny to express in ever greater fullness as time goes on. The dog is but poorly, slightly, an expression of the locked-up monadic essence, as theosophists say, within or above. But these words above and within, of course, are human words, and are merely attempts to delineate somewhat of the location of consciousness.

Theosophists say that the beasts in far distant aeons will become men. But do we mean this in the Darwinian sense: that the bodies of the beasts are going to turn into human bodies? WE DO NOT!! We mean that the life-essence, the inner power, the inner bundle of energies, will expand more and more as time goes on, throwing out from within the latent powers of the inner splendor, and that as this is done in ever greater measure, so the dog, slowly, slowly passes out of doghood, as it were, into something higher; passes slowly out of this something higher into something still more perfect, and so on until finally this inner urge of the reincarnating bundle of energies, of this consciousness-center, manifests its inner powers sufficiently to show forth and to express in human

form, the human aspect of the spiritual monad. Please think it over.

Every atom in my body is a learning thing, low in the evolutionary scale at present, but nevertheless the expression of an inner flame, the expression of an inner consciousness and of a will, which slowly, through the ages, casts off house of life after house of life, merely in order to enter into higher mansions of existence.

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,  
As the swift seasons roll!

"The Chambered Nautilus" of Oliver Wendell Holmes expresses a sublime truth.

No, it is not the dog body that becomes a man; it is not the ape body that becomes a man. On the other hand, there is not a drop of simian or ape blood in the human body, not one drop. I have explained all this before, and shown what our theosophical teaching of evolution is, in another course of lectures delivered by me a couple or so of years ago under the title *Theosophy and Modern Science*, and these lectures have just recently been printed in book form.

Nevertheless, the apes and dogs and other beasts will ultimately evolve into humanity, but not the bodies of them. The bodies will die out, just as our human physical bodies will die out, and then we human beings shall be incarnated in bodies of more truly human dignity and beauty, manifesting in larger measure and power the splendor of the god within. I tell you somewhat of what you are within, and of what you have locked up within you — unspeakable beauty, involved, undeveloped powers and faculties as yet, of which you may dream perchance: and these dreams are unconscious prognostications of what the future will bring forth;



they are intuitions, intimations, of what the human race will in future become.

We are not Darwinists, but we are evolutionists through and through and through, in the sense that I have just explained — a god within, seeking through the ages ever more and more to express its transcendent powers, unrolling, unwrapping, unfolding, what is locked up within itself. Theosophical evolution, that is, closely follows the Latin meaning of *evolvere*, "to roll out," to unfold. Thus are we evolutionists. Thus does the acorn bring forth the oak. Thus does the microscopic human life-germ bring forth the human babe which grows into the six-foot man, bringing forth what is within; for evolution is growth.

A friend this morning sent in to me a newspaper clipping. It is taken from a paper that I have never heard of: *The Bible Crusader*, which, I believe, is a champion of so-called Christian Fundamentalism; and this little clipping I will read to you. It will illustrate neatly but perhaps rather feebly, what I have been talking about. The clipping is a poem and is entitled: "An Ode to a Fly."

Don't be discouraged, poor little fly,  
You'll be a chipmunk by and by;  
Ages later, I can see,  
You'll be a full-grown chimpanzee.  
Next I see, with a prophet's ken,  
You'll take a place in the ranks of men;  
And then, in the great sweet by and by —  
Why should I swat you, dear little fly? —  
We'll be angels, you and I —  
Prospective chum of my home on high,  
This is what Darwin says — not I.

But, you know, Darwin did *not* say that! It is amazing to hear

anyone talk of Darwin saying that a fly would evolve into being an angel. But, do you know, this little "Ode to a Fly" exemplifies very neatly what might be called the theosophical teaching of evolution — if you understand how to read it! If the idea is that the body of the fly slowly changes until it becomes a chimpanzee, then we say, No. But if the meaning is, as I like to construe it, that that tiny spark of animate existence which in the present body we call a fly — that spark, that spark of life and growing being — slowly through the ages becomes brighter and brighter as the inner powers and faculties unroll and express themselves as it passes up the rungs of the ladder of life until manhood is reached, when the inner god begins to show itself: then we can sing this "Ode to a Fly," and know just what it means. "We shall be angels by and by. Why should I swat you, little fly?"

Yes, dogs reincarnate, and so do flies, and so do we. We are all growing; everything that is, shares in the universal life. We are all united together, every one of us. There are no real inner barriers, no spiritual gulfs, between any two of the families of living beings. The same chemical elements compose the bodies of all of us. The same psychical atoms compose the intermediate nature of all of us. The same spiritual monad which is the core of you, the inner god, is likewise the spiritual kin of another monad which is the core, the fountainhead, of that little spark of animate existence.

Please do not understand me to mean that this divine thing is incarnated in the body of a fly or of a dog. That is ludicrous, that is not what I mean. I mean that even a little fly, even a dog, even a plant, is *rooted* in the divine, just as much as a human being is, just as much as the highest god in highest heaven is. Only, the human being expresses that divinity much more and much better than the beast; and the god expresses that divine flame of intelligence and consciousness and will better than do we poor,

imperfect, human beings.

"To what far country does persistent self-preferment lead?"

Where do you think selfishness leads to? I can tell you: Consistent, persistent, unending pursuit of self-preferment leads to the far-distant lands, in the "mystic West," of forgotten hopes, of abandoned faculties and powers. It is the far-distant land of unhappiness and of decay.

There is one thing that nature will not tolerate for long, and that is persistent self-preferment to the detriment of others, for the very heart of nature is harmony, the very fabric and structure of the Universe is coordination and cooperation, spiritual union; and the human being who seeks self-preferment unremittingly, without surcease, ends in that far-distant country of the Mystic West, the land of forgotten hopes, the land of spiritual decay; for nature will have none of him for long. He has set his puny, undeveloped will against the mighty currents of the cosmos, and sooner or later he is washed on to some sandbank of the river of life, where he decays.

Nature demands of all human beings cooperation, brotherhood, kindly feeling, love, self-forgetfulness, working for others. What would happen if a brick in a brick wall suddenly took it into its head (if it could, and had a head!) to try to become the whole wall? Pretty soon you would see a mason coming along, and that brick would not remain there long. That is the idea. Nature will not tolerate persistent and inveterate selfishness.

Look at our bodies. Look at a tree. Each is builded up of hosts of minor things, of minor entities, all working together, and composing one thing, in which they all live and move and have their being, and therein they partake of the common life. The universe is founded in harmony, the heart of it is love, for love

and harmony are two aspects of the same thing. Selfishness is shriveling, it means cold, it means the opposite of the expansive, warm power of love. The selfish man or woman always, sooner or later, goes to the wall. The wicked may flourish like the green bay tree for a little while, but not for long. And oh, how much nobler it is, how much grander it is, for men to feel their common kinship with each other, to feel almighty love stirring in the heart, to sense the feeling of our common brotherhood, and to live to benefit mankind — all this is sublime. Therein lie peace, evolution — unwrapping, unrolling, — happiness, devotion, friendship; and above everything else perhaps, that sense of inner self-respect which comes to a man when he realizes that he has lived his best.

The heart of each one of you is a divine being. This divine being is trying all the time to express itself better and ever better through your emotional and mental intermediate nature, which you call your human soul. Why not open the portals of your human selfhood to the rays from the divine sun within, and live, live like grand men? It is easier by far than to live a narrow, selfish, useless life.

The god within you is the core of your being. When you become fully allied with it as far as your sublimated human nature will allow you to be, then you become a man-god, walking the earth. You become a Christ, a Buddha. This essential divinity is in you, in every one of you.

**No. 41 (July 8, 1930)**

**QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK**

(Lecture delivered March 30, 1930)

You have heard lovely things said of me in the announcements that were made to you this afternoon. Those announcements were not prepared by me. I have protested at being held up as a sort of demigod before I come on the platform, because it is giving me a reputation that I may find it very difficult to sustain.

I am a man, one of your fellow human beings. Nevertheless, I am a man with a message to give to my fellow man, and I don't occupy this position as one who is superior, but simply because my destiny has put me at this post. It has devolved upon me to deliver to my fellow human beings the message of the ancient wisdom-religion of mankind; and the beautiful things that you hear about me are not about this human personality that you see before you, but concern the inner splendor which is working in me, as it is in every one of you: the inner god within each one of you.

You have been used for so long to hearing one of two things: either that you are naught but an outgrown or an overgrown ape; or, on the other hand, that you were created in time and space by some almighty arbiter of the destiny of worlds and of men: brought forth out of the abyss of "nothingness" to make a few gestures on this stage of life, and thereafter to enter into one of two totally unmerited places. You had your choice of these two places while you lived, and while you lived you chose your seat! Such was the idea.

I remember that when I was a little boy my dear father thought

assuredly that he was bringing up a youngster for the service of the Church — and I thought most assuredly he was not. And my will prevailed in the end — not my boy's will, but the instincts of my soul carried me out of the narrow and restricted purlieus of a dying system of thought; and just as the striving and aspiring spirit within me could never rest satisfied with theological or dogmatic asseverations of belief, likewise, in a precisely similar manner, have I been riding at times full tilt, Don Quixote-wise, at all the windmills, bogies, phantoms, ghosts, of human thinking, wherever I have seen them, and without a Sancho Panza. I never had one. I myself always had to carry my own lance, helmet, and shield. My favorite tilting has always been at the scientific bogies and windmills.

I refuse to look upon science — one of the sublimest occupations of human thinking — as other than a holy thing; and I will not accept hypotheses, theory, or scientific dogma, in lieu of truth. Give me truth at whatever cost is something that I have always felt; and then, when I found as a youngster that these ideas were not mine, but that other men had them too — when I came into theosophy and found there that other human minds and hearts were vibrating in unison of thinking with mine — then I did what every honest man does. I said: These people think as I do. What they teach is sympathetic to me. I feel the truth of what they say. Therefore I am going to join them. And I forthwith became a Fellow of The Theosophical Society.

You could not have kept me out; and if it had been anything less than what I had expected to find when outside, then you could not have kept me in. I mean every word of this. I am a lover of truth, as every theosophist is. We have no dogmas in The Theosophical Society. It is an explanation and a search for the wisdom locked up in cosmic and human history; it is a translation into human thought of what the great seers and sages of the ages

have seen, and seeing, have registered in human formulation; and this formulation, no matter in what age it may have appeared, is the ancient wisdom-religion of the race, of the human race, of mankind, today called theosophy.

Theosophists have no dogmas. We have teachings, doctrines, beliefs, which are clear-cut, well-defined, definite, and as easily provable as are the postulates of mathematics; but no dogmas. Every theosophist is sworn, not by any pledge or oath of mouth, but sworn by his heart and soul, to stand in the ranks of seekers for truth forever, and when a new light comes to us, we follow that light, no matter whither it may lead.

But don't imagine for one moment, from what I have just told you, that the teachings of theosophy are naught but a syncretistic collection of wise sayings gathered together and pieced together in more or less haphazard fashion. Not a bit of it — not a bit of it! Theosophy is a system which is wholly coherent and symmetrical in every line, because it is formed from within outwards, and is not a mere brain-mind structure of thought. There are in this theosophical system no awkward lacunae, no aching voids, which blind belief must attempt to bridge. Undertake the study of theosophy, and find out what it is, and then you will see that what I tell you is truth.

So much for one side of the matter; but there is another, and to most human hearts a still more fascinating side, to our theosophy, than is the mere statement that it is a reasoned formulation of the operations of nature — of nature's structure and fabric. This other side is that there are teachers in the world, men who know, who have sent their spirits behind the veil of the outward seeming, into the very abysses of nature, and have brought back and have taught what there they saw. These men are the titan seers and sages of the ages, and they compose even today a

brotherhood of men who to us average men would seem, and are in fact, what we would call perfected men; but we use the word perfected in a relative sense only, for beyond them there are other spirits, souls, entities — thinking and self-conscious beings, call them what you will — all along the rungs of the rising ladder of life.

Look at what the human race has already produced in its greatest children. Look at the annals of history where their names are recorded. See the records of the great ones, and what they have done. You Occidental people with your young civilization do not really think. We speak of the great ones, and you think that they are mere theory, a mere idea, and you say, "Prove their existence." Prove it? I in turn ask, and then I answer: Look at the historical records of the human race and see what it has brought forth in the way of grandeur. See for yourselves the great ones: men who have made and unmade civilizations by their magic power of thought, and by the splendor of their lives; men whose names are known at the fireside of every civilized home: men who were the founders of the human thinking current even in our age, great men who lived not only in Greece but in all countries of the world; and alas, were it not our misfortune that due to bigotry and intolerance and egoism, the egoism of our stiff Occidental minds, so that we do not yet know all the recorded teachings of the human race, the proof of what I say would be even more evident than it now is.

Theosophists stand with the pioneers of thought — scientists, religionists, philosophers, it matters not. Wherever we see a human spirit striving for truth and towards truth, there are we at his side. That is why — and I cannot speak for other theosophists, but I can speak for myself, and I know pretty well what my fellow theosophists think — that is why, I repeat, I read with such deep interest the marvelous advances in discovery and thought that



our present-day scientific thinkers and researchers are making. They are beginning to see a great light, a new knowledge is coming into human consciousness because the old barriers have been surmounted, the bonds holding in the human mentality have been broken, and the sunlight of truth is beginning to stream into the temple of human thought and illumine human minds; so that "I SEE" is the watchword today.

It matters not what mistakes the scientists may make. It is by our mistakes that we learn, and by them we grow. They are growing, and growing fast, because they are learning. They are beginning to see a vision, and to dream dreams; and their use of the imaginative faculty employed within the bounds of reason and good sense and human experience will lead them on like a bright light into the realms of future human thought.

Yes, ultramodern scientists are becoming mystics, seers; and it is a most interesting thing to see how closely they are approximating in their newest discoveries and in their interpretations of these newest discoveries, to what our majestic theosophical system teaches. How many times have I not spoken of this before from this platform? Often, and cited instances, given you points, to which I now again refer you.

I have many questions before me today that in justice to those who send these questions in to me I ought to answer this afternoon, but I simply shall not have time to do so. I will try to answer them in the order in which I have received them, excepting one or two that, by special request and for good reason given to me, I will also try to answer this afternoon.

The first question, therefore, is:

"Is the discovery of the new planet of any occult significance?  
Just where does this planet fit into the scheme of hidden

wisdom which, as theosophy, is now making itself manifest?"

I do not think that the discovery of this new or so-called ninth planet of our own solar system has any particular occult significance. It merely is a proof that what the main founder of The Theosophical Society said fifty years ago is true, and what the teachers of wisdom at about the same time said is true, to wit: There are many undiscovered planets in our solar system and they will be discovered in due course of time. The planet just discovered — if indeed it is a real discovery — is the first instance. Other planets doubtless will be found in time. But there are planets in our solar system which no human instrument will ever find, for they are not visible to eyes vibrating in unison with the vibrational rates which form and make our own physical plane of existence; and these planets are invisible worlds — planets invisible to us — nevertheless centers of life, and they are just as real to the beings living on them as is to us our own most illusory and unreal planet of physical matter, composed mostly of holes and "vacant spaces" as it is.

Yes, there are invisible planets, and scores of them; and there are some other planets which are visible, because formed of the physical substance of this plane, and doubtless they in time will be discovered just as this present planet 'X' has been.

I will say, however, that this ninth planet is not truly a member of our solar system, although it is probably under the sway and control of our sun. It is not a real planet, nor, for the matter of that, is Neptune. This newly discovered body is a planet if we follow the usual scientific sense of that word. But it is not a planet in our theosophical sense of the word. It and Neptune are what we may call captures, but they are not planets in our own theosophical sense, that is, born of the womb of the substance of our own solar system, true members of our solar family. They are

captures.

Those of you who have read somewhat of the studies and researches and teachings of our modern physical chemists, as regards the structure of the atom — the electronic theory in other words — will have some inkling of what I mean when I speak of a celestial body as being a capture. A solar system can capture bodies — and you may call them planets if you will, although from our theosophical standpoint and teaching they are not true planets. They are adopted children, if you like. And, on the other hand, if they are captures, likewise can they be lost; and the polarity of the solar system is changed, reversed, by either such a capture or such a loss.

This is an old thought to theosophists. In ultramodern science, however, the idea is altogether new, wonderful. And in fact it is wonderful, that human genius, unaided by the wisdom of immemorial time, should intuitively have grasped these ultramodern scientific ideas. But isn't it always so? Isn't every new, great, and epoch-making discovery an intuition, a flash of light, coming into the mind of some great man? Most assuredly it is.

Here is a question of quite another type.

"You have several times mentioned Olen of Lycia, Pamphos of Attica, and Musaeus of Eleusis, as having been great sages and seers. I have not been able to find anything about them in the books I have access to; will you kindly tell me something more about them?"

How? What this questioner wants is something that is read in a book. Then most people would think that the statement is true. Is it? Theosophists do not accept truth in that way. What you read in a book is some man's statement supposedly based on a "fact of

nature," or of history. A fact of nature — isn't it a familiar phrase! Is indeed any authoritative statement a fact of nature? How often do the ideas of the authorities regarding the facts of nature change? The truth of our fathers is today in the dust-heap, and our present-day truth will in its turn be discarded for a greater light. Therefore I say: Keep your minds open, free!

Now then, in answering this question I am not going to tell you something that you can read in a book. What would be the use of that, spending my time here telling you what you yourself can read? Instead, I am going to tell you something that perhaps you have not heard, but not giving it to you as a dogma: not saying that you must believe it on the authority of the theosophical teachings — simply that what I say is one of our teachings. On the contrary I tell you: Examine what I say; think about it, reflect upon it. If you like it, hold to it. If you don't like it, then it is not yours.

These three men — and there were others, such as Philammon and Orpheus — were members of a series of great initiates who taught that small portion of the human race which we are accustomed to call the archaic Greeks certain of the mysteries of nature. They were great men of lofty intellect, of intuitive spiritual perception, and of eager, aspiring minds. And so great was the impression that they made upon succeeding generations of Greeks that their names have come down even to us, an alien people in a foreign land, and in a far distant time, as examples of men whose ideas founded the civilization of one of the most brilliant peoples in recorded history.

They were all seers and sages, high initiates, men who had been taught by others, who in their turn had been taught, and who in addition had "lived the life," so that they were able to touch, as it were, a spiritual, psychical spring in their being, and thereupon

could send their visioning spirit into the very womb of nature, into the deep abysses of natural being, and bring back and formulate into human language what there they saw and learned.

These men were all poets. It was customary in those days to put wisdom in poetical form. Poetry is much more easily remembered than is bald prose. That was the reason for using poetry as the vehicle of their teachings.

Very little is known about these great Greeks of the archaic days, because the records concerning them were never fully committed to writing, and such records as were then made have long since been lost, so that the present-day scholar has almost nothing at all to go upon in attempting to discover their real characters and lives, except the age-old reverence in which they were held by all later generations of the Hellenic race.

"Will you please tell us what is the afterdeath state of children and quite young people whose lives are cut short by disease or accident?"

There is a pathos about this question. Theosophical teachings are very clear with regard to the afterdeath states, and these states are not the same for the one who dies at a ripe old age, full of years and of human experience, glad for freedom and rest, as they are in the cases of young people and children. The states are not the same for middle-aged and old people and for the child or infant which dies even before nature has been enabled to bring into active functioning the human brain, expressing the human consciousness. The former are released and go to their spiritual home for rest and recuperation. As the life dies down in the deciduous tree during the autumn time, when it sheds its leaves and goes to rest, so also does the life-wave return clothing the tree anew with a garment of green; so does the average man pass out of this physical sphere into rest and peace, and returns again to

earth-life after a period of well-earned repose. But a little child dying: in this case do you think that nature works haphazard, by chance? I would like to meet any human being who thinks that nature so does, and that anything whatsoever happens without preceding cause, without a precedent chain of causation — in other words, that chain of causation which our theosophical teachings speak of, and which we explain in our doctrine of karma, the doctrine of consequences: that what ye sow ye shall reap, that everything that is is the fruitage of what preceded it — cause and effect in other words.

Do you think that a little child comes into the world by chance, and goes out of it by chance — dies by chance? To you who thus believe I have nothing to say except: Go and learn, turn to nature, think! But to all human beings who have learned to think, whose minds follow logical processes, and who refuse to take the statements of other men on blind faith, but who will to know and insist upon having inner confidence and conviction — those who *will* to have these: to them I now speak and I tell them that nature is not mocked. Nature is never balked; and hence when a little child goes out, nature's design of a human life has been frustrated, *pro tempore* it is true, but nevertheless frustrated; and in consequence nature puts forth that human bud again, and does so very soon.

The reincarnating ego, as it approaches physical incarnation, is a bundle of energies seeking an outlet along lines of least resistance; and that outlet along lines of least resistance is precisely attraction to its own sphere. Hence, in the case of a child dying before this bundle of energies has exhausted its power, it seeks a new body almost immediately, in a family most like the one to which it formerly had been drawn. It does not do this consciously. Are we conscious when we sleep? And yet we are cared for by surrounding natural laws, and awaken safely in the

morning.

So it is with the little child whose call into physical life has been frustrated by an early death. It returns very, very soon to another human body. All the bundle of energies which compose that Reincarnating Ego which manifested so feebly and so ineffectually in the previous baby body, having been unable to express themselves, in consequence when freed from the one body seek the next open door, drawn thither by attraction; and reincarnation takes place almost immediately, in an environment, in a family circle, where the vibrational rate, if I may use popular words, is the nearest to its own.

Nature is very kindly. There are no chances, no haphazard actions, anywhere. The very foundation of nature is love — love and harmony, which are the same; and the root of these is Consciousness. There, in a few brief words, is the archaic theosophical teaching; and our ultramodern scientists, who are fast becoming mystics, speak of this consciousness to which I have just alluded, and call it mind-stuff. This is admirable! Similarly might theosophists call it mind-stuff, but we use another name — consciousness — but the root idea is identic.

I do not object to this fundamental of the universe being called mind-stuff, but I prefer our own theosophical term.

Consciousness is the fundamental of the universe, and that is why things are orderly, logical, consequential. Think of it. Pause a moment in thought upon it.

Now, as regards the afterdeath states, which is the exact way the question reads, of children and quite young people. It is in these cases precisely like a quiet, peaceful sleep, without dreams. The child in its short and ineffectual incarnation has built up no karma. It has laid down no fruitage of consequences which inevitably follow a human life. It died too young. So at death, at

the baby's death, it passes into a state of personal unconsciousness, exactly like what it might have had when alive in its mother's arms. It is peaceful and quiet in sleep.

I tell you that nature is infinitely merciful in her major processes, and it is only human imbecility and human weakness and the imbecility and weakness of other beings like us humans elsewhere in the boundless universe, which cast discord and disharmony into the cosmic harmony.

Man can do that, and beings like him can do that, because he has self-consciousness, and thereby partakes of the very existence and life-energies of his kin, the immortal gods. Yes, the gods, the great spirits which infill the universe — for the universe is filled full with them — are children of the cosmic consciousness, living and working in hierarchies within hierarchies, thus providing the infinite and bewildering diversity, the heterogeneity, of the life that we have around us. Every flower, for instance, is a manifestation of an embryo-individuality, expressing itself in its own particular type and characteristic. Every chemical element is the same. Every sun, every rate of vibration of anything, all exemplify the operation and manifestation of this law of infinite diversity, rooted in cosmic consciousness.

What did I say — cosmic consciousness? Yes, I use this as a convenient phrase, but speaking more accurately, I should say in cosmic consciousnesses, which are the roots of individuality in the universe, in the gods our kin — for every human being in the core of the core of him is a god.

The Christians of modern days have begun to get some inkling of this wondrous fact; and hence they speak of the immanent Christ — an old idea, purely theosophical, known for ages upon ages in the past, but called by different names. I call it the Buddha within, for it seems to me that this word more accurately describes the



divine entity of which I, a man, am the imperfect and feeble expression; and all evolution is simply the increase in self-expression of this deathless energy within, of this characteristic, this individuality: unwrapping, unfolding, unrolling, bringing out what is within itself; and this process takes place slowly through the revolving ages.

Can a thing become something which it is not in itself? Can a thing produce something which is not locked up within it? Think! Can it be other than it is? Can it bring forth something that it is not within? Think! O you Occidentals, you have not been taught to think! You have been taught to believe, to believe; and I call upon you in the name of holy truth, to think! Yes, you have been the wards, first, of an outgrown religion — and I here mean no disrespect; I never throw mud, but I am here to talk truth — and, on the other hand, you have been the wards of a system of scientific thought whose main characteristic is its virtue: change, changing views, growth, evolution, development of opinion and vision. Change, at once the weakness and the strength of modern science.

Do not believe anything that your conscience tells you is wrong, no matter who teaches it; no matter what the authority, god or demon. Be children of truth, and seekers of light.

"How closely is the god within each person related to the gods without?"

This is a beautiful question. My answer is: Closer than hand or foot, as an English poet says, nearer than the breath you breathe; for all these gods, whether they be the guardians and watchers of the universe, whose thoughts and whose wills compose what men call the laws of nature, acting with unerring accuracy and on a scale so majestic that we men, seeing but a short cross section of the universe, do not realize what it is that we see — even they,

and the god within, are all children, offspring, of one supreme consciousness, which is the summit of our own cosmic hierarchy — not God, but the sublimest expression of consciousness and love and will in our own hierarchy of lives.

This sublimest, of which we are all children, and in which we move and live and have our being, is but the lowest rung of another and grander ladder of life, to us still more incomprehensibly sublime. The god within you, the divine being, the immanent Christos, the inner Buddha, is akin with the entire universe of which it is an inseparable part — inseparable because there is nowhither that it may go outside of the boundless All. Therefore it is a part of the frontierless and beginningless and endless infinitude. We are all kin, we are all rooted in the same universe, all participant in the same cosmic life — by this phrase generalizing the truth; all participants in the same cosmic consciousness — by this phrase generalizing the truth; all participants in the same destiny, all springing from the same origin, and all pursuing that same grandiose evolutionary path leading ever upwards.

This does not mean that there are no evolutionary ebbs or swirls. There are. There are temporary retrogressions — that is our theosophical teaching; but the general trend and impulse is steadily from better to better to better. To a best? Never. There are no endings, there are no frontiers. That idea, so ancient that formerly the whole world knew it and that theosophy has always taught, is one fine thing that Einstein did for the world: he introduced to the West in scientific and mathematical formulation what was to that West a new idea, but it is as old as the ages with us theosophists: that all things are relative to each other, and that there are no absolutes or jumping-off places — utter and unbridgeable gulfs or divisions. All things are forever interlinked, interlocked, interbound, interfunctioning, for we all

are the children and offspring of one vast incomprehensible entity. But as such entities are literally infinite in number, where then can even human imagination, with all human wisdom, stop, and say: Here is the end? Vain, vain egoism!

I have here three questions which seem to be so closely along the same line of thought, that I will answer them together or, rather, read one and answer it briefly, and then go to the next and answer that briefly from a slightly different viewpoint, and then take up the next. The first question then is:

"How is one to answer in a few words, off-hand, the question: 'What is the basis of theosophy?', satisfactorily for the purely matter-of-fact man of worldly experience?"

Some people are certainly ambitious! Fancy trying to answer the world problem in a few words, satisfactorily to the man of matter-of-fact worldly experience! I would not even think of trying to do so. It cannot be done. Tell the problem of the universe in a few words satisfactorily to some man of matter-of-fact worldly experience! What would you say? — I would say — no, I won't say it.

I can tell you how I always answer this question, though I recognize full well that it is a very imperfect answer, but I let my questioner know that fact. I say: Read our books. But if you want a statement from me, I can tell you what I have found Theosophy to be: it is a formulation in human language of the operations, structure, origin, present state, and destiny of the Universe. Now, I don't expect you to accept that definition offhand. If you did, I would not respect you. But study it. Study our books. I have told you what I have found to be the truth.

Let me add a few words to that. I would say that theosophy is also for those who suffer, whose hearts are heavy-laden and burdened

with pain. It gives comfort; it brings peace; and weary human hearts blossom and have rest under the blessed balm of healing thought that theosophy gives. Prove it! That is all I ask of you. Prove it by reading our literature, by thinking about it, by just a little honest-to-goodness thinking!

I wonder how many of you think? How many of you think that you think? Do you think that you are thinking, if you read something in a book, an encyclopedia or a dictionary or a newspaper, and accept it as your belief? In what way are you then better than the animals, or superior to the beast, who believes that whenever its master says "cluck, cluck, come," it means a little meat or something to eat? Are you going to be like that? Do you want somebody to come along and say "cluck, cluck, come," to you? Well, it is ridiculous, and you see it; but that is just what happens so often today.

I tell you that the Occidentals — and I do not mean this unkindly because in so speaking I want to wake you up — the Occidental peoples are the most credulous, superficially-thinking people in the world. Now, that is a fact, I believe. It is a fact. You will find that multitudes, hosts, armies of people believe something. But begin to probe a little bit. "Where did you learn that?" "Well, I read it." "Where?" "Oh, in a magazine article, the newspaper, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, or *Americana*," or something of the sort. "Have you yourself thought about it?" "Why no, I have not the time to think. I take it for granted that if they print it in a book, under some eminent man's name, it must be true."

But I say to you: Not for me! Precisely because I believe in teachers, I am going to choose my teacher, and it must be a man who *knows*, and to him I give my allegiance, faithful and true, because it will be a long time before I shall be convinced that he is my Teacher. Or, it may be very quickly. As a theosophist it took

me just ten minutes to make up my mind that I had found truth when I first met theosophical teachings; and I have been searching and probing for more truth ever since, and the more I have searched and the more I have probed in our sublime teachings, the more I have found to support my first choice. That is my experience in theosophy.

"I often need to give an inquirer into theosophy a short and concise definition of its meaning and also of the work of The Theosophical Society, but find it difficult to put the essential points briefly in such a way as to attract his interest and make it clear that theosophy has a more vital message for him than anything else he can possibly meet. What is your advice as to the best way to do this in a few words?"

My advice is: Do not do it. If you can set forth the problem of the universe and of man in a few words, or think you can, I will come and sit at your feet. You will tell me how to do it. I will work my fingers to the bone to get that knowledge. I will be the slave of love and truth, if someone can show me how to win almighty truth and to express it in a few words.

However, I can try to express at least one aspect of truth in a few words, and I will now make the attempt. It is as follows: Learn to love; learn to forgive. That will exercise all your manhood or womanhood. Love is the cement of the universe, the binding energy which keeps all things in place and harmoniously acting and interacting. I pity a man or a woman whose heart has never stirred. I say that I pity him or her. He or she does not know one-tenth of life: neither its beauty and its grandeur nor its pain. Do not live in a fool's paradise of illusion. There are pain and sorrow in the world, and it is our human duty to bring help and comfort to burdened hearts; and while ordinary philanthropy and charity are excellent, I tell you that better than feeding the body is

feeding men's souls and minds. Oh, these hungry human hearts!

"When a man has been deeply interested in the teachings of theosophy for many years, would you advise him to join The Theosophical Society? What benefit is derived from openly joining a body of people whose ideals are similar to one's own?"

I think that I have already answered this question. You have the benefit of friendship; you have the feeling that you are giving as well as receiving, which feeling any decent, honest, and honorable man likes and respects. You have the feeling that you are putting your energy, your intelligence, your will, and your power, back of what you believe to be true. You begin to respect yourself for being an honest and an earnest man, doing a part in the world's work.

Is not that inducement enough? Every one of these motives appeals to every fiber of a decent man's being or a decent woman's being. And you notice that I have not said that the laborer is worthy of his hire. I haven't said that you are going to get something. You certainly will — that is automatic — but you spoil a magnificent movement of the human soul if you sell yourself. Give yourself! Give, give, give! Give your very soul for truth! Join hands with those who are laboring in a great and noble work.

"Are not the many theosophical societies the world over merely separate groups of one universal Theosophical Movement with the same basic spiritual ideal?"

They are all unquestionably members of the same Theosophical Movement. I hope that all these different Theosophical Societies have the same spiritual ideal. I am looking for it in these societies and there I hope to find it.

Since I came into office last July, following the heart-longing of my great predecessor, Katherine Tingley, I pledged my word that I would work to bring about union and harmony among men, and more especially among fellow theosophists the world over, never minding what their society is, what their opinions may be. I know what I have and what I can give to those who believe in me — the ancient wisdom of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion; but as far as regards these other societies, I seek the points of union and harmony with the T.S., not those of disunion and discord. I offer in the name of the Society which I have the high honor to head, the hand of good fellowship and fraternal feeling to the members of every other Theosophical Society everywhere — a gesture of sincere friendship and goodwill.

I am beginning to receive most welcome and encouraging responses. Plans I hope in a short time will be under way for a unifying of all the theosophical societies, or at least most of them, the nobler and better of them, into one theosophical brotherhood, doing together our sublime labor for humanity.

I do not favor so much a federation of these societies, although I, and I believe my Fellows of The Theosophical Society, would be willing to enter such a federation in default of a closer union. No, I do not favor a federation so much, as the idea of union. Union is strength. Disunion is weakness; and I have been instructed to carry out, as best I can and may, this labor of unification. It does not mean that I abandon by one iota the noble ground upon which The Theosophical Society stands. It does not mean that in joining us, the members of any other Theosophical Society must of necessity give up the Society in which they saw the first gleams of theosophic light. But it were better that they do, for then there would not be the same separation of interests which now exists, and all true theosophists would be united in one society partaking of one common life under one common head.

Our constitution is broad enough to satisfy anyone at any time. The only prerequisite to membership is an acceptance of the principle of universal brotherhood; and those who belong to The Theosophical Society will tell you — and they are honest men and women — that I came to teach the ancient wisdom-religion as best I could; that the light has not died out from the world and can be had by all who come to our temple door (not this building, but the Temple of the Esoteric Wisdom) and thereon give the right knock. Knock, and it shall be opened unto you; ask, and ye shall receive in good measure, overflowing, without reservation.

In taking leave of you this afternoon, I do so by repeating to you what I tell my audience on every Sunday, as a thought for them to carry away with them, for this thought is the very basis of all theosophical teaching, and it is also the fundamental meaning of natural evolution. Every human being is a manifestation, still imperfect, still feeble, of a divine entity within him, or above him — never mind the adverb. Every one of you is an incarnate god, attempting to express in ever larger measure its transcendent powers and faculties and energies; and your ordinary human nature can manifest this only in the ordinary human way as intelligence, as love, as pity, as compassion, as understanding; and all the other large variety of the operations of the human inner constitution which make men men.

But you can confabulate with the gods, if you first learn to confabulate with the god within. And this you can do. You can follow ever more withinwards the path of spiritual selfhood — spiritual selfhood, I repeat, not the small, puny, petty, little human self, but the selfhood divine within you, which has no frontiers of place or time, and which is the same in you and in me, in all beings; the pure and unalloyed consciousness which is the very fundamental of the boundless universe. Of it you are a



child. In it you are rooted. All the faculties and powers of boundless infinitude, therefore, are in you, latent or expressing themselves feebly. This is the message of the great seers and sages of all the ages; and I pass it on to you.

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[Vol 1, No 42](#)

[Contents](#)

**No. 42 (July 15, 1930)**

**QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK**

(Lecture delivered April 6, 1930)

I see familiar faces on every Sunday afternoon when I speak here. I like to see the friendly gleam of recognition in the eyes of those to whom I speak; for, as I have told you, friends — and I tell you this on every Sunday when I have the pleasure to speak to you — I am a man with a message for you, something to give to you, something that is worthwhile; and if I don't succeed in conveying it to you, the fault is my own; but I nevertheless feel that I have done my best. And furthermore, the message that I have to give to you is not what we theosophists call a brain-mind formulation of other men's theories and beliefs. It is not something that you are bound to accept because I tell you so, or because The Theosophical Society teaches it; nor is it something that is taken out of encyclopedias; nor, again, something that is the fruit of thought when burning the midnight oil.

It is a message conveying to mankind something of the truths of the wisdom-religion, that formulation in human tongues of what the great seers and sages of the ages have seen behind the veils of the outward seeming; and they have seen it, because they have been able to send their percipient selves behind this outward veil and have brought back to men an interpretation of nature's structure, operations, and fundamental causes. Therefore is it that the message which these great sages and seers have formulated in human tongues, is worthwhile hearing.

We have no dogmas in The Theosophical Society. To join us you do not have to believe anything that is repugnant either to heart or to mind. You have merely to accept honestly and earnestly the

only prerequisite to membership that we have, and that is an honest and earnest belief in universal brotherhood, the fundamental spiritual unity of all that is. Our message, my message, the message of my great predecessors, is an earnest one. It is one well worth listening to. We tell you also that not one of the great religions or great philosophies to which human genius, the human spirit, has given birth, lacks somewhat of the fundamental truth which is the very basis of the universe in its spiritual and psychological realms. Every one of them has, as its foundation, a part, a portion, of this sublime reality.

But you Occidentals — and I constantly repeat this, because part of my duty is to awaken you — take your opinions on faith; you take your opinions on belief. You don't really think; and to make you think is a part of the sublime message which I have to communicate to you. I want to awaken you; I want to awaken you to the reality of what you have within you, to the realization not merely of a brain-mind belief, but that the core of the core of your being, the heart of the heart of you, is a divine entity, an inner god. The mystical Christians of the present day speak of this as the immanent Christ, and the Orientals from time out of mind have given to the same truth other names. I love to call it the inner Buddha, because that word to me expresses neatly, aptly, fully, just what this inner and sublime entity is.

Every one of you is a god in the core of the core of your being. Ye are gods, is the teaching of the Christian scripture, the Christian New Testament; and it is true. How this beautiful saying has been obscured through the ages, and how the minds of Occidental men and women have been diverted from the glorious truth taught by the great Syrian sage, Jesus, to the brain-mind lucubrations of theologians, called the theology of Christendom!

Return to Jesus if you want to be a Christian — not to the Jesus of

the churches, but to the great sage and seer, the illuminated and titanic spiritual energy which worked through that god-man, or man-god. And he was not the only one of such outstanding spiritual grandeur. The records, the annals, of history, are filled with the teachings of other men as great as he, all of them incarnate deities or gods — but not God in the ordinary sense.

Now, I am not a Christian. I am a theosophist, and consequently I have sympathy for beauty wherever beauty lies, especially inner beauty. I have understanding of splendor wherever I see it; and my heart throbs in sympathy and kindly feeling when I sense spiritual splendor in the religions and philosophical teachings of other men, of other races.

Naturally the inner part of me is a divine being, as the inner part of each one of you is; and in proportion as man can evolve forth, bring forth, the divine essence of himself, does he see divinity in his fellows, and does he recognize the common brotherhood of mankind, and does he see beauty and splendor. Love sways his heart. It is dogmas, it is opinions, that have separated men; and theosophists recall you to the primal truths of spiritual being.

Never mind what religion your fellows may profess: turn to radicals, to essentials. I am neither a Christian, nor a Buddhist, nor a Mohammedan, nor a Brahmanist; I am a theosophist, a searcher for truth — and one who to a certain extent has found truth. My soul is anhungered for truth and for more truth; and oh, what illumination have I not received since the doors of my heart were opened! I feel my kinship with the gods who infill the universe --- with the cosmic spirits, bright and flaming intelligences, call them by what name you will, for the name matters nothing at all.

Therefore do not be frightened, do not be afraid, because I use the good old term gods — because that is what they are. A clever

English — no, pardon, a clever writer from old Ireland, said some time ago: Our ancestors were afraid of ghosts; but we are afraid of names. Are you going to be afraid of a name? It is thinkers who rule the world. The divine Plato was right: it is ideas that rule men. It is ideas that make and unmake civilizations and that shake men's hearts.

Show to any man, I do not care where he stands — demigod or demi-beast according to the life which he lives — show him beauty, show him truth, show him inner splendor, show him intellectual and spiritual strength; and you have caught him. I am a fisher of men; I am fishing for men's souls. That is my sublime purpose, and I am happy when I hook them. Yet not I, indeed, for I am but the human instrument; but the sublime message which I bring to you from the great sages and seers of mankind is the hook and the bait. It is this message which is the bait that I offer to you; and oh, how blind you are if you don't take it! You prefer the prison of the sense house, you prefer the darkness of ignorance, you prefer sleep, death, you prefer to have your intellects stultified, because, forsooth, you are afraid to give yourself even to truth.

There are some people who do not like to move, either intellectually or spiritually. Their souls are crystallized hard, and set around the aspiring spirit within them; and I am going to smash that crystallization if I can. I want to bring to you light and help, to give to you light without price — yet indeed not my light. That would be worthless to you; nor is the light that I bring the light of any body of men, but is the everlasting truths of natural being; and the first lesson is that you have unknown powers and faculties within you. Awaken!

How do you receive truth? From outside? Or from within? Where is your understanding? Outside? Or within? Where is your heart?

Outside? Or within you? Look within. "Man, know thyself," said the old Delphic oracle of archaic Greece; for in you lie all the mysterious powers, faculties, energies, of the universe, mostly latent in you. A few, a very few, of these faculties and energies have received in men a small modicum of development, are slightly evolved; and these few qualities you know by the names of intelligence, understanding, love, compassion, pity, brotherly feeling, kindness. You can develop all these to the *n*th degree. You can become as gods walking the earth, for each one of you in the inmost of the inmost of his being is a god. You are kin to the gods who control, guide, and rule the universe, and who provide the vast and bewildering diversity which we see around us.

All nature is conscious. There is not a mathematical point which has not its own part of consciousness, which is not an inseparable part of the divine essence.

Friends, waken, for you sleep! You are what Pythagoras, the great Greek sage and seer, called the living dead — living in your bodies, yet dead to all that is worthwhile. There is, or there was, a humorous American poet who wrote of this type of man — and I am going to read to you a few lines of his writing, and I want you to see the application to those people who prefer the sleep of indifference, of ignorance, and who are too lazy to think, too lazy to awaken themselves, too lazy to be men. They are like the insensate stone.

I wish I were a little rock  
A-settin' on a hill,  
A-doin' nothing all the day  
But jest a-settin' still.  
I wouldn't eat,  
I wouldn't sleep,  
I wouldn't even wash —

I'd jest set still a thousand years  
And rest myself, by gosh!

Now, do you want to be such? I think that stones are softer than some human hearts that I have known; and I think that some human brains are more rigid and crystallized than any steel I have ever seen. The hardest thing in the world, the most adamant, is the human heart when it is perverse, when it won't awaken, when it won't receive truth, when it is self-satisfied that it has all the truth and that nothing more can be told to it. Such a case is hopeless, just hopeless, at least for the time being; and such a self-satisfied heart will have to go through the ages, through incarnation after incarnation in a human body, until the blows of experience crack the shell of the lower selfhood and then the Christ-light from above will enter in from the inner god.

I am here to answer questions. I can see by your faces that I have already answered many an unspoken question. There are unspoken questions, and these are the questions which touch me most deeply. I know something of the suffering that a human heart can undergo. I know what pain is; I know somewhat of these things, and I have more sympathy with the unspoken questions that I feel in the atmosphere sometimes, than I have even with the questions written and sent in to me to answer here from this platform, because a human being in his feelings is honest and in his words is often dishonest. Talleyrand, the French diplomat, told the truth. "Gentlemen," he said, "words are most excellent cloaks with which to disguise our thoughts," — preaching a gospel of deceit! Isn't it lovely, that men cannot meet on a common ground of trust!

In this connection, I will tell you something that I myself have found in life. The honest man is far more difficult to deceive than is the professional trickster. You cannot blind the eyes of love.

They are clairvoyant and penetrate even stony human hearts.

Here is the first question sent in to me for answer:

As you are glad to receive any thoughtful questions, I would like to know if there is any difference in the teaching of theosophy and Sufiism taught by the late Inayat Khan of India?

I do not know the teachings of this Sufi mystic. I think that he is a Mohammedan, for the name shows it; and the Sufis are Mohammedan mystics. Sufiism is the theosophy of Mohammedan doctrine, and embodies teachings which did not originate with the Arabian prophet, so called, but which were brought into his religion, that is, came into Mohammedanism, after and a long time after, the Arabian prophet died; and, furthermore, came into Mohammedanism from outside its own sphere, from ancient Persian thought, for there are in every race of people, springs, wells, fountains, of mystic human thought and feeling.

I told you a little while ago that there is theosophy at the bottom, forming the fundamental and the groundwork, of every great world religion and world philosophy; and this foundation in every instance has somewhat, usually in fairly large degree, of our theosophical doctrines. Similarly is it so in the rigid, iron-clad, dogmatic — and I wish to be kindly, although I am simply stating facts — religion called Mohammedanism. The Sufi teachings are beautiful as a rule. They contain things which are purely theosophic, teaching the existence of the Inner Splendor which I have spoken of as the inner god, teaching the benefits, spiritual and intellectual and material also, to be derived from exercising the faculties within you, love especially. Sufiism likewise teaches the necessity of losing the personal self if you wish to gain the greater Self, for this lower, personal self is the adamant wall hemming in or enclosing within rigid limitations the greater



splendor within.

Give up your life, said Jesus, if ye will find it. Verily it is so. This is a statement of natural law.

There is much in common between theosophy and Sufiism, simply because Sufiism is the theosophy of that particular body of emotional and theological doctrine called Mohammedanism. I take pleasure in reading Sufi poets, and in reading the Sufi teachings; but here is what I want to tell you, friends. Why should I give up the entire encyclopedia when I am offered but one section of that encyclopedia? Do you get my thought? In other words, why should I give up the whole — theosophy — when I am offered but a part — Sufiism? Sufiism is a part of the general Theosophical teaching; but I prefer the grander and greater thing, because it is the entirety and fullness of wisdom.

I have much sympathy for Sufiism. I have known Sufis, and have respected them; and, for all I know, we have Sufis in The Theosophical Society today. We do not ask our people: To what religion do you belong? It is true that we like to know this, but if they choose to say: I prefer to keep that to myself, they can do so. We have adherents, I believe, of all religions and of none, in The Theosophical Society.

Question Two. There are perceptible stars so distant that it takes thousands of years for their light to reach us. Are there not innumerable gradations and distances between the densest and lightest of mundane substances, if there is proportion in the universe?

Most certainly there are; and the fact that this idea is modernly abroad in the world shows that our modern scientific researchers and discoverers are growing to be mystical thinkers. The old materialism of our fathers is dead, and the newest class of

ultramodern scientific researchers and philosophers are growing very mystical indeed, and they are telling us that this physical universe of which our imperfect physical senses of report tell us somewhat, is but a very small portion of the entire universe — and this is an old theosophical teaching indeed.

They are furthermore saying and teaching an old, old doctrine, old as thinking man: that the fundamental of the universe is what they call mind-stuff, consciousness, the root of all that is. This being so, and as we see diversity everywhere, we must find an explanation for that diversity; for it is obvious that if there be but one mind-stuff in the universe, one consciousness, the bewildering diversity which surrounds us — individuality, in other words, such as is manifested in men — would be simply inexplicable.

Therefore do theosophists point to the ancient truth, and say: Yes, consciousness, mind-stuff, is the fundamental of nature; but this is merely an abstract way of stating the truth. The concrete fashion, and the better way, is to say: consciousnesses infill the universe, and provide the diversity which you see everywhere. The world, the universe, is filled full with gods, divine beings, cosmic spirits. Every great religion has taught this, and they have called these beings by different and differing names. In the Christian religion they call them Archangels and Angels and Principalities and Powers and Virtues and Thrones and Dominions, and whatnot; but I prefer the good old name gods, for gods they are. And we of the human host are merely one family of the innumerable hierarchies interblending and interlinking with each other and including all the self-conscious, sentient, thinking entities which infill the universe, and give to it what we men call the laws of natural being.

Consequently, all nature is formed on the hierarchical pattern,

and all nature is graded off, so to say, stepped off, or runged off, like the rungs of an ascending ladder of life. Therefore there is gross matter, more ethereal matter, matter still more ethereal, matter becoming spiritual, matter still more spiritualized, spirit, superspirit, the divine, and so on forever. Where will you stop, and say: Here things begin, and there things end? Life is frontierless, without bounds, and is beginningless and endless. Will you show me where life begins? Will you show me where life ends? You cannot do it.

Look into your own self, examine the arcana of your own consciousness. Feel the aspirations, the hopes, the longings, the yearnings, for something better, grander, greater, nobler. Indeed, your very heart tells you that man's evolutionary pilgrimage is through eternity. Our physical scientists are telling us that this so-called gross matter, which seems so solid and substantial, is mostly holes, vacancies, empty spaces, and so it is. This is an old and familiar doctrine to theosophists, and it is ancient as thinking man.

Therefore do we say that the material universe is illusory, not meaning that it does not exist, but meaning that our physical senses of report do not tell us the truth about it, and that we require our awakened intelligence within us to understand even the external universe.

I repeat that all nature is graded off, stepped off, in rising scales, not only of matters or substances, but graded into worlds or realms or spheres filled full with spiritual beings; and even in our own physical universe, nature has ranges from the ethereal to the grossest physical, and hence the most distant stars are connected with us and are in fundamentals and essentials nowise different from stars which are closer to us; and the same thought applies to our own sun which of course is a star.

I am now speaking more particularly of the inner and invisible worlds of which our physical, exterior world is but a cross section, so to say, dividing the superior from the inferior. We human beings exist in this physical universe as travelers, pilgrims, passing through our present, especial phase of experience; but a great and sublime destiny is ours, and the time is coming in the far distant aeons of the future when men, because they then shall have brought forth the divinity within them, shall walk the earth like gods — simply because they shall have brought out into manifestation the powers of the inner god. All things of value are within us — or above us. Which adverb we use, within or above, matters not at all; but pray get the idea of the dominant power of the indwelling divinity. All powers, all faculties, everything that is great, everything that is worthwhile, everything of value, comes from within and above. The oak grows out of the heart of the acorn. The six-foot man comes from a microscopic human life-germ. Such is nature's law, pouring forth what is within, unrolling what is within, unwrapping what is within. This is evolution as theosophists understand it.

We are evolutionists through and through, but we are not Darwinists.

In your lectures you sometimes speak of "the gods, who make and unmake civilizations." Would you enlarge upon that subject? Several questions with relation to it arise in one's mind:

Would a civilization arise at all if the gods did not bring it about? Or is it a natural process, which they help along?

If the latter is the case, are they entitled to break it down only to the extent that they build it up?

Don't you think it must be a very risky business, to start things

which affect the destiny of a world?

Why, I certainly do think it risky! But what of that? Are you going to be like the stone of the verse that I have just read which wants to "sleep for a thousand years, by gosh?" Pardon me this language. It is the vernacular of the poet, not mine! Or are you going to be men, real men, thinkers, movers, actors, playing a sublime role in the drama of life? You cannot do otherwise. You cannot stay still an instant, even if you wish to do so. Perforce you act; and the greater the man the more efficient is his action, and the more quiet it is. All great things grow in the silence; in the silence does growth bring forth its treasures.

I have never said that "the gods make and unmake civilizations." I have been misquoted. I have said that it is great men who make and unmake civilizations, which is what I have said this afternoon. I never said that the gods bring about civilizations or destroy them. It is men who bring about and destroy civilizations: great men who make them, men whose thoughts stir their fellows; and ordinary men destroy the work of the greater men. You men do it, and therefore are you responsible for what you do.

It is you men who help to make civilizations, and you are responsible for the civilization that you bring forth. Natural law acting through and by divine entities will hold you responsible; in other words common nature will hold you responsible. Your own hearts and minds will hold you responsible for what you do, for what you make yourself to be. This in brief is our doctrine of karma: As ye sow, that ye shall reap. You cannot be something that you have not made yourself to be, and therefore are ye held responsible.

Yes, it is risky to start things. It certainly is. There is a risk in every act you do. You may leave this temple, enter your automobile, start to town, and have an accident on the way. But what are you

going to do? Are you going to stay in bed all day long and all night long for fear of a risk?

Yes, you cannot do otherwise than act; and the thing to do is to act nobly, to put the best of you in what you do, and leave the rest to the Powers that be. Be a true man. Learn to think. Nobody else will deceive you if you yourself are not crooked, because if your heart is pure you will have the eagle's vision; you will see truly; you will feel rightly; you will instinctively sense where honor and honesty lie.

Here is a question which I found very interesting.

How long will fear continue to dominate humanity?

Fear God,  
Fear the devil,  
Fear the king,  
Fear fresh air,  
Fear poverty,  
Fear the cold and heat,  
Fear the country next to your own,  
Fear death,  
Fear change,  
Fear the dark.

"That which I feared has come upon me."

Poor, fear-ridden men! Do you know what fear means? You are bringing the things that you fear upon yourself. You become a psychical magnet psychologically attracting what you fear.

The man whose heart is filled with love and pity never knows what fear is. There is no room for it in his heart. Love all that lives, for love is the cement of the universe, and you then ally yourself with invincible cosmic powers and you become strong and spiritually and intellectually clairvoyant. Love is a mighty

power. It casts out all fear, as you have been told before. These are not vain and empty words. Feel their truth. Do you fear what you love?

Men will be ruled by fear just as long as they love themselves; for then they will be afraid of everything that is going to happen — afraid to venture, afraid to act, to do, to think, for fear lest they lose. And they will then lose. It is the great men who do not fear, who venture, who act, who do — for they are the doers; and they are also the thinkers of the world, because in either case they have no fear. They love the things that they do. Therefore they have no fear.

Now put this material fact upon a general and higher plane, and you will have one of the noblest teachings that the great sages and seers have ever brought to their fellow men: Perfect love casteth out all fear. You will then never fear death; you will never fear poverty; you will never fear anything in proportion as your heart is filled with love and understanding, because love — perfect love — bringeth understanding. These are practical rules of ethics, practical rules of human conduct; and oh, the pity that mankind has lost sight of them! "That which I feared has come upon me!" It is always so.

The next question before me is the following:

Do inharmonious thoughts poison the air that we breathe?

Most decidedly they do, and not only do they poison the air, but they also poison your very bloodstream, poison your body, and disease is the resultant. What are inharmonious thoughts? They are selfish thoughts, evil thoughts, mean thoughts, thoughts out of tune; and they arise in a heart which lacks love. Now think! Perfect love casteth out all fear. This statement is absolutely true; and perfect love in the human heart tends to build up a strong

body, physiologically clean, because the inside of you is psychologically and morally clean, harmonious in its workings, for in this case, the mind, the soul, the spirit — the true man — are harmonious in their workings. The body merely reflects what you yourself are.

But lest there be a misunderstanding here, remember that every man reaps what he has sown in this or in some other life on earth; consequently it may happen that a man presently in a human body may be a good man, a noble-hearted man, but he may be unfortunate in being afflicted with some disease. The reason for this is that old, bad karma, as theosophists say, in other words, causes sown in some past life, have not previously had a chance to work themselves out of the system, and therefore this man, good, high-minded, without any known cause in the present life for his disease, suffers and his heart is heavy laden. But when these causes have exhausted themselves, the trouble will pass, and the experience will have educated him to nobler things: softened his heart, clarified his mind, filled his whole soul with pity and compassion for those who suffer as he did.

Be not afraid of pain; be not afraid of suffering. Be not afraid of obstacles. Be the best that is in you, and all will turn out right someday, sometime.

Harmony is the basis of the structure of the universe, because it is one of the functions of love which is the heart of the universe. Therefore love and harmony are two sides of the same thing. Have harmonious thoughts and you will become beloved of your fellows, and you will never harm any other being. Oh, if I could tell you the blessedness, the peace, the happiness, that come to those who truly love! Impersonal love is magical, magical; it works marvels.

I will answer one more question, and then I shall leave you:



There are indications that many of the outer barriers betwixt man and his own innate divinity are disappearing. Has not man himself erected those barriers that he is now busily removing?

"Our remedies oft in ourselves do lie,  
Which we ascribe to Heaven." — *All's Well that Ends Well*, Act I

Will the removal of those barriers enlarge man's consciousness — also his responsibilities?

The removal of those barriers will indeed enlarge man's consciousness; but I don't like the way in which this question is phrased. I would prefer to say that as man's consciousness grows, it bursts the bonds hemming it in, breaks down the barriers preventing its expression, and the inner splendor shines forth. We are surrounded by barriers of our own making, of our own construction, of our own thought-fabric, and our worst barriers are within us. It is also obvious that as our consciousness grows and expands, the part we play in life grows proportionately greater and more important, and therefore also do our responsibilities increase.

If a man can conquer himself, he becomes a partner and collaborator with the gods. Self-conquest is the most difficult thing for a man to achieve: the most subtle, and yet the noblest. The trouble is that men do not conquer themselves; they are always fighting themselves. They do not understand what self-conquest means. In the name of the immortal gods, why do you fight, fight, fight, fight, fight? Why do you dignify the things that you fight? Forget them! Forget them I say! Pay no attention to them. Be yourself, your inner self, and then you will grow as naturally as the lotus flower under the rays of the sun and moon.

Thus spoke in substance the ancient sage of China, Lao-tse: "There will be warfare in the kingdom as long as there are virtuous men in the kingdom." Do you see the point? Just as long as a kingdom is divided into virtuous men and evil men, there will be intestinal difficulties and disputes. When the virtuous men shall have disappeared, it will mean that there will then be no evil men, because men are virtuous only by contrast with others who are not virtuous.

Do not dignify the evil side of you by struggling against it or fighting it; but ignore it, forget it, and *be* your nobler self! Then these things will drop away from you like squalid and filthy garments. Do you fight a garment which is soiled? No! You cast it aside. You cannot put the new wine of the spirit into the old bottles. Cast the bottles aside, and your wine, the wine of the spirit, will form its own new containers and will be safely preserved within you.

You need not be slaves; you need not be cast down; you need not be the bondmen of weaknesses. Be what you are within yourself! You are an inseparable part of boundless infinitude, because you are in it and you cannot leave it; therefore everything in that boundless infinitude is within you. You have the universe with its incomprehensible energies and powers to draw upon, by going within yourself — by following the still small pathway within, the pathway of the spirit. Follow that, and it will guide you to the heart of the universe, with ever-expanding faculty, with ever-enlargening power. Your own heart will grow great; your mind will grow grand; and your whole inner temple of being, all your nature, will be filled with the glory within — the splendor of your inner god.

The inner god is your higher self. Oh, be it! It is the only way by which to attain illumination — to go behind the veils of matter

and thus know truth at first hand. It is the way of genius; it is the way of inspiration; it is the way of aspiration; it is the way of immortal and invincible love, boundless love, a magical power which feeds all hungry hearts and brings the water of life not only to your own thirsty soul, but to the thirsty souls of your fellows. Browning, in his "Paracelsus," has set forth this noble truth with a poet's intuition:

Truth is within ourselves; it takes no rise  
From outward things, whate'er you may believe.  
There is an inmost center in us all,  
Where truth abides in fullness; and around,  
Wall upon wall, the gross flesh hems it in,  
This perfect, clear perception — which is truth.  
A baffling and perverting carnal mesh  
Binds it, and makes all error: and, to KNOW,  
Rather consists in opening out a way  
Whence the imprisoned splendor may escape,  
Than in effecting entry for a light  
Supposed to be without.

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[Vol 1, No 43](#)  
[Contents](#)

**No. 43 (July 22, 1930)**

**QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK**

(Lecture delivered April 13, 1930)

I don't see why a theosophist should think stern and severe thoughts, or look sternly and severely. If he knows the realities of life — human life and cosmic life — which show him what sorrow and suffering there are in the world, he also sees the background of beauty and harmony; he also sees the great fountain of life whence flow forth not only into human hearts, but everywhere, almighty love which is the cement of the universe, holding all things together in harmonious correlations and coordinations; and he feels upspringing within his own inner forum the same life, the same intelligence, the same consciousness, that as aspects of the one fundamental reality are the very heart of the universe.

So, why should not a theosophist smile and laugh — not one of those cold-hearted laughs and those stony smiles in which only the lips are moved, but an honest-to-goodness laugh and smile, springing from a warm heart and genial soul? For true life is happy. It is only we humans who make it the opposite, and other beings equivalent to us men on other planets — imperfectly evolved beings who do not know fully what is in them, and who do not fully know what is in the universe surrounding them, of which they are all, each one, an inseparable part. They live in dreams; they live in illusions; they live surrounded by the web of the lower personal self, all enwrapped and tightened up and crystallized with these bonds and bands of the lower selfhood surrounding their inner god. Break them! Find your freedom!

Be a child of the universe: for I tell you on every Sunday afternoon — and this is one of the divinest parts of the message

that I am here to give — that the core of the core of each one of you is a divine being, an offspring of the spiritual-divine side of the universe. Just as your body is the child of physical nature, so are all of you, the real part of you, the real man, the offspring of the spiritual side, rooted in the divine life of the universe.

"Life is joy," as Katherine Tingley used to say — not, however, as men mislive life, but in itself, for life *per se* is harmony; life is orderly; life is consequential; life follows regular and harmonious sequences, from cause to effect, which effect becomes instantly the cause producing another effect; and so on forever.

Yes, joy, beauty, love, harmony, peace — all these fine and noble things are in us; and these are the things that we should cultivate, because these are the qualities and powers that make men truly men.

I read to you from this platform on last Sunday afternoon, a little verse, written by some humorous American poet, I think it was, about a little stone that wanted to sit on a hillside and neither eat nor drink nor wash, but "I jest want to set on a hillside and rest for a thousand years, by gosh!" Now, you surely don't want to be like a little human stone of that type. Be a true man, an actor and doer in the cosmic drama.

Well, I am here this afternoon to answer questions. The first one before me is the following:

How far shall we go in our efforts to get others interested in our philosophy? Many good, intelligent, and experienced people do not seem to comprehend even the A B C of theosophy. Is it up to us to waken them and continue to stir them, even when they show only a lukewarm interest or indifference, or shall we follow the advice of the Bible: "not to throw pearls"?

How polite it is that the rest of the New Testament quotation is omitted! No, the throwing of pearls before "dogs" and "swine" is not a part of our theosophical duties; but, do you know, this passage in the Christian New Testament refers to teaching the deeper principles of the esoteric philosophy to people who have neither minds to understand them nor the hearts to realize them, nor again, how much it costs a teacher to tell openly of these esoteric truths.

This reference to dogs and swine — "casting your pearls before swine" — is one of the allusions, phrases, technical terms, used in the Mystery schools. Certain classes of men have always been supposed to look like and act like certain beasts, according to the physical or other attributes of these beasts. Some men like dogs will bark and rend; some men like swine will wallow in the mud and eat and do little else. Some men will be like a bird which soars — therefore the bird was chosen to represent the soaring mind of man, the soul; whereas the dog and the swine, etc., stood for those men who would not take truth even if you gave it to them, for they prefer to wallow in the mud of physical existence, or to bark and bite at the hand outstretched to feed and to help.

No, we do not cast pearls of wisdom before anybody, not even before those who are prepared and ready to receive these priceless pearls of wisdom. They must come to us and knock; and when they give the right knock, the doors fly open as if they were enchanted. But, on the other hand, we most certainly are aggressive in our propaganda; we have something exceedingly good to give to our fellow human beings; and to give this is what I am here for.

I am a fisher for men, for men's souls, and my bait is the ancient wisdom-religion of antiquity; and I am trying to "save the souls" of men — and I here employ the old-fashioned Christian phrase,

because by using that phrase I shall be understood. I want to bring peace and light and help to my fellow men. That is my main objective in my work; that is what I was sent to do, and that is also what every earnest theosophist tries to do. We are aggressive propagandists. However, we get nothing for what we give. If we worked for a price we should thereby sell ourselves, and that is something theosophists don't do and won't do. We are free men, recognizing our kinship with the immortal gods who guide, control, and govern, the universe; and when you find a single theosophical doctrine taught for a price, then I say to you in all earnestness: Take it not. No theosophical teacher ever sells himself or sells the treasures — spiritual treasures — of the ancient wisdom-religion for a price. I make no derogatory allusions against anyone. I plainly state a fact, and you can apply that fact just as you please, and where you please, and when you please.

"How far shall we go to get others interested in our philosophy?" My answer is: just as far as you can, honestly, honorably, truly, and truthfully. The reason why many good, intelligent, and sincere people do not accept the theosophic bait offhand and when they first see it, is because they are afraid. Their hesitancy arises out of a more or less vague fear of being labeled or of undergoing restrictions; and also because so many are afraid of truth. They are afraid that they may be caught; they are afraid to give themselves. And this my manner of speaking is unusual; therefore do I use it. A theosophical speaker's duty is to tell you the truth, no matter in what phraseology he may couch that truth. We theosophists are here to deliver the sublime message which it is our duty to give, and that message is priceless and is never sold.

You don't have to believe in any particular doctrine in order to join The Theosophical Society. You don't have to subscribe to any dogmas, to any creed. The only prerequisite is an honest and

sincere belief in universal brotherhood; and I will tell you one thing: you won't subscribe even to that — and this has been our experience — unless you are ready to go farther.

I have met men who have told me: "I don't believe in brotherhood; I don't like the idea. I am myself; no other man is my brother, except one born from the same mother." What can you do with a mind like that? Such a man does not know even the latest teachings of science: that all life is one, that all human beings — that all entities whatsoever, human or not — have a common origin and a common destiny, and are all children of the universal Mother. Why, you Occidentals do not even really *think* half the time; you accept things on belief, things that you have read in a book, in an encyclopedia perhaps, or — the gods immortal forgive us! — in a newspaper!

Now, what you find there may possibly be true, but ninety-nine chances out of a hundred are that what you read there is merely some man's opinions or conclusions. Therefore you are acceptors of opinions, which you thereafter believe to be your own opinions. Pray believe me when I say that I don't desire to step on any good man's toes, or hurt anyone's feelings; but nevertheless I repeat my conviction that Occidentals do not really know how to think. You of this audience are Occidentals too, and I want to waken you, so that you really will think; and if I cannot do it by proffering my outstretched hand in fraternal good feeling as a brother, then I am going to jolt you and jar you through your minds and hearts. Your antagonism to this would be to me the first good sign of your awakening mind and heart; because I know that you will be honest, and that from antagonists you will become friends.

By the way, the following question is out of its sequence of order, but as it pertains in a sense to what I have just been speaking of, I



think that I will answer it now.

Say [pardon me, this is not my language] what are you putting over on us when you speak about "you Occidentals"? You don't wear a turban and a robe yourself. [Wouldn't I look handsome in one!] Do you mean that your philosophy is Oriental?

No, I do not. The theosophical philosophy is no more Oriental than it is Occidental, no more ancient than it is modern; it is of all times and of all parts of the world. And if you are interested and will undertake a study of the fundamentals (I don't mean this word in the modern Christian sense, but in the dictionary sense of the word — the bases, the foundations) — of the great world religions and world philosophies, you will find theosophy there in every one of them; for theosophy is truth — no one man's truth: nobody imagined it. It is not the fruit of minds which burn the midnight oil in trying to find a solution of the problems of life — not at all.

But the great sages and seers of mankind, the lofty and illuminated intellects, the titanic men of the race who were all initiates, have sent their percipient souls or minds behind and beyond the veils of the outward seeming and have studied causal truths in the very womb of being, and have brought back what they found and taught it to their fellow men. The natural truths thus formulated we today call theosophy. In other ages this formulation bore other names.

I am not trying to put anything over on you. I am trying to "hook" every one of you who is not a theosophist already. I hook none but honest hearts, for none but honest hearts and strong minds will be attracted to the bait with which I bait my hook. I am a fisher of men, and so is every Theosophical teacher: no matter what his own particular evolutionary stage may be — young soul or old soul, high or low — no matter what his position in the scale

of life, the humblest member of The Theosophical Society is a fisher of men.

I am trying to give you something free, and it is difficult to make you take it, simply because you won't believe it to be as good as it is. You find it difficult to believe me and this is because you are not awake; you don't know how to think. Now, this is a truth, an actual truth, and I speak of *you* Occidentals because while this body of mine was born in the Occident, my soul elsewhere takes it rise.

The Occidentals, however, have a world of good in them. They are in the foreground of evolutionary progress today; they are leading the races of mankind on the earth today. But their time will pass. They are still young, so far as their experience of building a civilization is concerned. When your forefathers ran around the forests of the European countries clad in the skins of beasts — wild white men (or pink men, because you are pink, not white) — the Orientals were building lofty and splendid civilizations. They had merely come in ahead of you on the evolutionary pathway; and when your time passes and the Occident has run its course — yes, when empire passes from your grip, it will pass elsewhere to other races of men. And don't forget it!

Man owes a duty to his fellows. He is not here by chance. Examine yourselves. Examine your own hearts. You will find that you have a conscience when you think long enough. Most of you don't think long enough. You just let it go at that; and the average man in the Occident today actually does not believe that there is such a thing as a system of natural truth which so to say photographically represents nature's laws, nature's operations, and nature's structure. He is still under the psychology of the materialism of our fathers, the old scientific determinism which

even today has gone by the board. Your best scientific thinkers have thrown it overboard, have cast it away; and yet the average Occidental, the human multitude of Occidental civilization, is running along the old tracks laid by our fathers and grandfathers, whereas their ultra-modern scientific leaders and thinkers have branched off from those old tracks and are going in another direction, at a tangent.

No, I am not trying to put anything over on you. I am simply telling you sheer truth. Theosophists are aggressive propagandists; we have something exceedingly fine to give to the world, and we don't charge anything for it. We are taught that it is our duty, bounden to it as we are — a moral duty, a spiritual obligation — to give to others what we ourselves have.

Question Three. By cultivating trees and flowers do we help them in their evolution?

Yes. Of course this question is a bit vague, particularly to a theosophist who sees in a plant only a minor example of what he sees in a human being. The physical body of the plant is merely the vehicle through which appear natural energies, powers, expressing themselves as best they can through the variety of plant forms which cover the earth; just as he sees in the physical body of man the physical vehicle through which man's inner and invisible constitution, of his spiritual, intellectual, and psychological nature, is expressing itself as best it can.

Nevertheless, the cultivation of plants helps those plants and, as a matter of fact, all the choice fruits that are cultivated today in our gardens and orchards have been developed in past ages from wild stocks. The peach, the banana, the orange, the fig, the apple, the plum, the cherry, whatnot, all of them have been developed by former races of men of whom your Occidental history preserves no longer even a memory, but which lived and civilized

the earth in their own times aeons ago; and they have transmitted to us down through the ages these developed fruits, and these evolved grasses which we call grain, cereals.

If this questioner means by this question to ask me whether cultivating plants hastens the evolution of the inner life of them, then my answer is also Yes.

Question Four. Can the conscience be educated? My conscience seems not to be the same today as it was ten years ago. And the conscience of a Baptist does not seem to be the same as that of a Methodist or of a Christian Scientist. What is then the conscience?

Well, I have heard people say that other people haven't any conscience. Of course that is not true. We always recognize in other people what we have in ourselves. You doubtless see the meaning of this. The man who says of his fellow man: "Oh, he has no conscience!" simply proclaims to the world that he has not awakened his own conscience. It takes grandeur to recognize grandeur; and if you have not the percipient heart within your own breast, then you cannot recognize it in others. If you have not beauty, harmony, love, within your own heart and mind, you will not see them in others. No, I tell you that even in the most hardened criminal there is a spark at least of something noble and high.

I do not like to say that the conscience can be "educated." Doubtless the word is true enough, is applicable enough, in one sense; but I would liefer say that the conscience can be brought more actively into manifestation.

What is the conscience? The conscience is the working of your spiritual being, a spiritual manifestation of the inner god of you, managing to send some faint gleams of light and truth and

harmony and love into the poor, heavy, material brain-mind in which most men live and suffer and die.

Obviously, therefore, the conscience of a child is not as fully awakened as the conscience of a man; and the conscience of an inferior man is not as fully awakened as is the conscience of one of the great sages and seers. Evolution continuously brings forth a larger measure of the spiritual being into play in human hearts and minds, and in that sense the conscience may be said to be evolving, but not in the sense of being added to particle by particle and built up, as it were, out of the bricks of thought or bricks of feeling.

No. The inner god within you, your inner divine light, is constantly attempting to send ever more and more of its own grand illumination into your hearts and minds; and evolution is this bringing forth, this unrolling, of what is within: this unwrapping of what is wrapped up — the divine part of you — into outward life.

Our teaching, however, is that the conscience is not an infallible guide. Don't believe it! If men were perfect, the conscience would be an infallible guide; if men were full exemplars, full manifestations, of the divine powers of the god within, then the conscience would be godlike. But the conscience is not an infallible guide. It is high time that Occidentals understood this truth. Men need teachers, guides; and don't forget it.

That is a truth which is unwelcome to the Occidentals at the present time. They think that they know better than that. "I want to be my own guide," they say. "I am the captain of my soul." True, but what kind of a captain? Do you make a success of it? Do you bring your ship into port safely? Are you full understanders of the universe? Does all nature lie spread before you like a panorama of truth, on which you can read the secrets of the universe? If so,

then as captain of your soul you need no other helper or guide.

But wiser men know better; and they look to the stars. They guide their ship by the compass. Some of you may say: "That is an awfully dangerous doctrine you are teaching. Do you want us to go back and be the humble slaves of some ecclesiastical organization?" No! Immortal gods, forbid such a catastrophe! Don't misunderstand me to mean that.

I tell you that there is truth in the universe; that there are guides; that there are teachers, illuminated and utterly self-forgetful men, who know more than the average men do; and I can tell you where to find them. I mean every word of this. I cannot progress for you; but I can show you where you will be taught; and you will be taught not a thing that will ever injure you; you will be taught first to rely on the god within you.

But beware of your own egoism, your own lower self; become impersonal, so that your judgment will not be swayed by bias, distorted or twisted. Lean on your conscience as much as you will; but go beyond it to that supreme fount of light within, your own inner god, remembering that in some other men their respective inner gods are self-expressing themselves in fuller measure than in you, and these other men are the great men of the human race, who therefore are the natural leaders and teachers of their fellows.

Who was Jesus? Who was the Buddha? Who was Sankaracharya? Who were all these spiritual titans? They are the natural leaders of men or spiritual leaders of men; and men like them live on the earth today, and are what we call the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion. It was they who sent into the world H. P. Blavatsky, the foundress of The Theosophical Society, in order to bring back to mankind, and to the Occident especially, some inklings of the ancient wisdom-religion of the human race.

So therefore, you see, I also tell you to be the captain of your soul, but to place that captaincy in the divine part of you, not in your brain-mind, not in that part of you which is asleep, unalert, unevolved, unwitting of spiritual things; and remember, furthermore, that this captain of you will recognize still greater captains in greater men than you are at present.

Think over a saying ascribed to Jesus: "Except ye become as little children ye cannot enter the Kingdom" of wisdom. This seems like a hard saying to follow these words of Jesus; but really it is not. It is just simple truth. It means regaining the child-mind of simplicity and willingness to learn and reliance on the feeling that the big personal *I* is not everything in the universe, in other words a reliance on those who our intuition tells us know more than we do.

Why do you go to your universities, why do you go to your schools, why do you send your children to school? So that they may be under teachers. If you do not believe in these, why not let them grow up wild, like the beasts? Because you know better. And do you think that simply because you are grown-up children — and that is what we men and women are, just grown-up girls and boys — you know so much, each one of you, that nobody can possibly know more than you do? If that is your idea, I pity you. You need training badly, you need educating in order to awaken your mind.

Remember that a reverent heart and an eager intellect are signs of a growing man, and that when a man has reached the stage where he thinks in his heart, although he may not actually say so openly, that "I no longer need a teacher, I am the captain of my soul, I am going to guide my own destiny" — all of it true, but misapplied — then you can be certain that he is one who needs guidance and light badly. Yet teachers can be had for the asking

for those who ask aright, and who come with a pure heart and eager intellect and an impersonal search for truth. Knock, and the door will be opened unto you.

I don't know anything about the conscience of a Baptist. I have known Baptists. They seem to me to be average men. Doubtless they have a conscience, each one. I suppose so. I have not dissected them and tried to find a conscience; but I take it for granted that they have, because they act like human beings with a conscience; and the same may be said with regard to Methodists and Christian Scientists. Why not? But because they have a conscience does not mean that they have all of truth and are quite capable of teaching that truth to others.

Next question:

Is there any hope for the Occident? I mean by this, is the West as a whole prepared and ready for theosophy, the ancient wisdom? Our unwillingness to give up our personality, or as you so beautifully express it, to forget ourselves, seems a great hindrance. Even in Occidental religion we have this cult of personality, believing as Occidentals do in a personal God and a personal Savior. Can the pure wine of theosophy be "poured into old bottles"?

I would never try to do that. Yet I tell you that every one of us is an "old bottle" in the sense of being receptacles of a knowledge and light that we have outlived, but which guided us for the time being; and in consequence we are all just full of prejudices and all kinds of mental hindrances and stumbling blocks.

Now, is there any hope for the Occident, as this kind questioner puts it, evidently a theosophist. I think that there is great hope. Because Occidentals are just human beings like all the rest of the world; and the sooner Occidentals realize this and live up to it



and feel it, the better for them.

I will tell you what my own opinion is, and it will be an answer to this question, and this possibly may sound like a contradiction of what I said a little while ago, but it is not. You Occidentals have been accustomed for so many hundred years to let someone else think for you, to be "washed in the blood of the Lamb" (who is somebody else), and to cast your sins on somebody else, and to take things easily, that you have simply forgotten what you have of divinity each one within yourself. Don't you see the difference between following a person and following an ideal — lofty, sublime, grand — of which that person is the channel of expression to his fellow man?

I do not ask you to follow me. I would pity you if you did. But I do ask you to follow the message which I am trying to give to you. It is a lodestone to your ship — yourself; and it will pull you — pull you starwards; for it itself is starry, and that lodestone is a spiritual star.

There is hope for the Occident, of course there is; but I don't see much hope for any man who wants to cast all his troubles and trials and sins on a personal God and to make that personal God his spiritual pack horse. Such was NOT the teaching of that great initiate, the Syrian sage, Jesus.

As ye sow, that ye shall reap. That is also the teaching of theosophy. You Occidentals for hundreds of years have grown into the habit of trying to relieve yourselves of moral and intellectual and spiritual responsibility, and you will never succeed in doing so. Nature does not permit it; nature does not work in that way. She demands retribution for what you do; she exacts payment for what you have done; she lavishes rewards where she finds human beings working with her; and the heart of her is love and harmony and order and compassion. You see it all

around you in the order and beautiful harmony that prevail everywhere.

The disorder that we occasionally see and the inharmonious things that occasionally spring to our attention, especially among men, are produced by those individuals who work against Nature's spiritual and other laws, and nature in her efforts to restore equilibrium, to restore the harmony and peace in her own structure, brings about suffering and pain; and thus these are our best teachers.

What I shall now read to you is a beautiful thing. It was sent in to me as a question, but it is rather a commentary written on two extracts taken from one of the lectures that I have given here, and later printed as one of the pamphlets in the series *Questions We All Ask*. The two extracts are these, somewhat misquoted from the original:

"Where is the simplicity in the flower? I see grace, selflessness, infinitude, in the bosom of a flower."

"And yet you talk about the 'simplicity' of a flower." —  
Excerpts from *Questions We All Ask*, see Pamphlet No. 25, page 362

And this writer, my kind friend, has the following commentary:

The most baffling problems in mathematics (in the last analysis) are mastered by the judicious use of simple addition, subtraction, and multiplication. Is not mathematics of the soul equally simple (perchance more so), but hidden by the veil of man's unconsciousness?

The most charming people, even to a casual observer, are they to whom spiritual unfoldment has imparted the power to radiate love, compassion, wisdom, and brotherhood; and

withal a sweet simplicity of tastes, desires, and way of living that are at once compelling and irresistible. Even enemies learn to love them. Infinity, thy mantle is simplicity.

And then, here is a quotation appended to this commentary:

"Anything that we do not understand is a mystery. To a pig it is a mystery why a man flings turnips over the wall of his sty."

It was rather unkind to inject this quotation and yet it is true. I think that this kind friend has misunderstood what I intended to convey when I spoke of the mystery in a flower as being baffling, irresolvable, profound. A flower, I think, can be spoken of as being simple, as possessing simplicity, only if we consider the exterior parts of it. But who with an understanding heart and a feeling soul can look into the bosom of a dewy rose and not sense infinite mystery there? It would be wrong, I think, to call that wonder by the name of simplicity. It is spiritually simple, true, and yet the very wonder of it baffles even our penetrating mind.

I can see no ordinary simplicity in the flower. We speak of the simplicity of lovable human beings, and that is very true; but that is merely our first impression of them. It is precisely these who have real spiritual and intellectual simplicity who are the most baffling, the most profound, because their hearts and minds are like deep wells. Do you understand me?

All beautiful things are clothed in simplicity of course, and lavish ornament, ornate decoration, simply bewilders and offends, because the eye is distracted from detail to detail, and wearies in the search for individuality, and therefore does not sense perhaps the architect's motif behind the finished project. At least — and I am sure that others feel as I do — I can see infinite wonder in a flower, and in one sense all the mystery and wide range of destiny; and I also sense simplicity here, but a simplicity of

perfect order, perfect harmony, perfect proportion in detail, arising out of the fundamental individuality thus expressing itself as an entity.

Perhaps after all it is a mere matter of words between me and my kind questioner. Most human disagreements arise out of verbal misunderstandings; so that wise men, when they meet together to discuss some problem, usually have a preliminary meeting in order to settle among themselves the meanings of the words that they are going to use.

William Durant, the popular writer on philosophy, says:  
"Progress is the domination of chaos by mind and purpose; of matter by form and will. . . . It is increasing control of the environment by life."

Is this view of progress in harmony with theosophy, or is there more to it?

Oh, much more, vastly more! In a general way of course what this writer has to say theosophists also believe to be true. But what I object to here is the divorce between mind and purpose on the one hand, and the physical world on the other hand. I claim that any such radical divorce between the two extremes of nature is nonexistent and therefore not true. You cannot fundamentally separate the two, for the exterior world merely manifests what is within, in the interior and invisible worlds. The outer world is merely the garment clothing the inner powers and energies and forces which pour through the outer world as through a channel, and self-express themselves here in the physical world and produce the wonderful variety and beauty and marvels that we cognize.

Furthermore, I do not like the phrasing this writer uses when he says: "progress is increasing control of environment by life." In a

general way the statement is of course true, but here again he makes the same radical fault above spoken of, as I understand it: to wit, he makes life one thing, and environment something else. How can you separate environment from life? If the environment is not alive, if it is not full of life, it could not exist; and theosophists say that progress is the ever fuller expression of the powers, energies, characteristics, and faculties lying latent in the evolving entity, pouring themselves forth through the ages, in and by means of environment, bringing out what is within ever more and more, and in ever larger and fuller measure.

Therefore environment is merely the resultant of the working energies, the laboring lives, the hosts of evolving entities, interblending and interlocking and, by their grossest energies, producing that environment. Is there such a thing as environment *per se* apart from the thing which it environs? In other words is environment a radical entity? What is called environment is merely all the other entities and things, living just as the observer is. You cannot separate life from environment. They are fundamentally one thing.

No: progress, in our theosophical teachings, is the bringing forth from within in ever greater measure, in progressively greater degree, of what the evolving entity has locked up within it. A thing cannot bring forth what is not within it. Isn't that obvious? That is our theosophical teaching of evolution, and we are evolutionists through and through and through, but not Darwinists, nor Lamarckians, nor neo-Darwinists, nor neo-Lamarckians. I could say much more on this point, but my time this afternoon is already drawing to a close. I will answer one more question this afternoon.

We read: "Heaven and earth are touching each other in travail, to bring to birth a new race, and a new religion and

science in one." Do theosophists endorse this statement?

Yes, in a general way we most emphatically teach that religion and science and philosophy are one thing, and that these three are merely the three different operations of the human mind by which natural truths are expressed through human consciousness. But fundamentally religion and science and philosophy are one thing, and we refuse to admit that they can be kept in watertight compartments — or more correctly in thought-tight compartments.

That is where the mischief in the past has lain. Religion was a thing apart; science was a thing apart; and philosophy — lay somewhere else. Religion, science, and philosophy are fundamentally one thing: three methods or manners by which the human consciousness attempts to express its view and conception of the universe. And oh, how much is locked up within this human consciousness! Human beings simply do not realize what they have within them.

It is to this inner fountain of consciousness and power — deathless, beginningless and endless, rooted in boundless infinitude, the god within, your own inner god, the Christ immanent to use the Christian phrase, the inner Buddha — it is to this that every true theosophist will recall your thought. Each one of you is an incarnate god, a living spiritual-divine entity at your core, and all evolution is merely the bringing forth in ever larger degree of the powers and faculties, of the energies, and of all that is within and of the essence of this inner god.

The time is coming in the future when the human race will have so far expressed their own inner faculties and powers, the powers of the inner god, that men will walk the earth like human divinities, and every man will be a Christ, a Buddha. As the Christian New Testament has it: "Ye are gods," and it is so. Oh,

when men of the Occident — because it is in the Occident especially that this grand truth has been forgotten — when men in the Occident know what they have within themselves, then heaven will be on earth, for men will live in that part of their being and draw upon fountains inexhaustible of spiritual energy and strength and consciousness; and through that future race of men will flow in majestic stream from the fountains latent in the, resident in the, heart of the universe, the all-enlivening power of cosmic love. Think! And each one of you *be* the god you are within you.

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[Vol 1, No 44](#)  
[Contents](#)

No. 44 (July 25, 1930)

## QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK

(Lecture delivered April 20, 1930)

CONTENTS: Eastertime and the risen Christ. — Is there such a thing as the resurrection of the body? — Was Jesus Christ really crucified? — Galaxies of genius at various periods in history. — Is the cell a living creature, or merely its habitation? — Humility vs. impersonality. — The meaning of "Isis" in the title *Isis Unveiled*. — Do theosophists believe in healing by prayer; in casting horoscopes; in cremation? — The Messiah within each one of us. — Set him free!

Friends, you look sympathetic — with me of course! It is as if you had come to hear a lovely Easter sermon. But why should you expect an Easter sermon from a theosophical speaker? Because on Easter Sunday, perhaps, you are accustomed to hearing about "He was crucified, dead, buried, and on the third day he rose again from the dead"; or because in going to church and hearing the beautiful music and seeing the flowers and looking at each other's gowns or faces, you perhaps expect to find the risen Christ among you. Have you so found?

I think that you will indeed find something of that kind here; and I am going to give you an Easter talk, theosophically speaking, something that I hope will give you food for thought, no matter what you may think about it at present; but I want to cast seeds of thought into your minds which will take root there, and after you have left us, perhaps a week or a month or a year hence, each one of these seeds will grow into something within you, stirring, expanding, and breaking the bonds of the lower selfhood, so that you will realize that the truth regarding the risen Christ is a



spiritual and not a physical one; and will realize that to look upon this Christian myth, this beautiful legend, as a story of a physical resurrection is a degradation of a sublime spiritual reality.

A dead god-man or man-god is an anomaly in the world of truly spiritual thinking. Theosophists do not believe in that; but we do believe that behind this esoteric mythos or legend there is a beautiful explanation, which is well worth hearing and understanding. In modern days mystical Christians will talk to you about the immanent Christ, the spiritual nature of each human being, lying in the tomb of the personal selfhood, from which only death — according to their belief — frees it. This immanent Christos is no new thought belonging to the Occident, but verily one of the most ancient of the teachings of the esoteric philosophy, of the ancient wisdom-religion of humanity.

Its meaning is this, that within each one of you is a divine being, a living god, prevented from manifesting its transcendent powers only by the cramping bonds of our personal selfhood — our prejudices, our whims, our small petty hates and loves; and that when a man can conquer these lower things — conquer them in the sense of making them servants of the god within, fit instruments and tools for self-expression — then you will see man walking the earth as a human god, because manifesting the transcendent powers of the god within him, of the immanent Christ, of the inner Buddha, as the Buddhists put it.

This last is the phrase that I love, because it is so much more expressive than the Occidental phrase, the immanent Christ, simply because this Occidental phrase is so colored with medieval theological thought and conceptions of various kinds. The thing is the same, the idea is the same, but I prefer the phrase which best expresses the truth.

Now, why cannot each one of us on at least one day in the year let

this inner god of us show itself, manifest even though poorly? Oh, what a heaven the earth would be if we could do that daily! Could we do it, then we would bring about the resurrection of the Christ-spirit within the tomb of the body, or rather of the personal self.

This is not religion merely. There is a deeply scientific aspect about it, a highly philosophical background to this. All evolution is but the ever larger and greater self-expression of this inner divinity; and the physical body follows suit. As these inner powers and energies and faculties become more and more liberated and freed in the human soul, in the human mind and soul, the body follows suit slavishly and becomes ever nobler and more beautiful, ever more fit to express what is within. Can evolution bring forth something which is not within the evolving entity? Of course not. Evolution merely brings out what is within. It cannot bring forth something which is not within. The evolving entity, in other words, can manifest *only itself* — its nobler self, the self within, the locked-up part.

Just pursue that thought more and more in the realms of your higher mind and imagination and you will readily see that when the transcendent powers of the inner god come forth and manifest — as they will in all the human race in the far-distant future — even in our time, when that happens you have a Christ walking the earth, teaching his fellow men the same old doctrines of the wisdom-religion of antiquity — nature's truth; or you have a Buddha; or you have one of the great sages and seers, who stand in the annals of human history like flaming fires guiding their fellow men ever onwards and upwards. Let the Christ come forth! Resurrect the Christ within you!

If I had time this afternoon to give you the full theosophical interpretation of the actual and original meaning of Easter and

the Easter festival, you would find it truly fascinating!

There is a great truth in the Easter doctrine and in the Easter idea. It is a truth regarding the mysteries of initiation. The ancients had their initiation ceremonies, and the fruits of the initiation chamber were these great men who came forth and founded this great religion or that, this great philosophy or that — men who swayed the destinies of empires, because they swayed human hearts and human minds. They were men of power because highly evolved men.

Easter was one such initiation period, just as the period of the winter solstice was, just as the period of the summer solstice was, just as the period of the autumnal equinox was; and the initiation period of Easter, of the spring equinox, was that one in which a man — a great man — after training, after discipline, left his personality behind, dropped it as a garment faded and soiled and cast aside, rose from the tomb of the personal selfhood into spiritual impersonality, became one with his own inner god or "ascended to heaven," as the mystical expression went — became more than man, because he then became a god-man or a man-god.

Three days were required on the average for this initiation. The aspirant, already far advanced along the initiatory path, was taken into the initiation chamber, laid on a couch of cruciform figure — shaped like a cross — not nailed, not bound, but he lay in a trance while the inner part of him went down into the Underworld, and then took on the wings of his own spirit a journey to the portals of the sun, and therefrom came back glorified, and rose from the cruciform couch a savior of his fellow men, utterly impersonal, manifesting the powers of the god within him — a Buddha, a Christ!

Oh! what a pity that the religion of that great-hearted and noble-

mindful Syrian sage, Jesus, lost the explanation of the meaning of these things, so that in aftertimes men sincerely and honestly took the mere words of the story, instead of realizing that they were mystical sayings, descriptive by metaphor of what took place in the initiation chamber!

Jesus was only one of the great sages and seers who have taught the human race. He taught nothing new. Had he taught something new, then he would have been open to the charge of founding a religion of his own in the sense of gaining a mere following. He taught Truth which is old as the universe, and yet ever new to the hearts of each new generation of men.

There is one truth in the universe, which, when expressed in human language, is a formulation in philosophical phraseology of the structure, operations, principles, laws, of the cosmos; and it is this same truth which all the great sages and seers of the world have ever taught, in different languages, under different forms, in different times; but in all cases it remains the same fundamental system of reality — of real things.

If you examine the heart-meaning, the heart-doctrine, as contrasted with the eye-doctrine — the rites and ceremonies and so forth: if you look to the heart-doctrine, which is the fundamental meaning of every one of the great world religions and world philosophies, you will find this same fundamental truth there — the same teachings, the same thoughts, and the same invigorating call: Come up higher! Come out of the mire. Be men. Be more than men. Be the god within you.

The whole system of philosophical and scientific teachings regarding nature lies in that background; and this system we today call theosophy. It is not ours, it is also yours. We are not Theosophists because we have invented something, or found something. We are theosophists because we believe in theosophy

and follow its teachings. We have studied; we have examined. We have not anything new to present to you. Our teachings are as old as thinking man. There is not a single new thing in the theosophical system. If there were, I, for one, would scan it narrowly. I would feel like saying, as has been said before, that what is new in any religion is not true, and that what is true is not new. Truth is old as the ages.

I am supposed to answer questions this afternoon. I have quite a bunch of them here, and in this connection I have received three or four urgent requests asking me to answer certain questions this afternoon without fail. I do not know that I shall be able to do so in all cases. Some of these questions are not altogether of a type which some of you, brought up in Christian churches, might think to belong to Eastertide. But is Easter something apart and different from truth? Is it something that we should think about only once in a year, and forget it on the other 364 days? No; because the truth lying at the back of the Easter festival, in other words, the meaning of the Easter festival, is a part of the system of philosophical and scientific and religious thought which is the grand system of which I have spoken to you.

What I want to do is to awaken you. I want to see some resurrections here. I cannot resurrect you. You must resurrect yourselves. Therefore I want to cast a few seeds of thought into your minds, so that these seeds of thought will take root and become spiritual plants, and grow, and finally split the hard and stony lower selfhood so that the life in the new spiritual plant will wax great within your souls; and then one day you will realize the truth and will exclaim to yourself: My God! That thought and I are one!

Here is the first question, or rather the question first in order:

How does theosophy account for the appearance of *groups* of

men of genius at various historical periods? For example, the poetical geniuses of the Elizabethan period — Shakespeare, Marlowe, Spenser, Raleigh, etc. — or the brilliant array of scientific men in our own time in almost every country of the world. It seems as if mankind developed now one side, now another, of the marvelous powers and faculties inherent in its nature. Perhaps your answer would also throw some light upon the much-debated question of what constitutes genius.

It is quite true. There are certain periods in the history of the human race, as its annals show, when constellations of human genius appear, produce what they came to bring, produce it forth, and leave it as an heirloom for following generations. Look at the marvelous luminaries of the Periclean period in Greece, and of the three or four hundred years that followed. Such a constellation of human genius the Occidental world has possibly never elsewhere seen. The works of those great Greeks are studied today in the universities of every civilized country — studied and analyzed; books are written about them; men strive to understand them. These men remain in thought as the exemplars, as patterns, for later generations to follow. Dead languages are studied industriously in order that the inner meaning of what those great men have taught may be better understood.

Why is it that these constellations appear? And why is it that there are periods, not only in the history of any one individual race, but in that of the world apparently — periods of spiritual barrenness as Plato put it, in which nothing of value seems to be produced at all, when men live more or less in the physical selfhood, run therein little rounds, run circles around themselves so to say, but bring forth nothing of outstanding value?

Our theosophical teaching with regard to this problem is simple

enough. A race is like a man in this respect. The man has years in which his mind and heart are productive, bring forth from within what is there, in as large a measure as the man may express it, and after that his powers seem to fade, his faculties seem to die, and he subsides into what someone has humorously called "innocuous desuetude."

A race usually brings forth its best at the culmination of its own racial power. Then the great men appear; and you will also note, if you study carefully, that just about the same time appear the seeds of the new race which is to follow that race in history.

Men in the Occident have lost the key to understanding themselves. They think that they get things of value from without themselves. But occasionally a man lives who brings forth something of outstanding value from within himself, and thus becomes a living proof of our statement that everything of value comes forth from within. You will never educate a man to be a genius. You can never instruct a man to be a Christ; you can never train a man to be a Buddha. It is all development from within. Did I not tell you a moment ago that everything of value that the human race produces comes from within, from the faculties and powers of the inner god thus manifesting themselves? Does any one of you think perhaps that this is a subtle appeal to your personal vanity? You will never be a genius if you think that. Vanity is its own retributive punishment. Selfishness digs its own grave. It is impersonality, it is impersonal love, it is all the great and surpassing qualities which the human soul brings forth, which produce the works of genius.

How can you succeed in doing anything successfully which you do not love? Therefore I tell you: Love spiritual beauty, love love, love brotherhood — the common feeling of our human kinship; and it is but a slight step farther to realize that we are kin with

the gods immortal whose children we actually are. Then when you get that feeling, your whole being is fired. You cannot contain the flow of inspiration within you. Out it comes; and in proportion as you become a mediator, a channel for manifesting the powers of your own god within, will you yourself produce works of greatness. Resurrect out of the tomb of your own lower selfhood the Christ within you.

And genius — what is genius? Genius is just what I have told you: the efflorescence, the flowering, of what the man is within, in his higher nature. And do you know, friends — and I am going to talk to you plainly — you people of the Occident are breeding up, at the present moment, a teaching in your midst which if not speedily cast into the limbo of forgotten superstitions will produce a race of degenerates and imbeciles, a teaching which tells you: Come down here, wallow with the beasts in the mud. And the reason is that you have forgotten the call of the god within you.

There are men abroad today, doubtless good and sincere men after their fashion, but spiritually ignorant and unwise, who say that all the outstanding marks of the striving of the human spirit towards genius are the proofs of the working in men of misunderstood and repressed bestial desire. This is a teaching of hell — of the hell of the beastliness in human nature which, alas, unfortunately does exist. Any one of you who believes that his love for country, his love for truth, his love for beauty, his love for honor, his love for justice, his admiration for pity and compassion, his love for altruistic and impersonal service, and other things like these, are the fruits of repressed sexual desires is in a parlous and pitiful mental condition.

You men have even forgotten, you of the Occident, that you are the expression of an inner divinity, in obeying whose call you



have genius at your command; perhaps not immediately, for nothing grows to perfection overnight. You gain it step by step, but you earn what you gain. That is nature's law. But which of the twain do you prefer: To be children of the gods as you actually are, to recognize the godlike faculties within you — or to listen to the call of the pit? I mean every word of this. I think that the teachings to which I here briefly allude are beastly — beastly and untrue.

Show me any repressed animal desire which has ever eventuated in the colossal geniuses of the world, in the great and outstanding works of human-spiritual productivity. The two things hang not together. They used to say that the Athenians of old were always searching for some new thing; and those who said this doubtless likewise had the thought in the back of their mind: How foolish! We are not like that. Aren't you? You of our own beloved United States especially, hanker and hunger after every new thing that the newspapers talk about, or that appears, or is heard of, on the lecture platforms of your universities. You read some new thing in a book; and perforce to you it is therefore true! Is it? I say it is not necessarily true. In practically every instance it is some man's opinion based on some popular fad whether in science, religion, or philosophy.

A theosophist acknowledges no truth except nature's own operations; and when a man tells me, no matter how sincere he is — this sincerity matters not at all, for it merely relieves him of the charge of intentional evildoing — when a man tells me that all the noble aspirations of my heart and all the finest and most impersonal thoughts of my mind are merely the results of repressed desires, I think he is mad. He evidently has never experienced what I have, nor does he know what I know.

Do you think that the actions of a dirty little boy or of a dirty little

girl will eventuate in developing a Christ? Will produce a sublime Buddha? Will bring forth a Plato, an Apollonius of Tyana, a Pythagoras, a Lao-tse, a Confucius, a Sankaracharya, and all the starry host of human genius which the world has known? Think! If you are human beings, as you are, blessed with judgment, discrimination, thought — then think for yourselves.

Here is a question of quite a different kind.

If my memory does not fail, you made the statement once in your wonderful *Questions We All Ask* that the cell is universally alike: the same in a sequoia, in the algae, in the mountain, and in the human being. On the other hand, Mr. Judge in *The Ocean of Theosophy* tells us that the cell is a mere phantom, made by the "fiery lives" as temporal structures, like bricks in a building, forming and unforming in the course of the cyclic laws governing the activities of the "fiery lives." Is the cell a creature or a structure — the thing itself, or a mere ephemeral habitation?

In the first place, I do not think that I spoke of a cell. I think that the words I used were atom and molecule; but the statement then made I now repeat. There is no difference between the chemical elements of your body and the chemical elements forming the substance of the rocks of some noble hill. Your own flesh, the flesh of the ox, or the physical fabric of some beautiful flower, or the wood of the platform on which I stand, so far as chemical elements go, are all one. Yet one is a flower, and one is wood; one is an ox, and one is a man. Yet what a difference there is between the ox and the man or the man and the wood, formed of the same chemical elements; all such entities are at once structures and creatures — things in themselves and yet mere ephemeral habitations of the indwelling individuality.

So it is with a cell also. It is both a structure as man's physical

body is, and an entity as man's physical body is. Physiologically speaking, your physical body is an entity. Structurally speaking, it is a structure, housing something nobler than himself, a house, a "bone-house," as the old Anglo-Saxons put it, a house of flesh — such is the human body. So is the body of the ox, so is the noble sequoia, so is the mountain, so is the vast sea or anything else.

The atoms and the molecules, insofar as the chemical elements go, are the same in all beings more or less. And all cells are more or less formed of the same fundamental chemical atoms. Every cell therefore is both structure and entity, a thing-in-itself and an ephemeral habitation, just as the human physical body is composed of myriads of cells. The physical body is an entity as a physical man. It is a structure when you consider that it is composed of molecules and atoms: a structure which houses the god within, working through your mind — what is popularly called the soul, that wonderful mystery which thinks, which feels, which acts with will.

Never mind the name you give to this inner entity. Never mind what you call it. Never mind where it is, whether within or above. Exactness in these matters pertains to our more profound theosophical doctrines. But whatever you may call it, and wherever you may place this wonderful entity, within or above, it is the real man.

When you once catch the idea that there are more subtle planes of existence than this physical world, then the dispute about the soul stops, as Ralph Waldo Emerson truly says, because you know. Therefore I say to you: Examine yourselves. Think. Think! Think and feel; and that is what few people in the Occident really ever do.

I have heard theosophists say that, in their opinion, Jesus called the Christ did *not* suffer death by crucifixion, as related

in the New Testament story. Someone by the name of Jesus, they say, may very likely have been crucified at the time described, but not Jesus Christ the avatara.

Does the reason for this assumption lie in the fact of Christ's avataraship, and that the overshadowing or inhabiting spiritual being or god would be able, through his divinely developed powers, to ward off danger and prevent violence being done to the body it inhabited?

Are there any instances on record or in myth of one of the *higher* spiritual Teachers (Avataras of Buddhas) having met death (to the body) by violence?

What a complexity of questions are here! I cannot tell you what other theosophists may teach or think about Jesus. I can tell you what I think and what I have taught. I am not the keeper of the consciences, as Leader of The Theosophical Society, of members of The Theosophical Society. They believe as they please. Nevertheless as a teacher I have my duty to do in the world. I have a message to bring to my fellow man; and the following is what I have taught about the Christ story, the Jesus story.

A man, call him a Jew if you like — it does not matter at all — who was later known by the name of Jesus, and still later known by the name of Jesus the Christ, lived in Palestine, lived and taught there. He was one of the great sages and seers. He was one whom theosophists call an avatara, that is to say a manifestation, as a man, of a divine being — the divine being within, if you like — more or less fully expressing itself, and therefore, to use popular language, such a man is what human beings call a god-man. He was one who followed all the esoteric teaching of his time in his youth; he was initiated in the Mystery schools of Syria, of the Hither East, in his early manhood. He was one who was laid on the cruciform couch of which I have spoken to you, and who

successfully passed the dread test; and after three days he rose from the ones "who were dead," which is the real meaning of the phrase "from the dead" — not from death — as a Christ, just as I have already briefly explained it to you this afternoon.

The Christ within him was then manifest. This last and supreme initiation brought forth the inner god, so that he taught his fellow man as one having authority, because he spoke from the fountain of truth welling up within himself. Do you know what that fountain of truth is? It is the path of the spiritual selfhood, which is your link with the universe: that path leading ever more and more inwards, more and more, inwards and inwards, until the very heart of the universe is realized to be one with yourself.

Every human being in his spiritual nature is an inseparable part of the universe, its child: so to say bone of its bone, and flesh of its flesh, blood of its blood, life of its life. How can it be otherwise? You cannot live outside of the universe. You are a part of it. And this is what the ancient sages of Hindustan taught, when they spoke of the atman or spiritual-divine self. They said: *Atmanam atmana pasya*. They said: "See the Self by means of the self;" that is to say, understand divinity by and through the divinity within you; for there is no other way of understanding divinity than through your own divine part. Does the swine understand the man his keeper? No, because the swine has not reached humanhood. But man understands man; and man by means of the god within can understand divinity by the same rule. Greatness recognizes greatness. Genius responds to the call of genius. Divinity recognizes divinity.

Oh, I tell you, once you have followed this inner path, this spiritual selfhood, to your own divine essence, and then grow to realize that your nature is of the very fabric of the universe, then you will feel that all things are yours because they are you.

Infinity and eternity are but words; but within, you will have the actual realization of your oneness with the frontierless, boundless All, in frontierless boundless duration.

No, this sage, this Syrian seer, was not crucified, literally and physically. A crucified god is an anomaly in human thought. But a crucified neophyte or aspirant: yes, in the sense in which I have tried to set the matter forth. And there is such a thing as a mystical use of the term crucifixion: a man may be crucified on the cross of his own mean and ugly lower selfhood, crucified by his own passions, torn and rent instead of standing like a man, free, a free man. That is a very real and yet mystical crucifixion; and when you know somewhat of the inner Christ, you shall attain freedom; and all the boundless universe shall be your playground, not merely in thought, not merely in imagination, not by sitting in your armchair or lying on your couch and thinking that it is so and so, but by actual experience; for I tell you that a man can loosen his spirit and go forth with it even to and passing beyond the portals of the sun.

I have never heard of an avatara of a Buddha having been done to death by violence. Do not forget, however, that the ancient Mysteries were guarded with extreme care, and that when any reference was made to them — the penalties for betrayal of the secrets of initiation being extremely severe — any reference to them was made in trope, by metaphor, by figure of speech, by fairy tale, by myths, by a story. Nothing was so disguised that another initiate could not read it. The truth was said there, but only those who had the key to this mystic language could understand it. To those who had not this key the reference or the recital seemed to be a mere myth or strange legend. Do you see what I mean?

"Crucified, dead, buried, rose from the dead on the third day, and

ascended to his Father in Heaven." Every word of this recital is taken *literatim*, literally, from the language of the initiation chamber. It is an example of the use of the mystical tongue to which I have alluded. Study theosophy, and then you will understand these things better.

Why was deep humility the outstanding quality of the great teachers of the past? Was it more effective than pomp?

I am not fond of humble people. I am always a little afraid of them, a little suspicious. A man comes to me and is so awfully humble that he nearly crawls like a worm — I grow fidgety. He makes me feel thus. I want to walk away from him. How much better acts a man who will come to me and speak the truth boldly — say what is on his mind, what is on his heart, openly, like a man; and no matter what my own reaction is, no matter whether I agree or disagree with him, I can respect him, simply because such a man acts like a man and thinks like a man — but these humble people, *wow!*

I think that this kind friend should have used the word "impersonality" instead of humility. I think impersonality is really what is meant in this question. Every great seer and sage is marked, above everything else, by lofty impersonality. He thinks of himself the last, of others the first. His views of things are impersonal, and are therefore true, and are therefore unbiased, unswayed and unaffected by the personal equation. His mind, because of his impersonality, is so clear and keen that it is like the smooth mountain tarn reflecting every ray from the stars above.

He is so because he is impersonal; whereas the personal man is always so frenzied and fretted with his worries and troubles and his trials and his wants and his hates and his loves, and this and that and the other thing, that his mind is in a perfect frenzy and fever all the time; and how can truth enter into such a mind?

That is the main trouble of us ordinary men. We live a frenzied personal life almost all the time, and we actually pride ourselves upon it. We don't know what peace is, what impersonality is; we do not know where wisdom lies. Nevertheless men do know in some parts of the world; and theosophists are taught to be impersonal, however poorly we may succeed in being it. We are taught to strive to be impersonal, which does not mean to be 'humble.' I suppose the ordinary mythological legends about the humble Jesus, and so forth, have so stultified the minds of the Occident that they probably think that every spiritually-minded being must go through life acting like a worm or a rabbit. No, friends, that is not my ideal. Give me a man, an upstanding man! Indeed, even if you examine the Christ story of the Christian New Testament, you will find that Jesus was fully a man. How about the temple and the money-changers, and the lash? How about his interview, according to the story, with Pontius Pilate? There was a man indeed. Nothing humble about him there. Nothing of the Uriah Heep stuff!

Look at the Buddha, the very incarnation of wisdom and love, in whose name has never a drop of human blood been shed. He has brought hope and comfort to more human hearts than any other one of the great sages and seers of the human race in recorded history. He was a man, a man among men. Compassion and love were his dominating characteristics, and wisdom. Nothing "humble" about him. But he was impersonal to the highest degree.

A Mason asked: Have you initiation here?

My answer is, Yes.

A judge asked: Do you believe in the resurrection of the body?  
I do not — he added.

Nor do we theosophists, in the Christian sense of the word. And



yet, when you realize that the very atoms of your body do not come to you by chance, that they are the same atoms which you used in your last incarnation on earth, then you quickly see that there is a resurrection of the physical man in that sense of the word: i. e., that when you return to earth in the next reincarnation, the atoms in which you live in this present body, will automatically fly to that new body, will be psychomagnetically drawn to you, for they are your physical, astral, and ethereal children.

But the resurrection of the body in the Christian idea, theosophists do not believe in. Nor do I think that Christians believe in it any more. I have not heard of that doctrine being preached for quite a long number of years. I hope they don't preach it, because I am afraid they may be disappointed.

A gentleman asked: What is the significance of the word "Isis" in the title *Isis Unveiled*

The significance of the word Isis in the title of this book is the Great Mother of us all, universal nature. *Isis Unveiled* means the unveiling of nature's structure, operations, constitution, origin, and destiny. *Isis Unveiled*, therefore, construed properly, means an unveiling of esoteric truth. Isis of course, as you know, was one of the goddesses of the ancient Egyptians. But that is not here nor is it there, in the answer to this question.

A lady asked: Do you believe in healing by your prayers? When you are sick, what do you do?

I go to a doctor, or the doctor comes to me, which is about the same thing. I am not overfond of doctors either; but I do not try to heal myself by lip-prayer. There is a whole philosophy in that indeed. I have little respect for those people who think that they can do what they like, and then heal themselves by praying to be

well again. I can understand their human ideas about it all. I have sympathy for them as unfortunate human beings; but I have no sympathy for the idea. I feel like saying to them: Go, and sin no more; and after a while your sins — that is your troubles, your diseases — will be "forgiven," which means that they will have worked themselves out; and your sinning no more means that they will not recur.

Now theosophists do not pray, if that means going down on your marrowbones and putting up your hands, and telling Somebody what you think you ought to get. What an idea such simple-minded people must have of that Somebody! Does he know his business or does he not? Theosophists do not pray in that sense of the word; and yet I tell you, friends, that a Theosophist prays in another sense of the word; and his whole life, if he be sincere, is one long prayer.

Prayer with theosophists is aspiration; it is a constant raising of ourselves from day to day, trying each day to go a little higher towards the god within. This means harmony, inner harmony which means peace. Therefore, having harmony and peace within you, in your mind, in your heart, that state of mind and heart will reflect itself in your physical body, and your body will function harmoniously, which means that it will function in health.

A gentleman asked: Do theosophists cast horoscopes or believe in the practice of astrology?

Now, there it is again! Trying to make me responsible for what all theosophists believe and do! I am not a Jesus. I don't want people's thought and sins and virtues to be cast on my shoulders. I am carrying enough of my own — and besides this, nature does not permit transference of karmic consequences to some other person. If that were possible, nature would be in a constant state

of jangle and chaos.

I don't know and I don't care what other theosophists honestly think or believe. If they subscribe to the Constitution of The Theosophical Society and live a decent life, they can believe whatever they like, or disbelieve whatever they like. I do not keep the consciences of my F.T.S. — Fellows of The Theosophical Society. If you ask me what I personally believe about this matter, I will gladly tell you: I believe in astrology, but not in that tawdry and tattered remnant which exists in the Occident today, and which is advertised in the newspapers, and by which you can get your horoscope cast for a price. Occidental astrology is just a remnant, tawdry and tattered and soiled, of the ancient Oriental astrological science; and in real astrology, which is the soul of what you Occidentals call astronomy: the higher teachings of astronomy as I understand it: in it I do believe. I think this esoteric astrology is one of the most wonderful parts of the study of nature's laws and structure and operations; and our theosophical teachings set forth that the universe is one vast organism, that every part, every entity, is interlocked and interlinked and interblended with every other part and with every other entity; and that such a thing as an absolute separation of part from part, or of entity from entity, or of the destiny of one from the destiny of others, or of the origin of one from the origin of all others, is a natural impossibility.

What I have just said is the fundamental basis of spiritual astrology in all its ancient grandeur, and it is a sublime science; it is also a religion; it is also a philosophy: it is these three which in their essence are one but only appear as three distinct fields of thought and of investigation.

But what passes in the Occident today under the name of astrology, as I have already told you, is something that I don't care

to have anything to do with, although I do not want to say anything against it that would hurt the feelings of sincere believers in it. I am not a man given to strictures against other peoples' beliefs and feelings; but I do not follow or study Occidental astrology so called. I have no real belief in it, simply because those otherwise honest men and women who advertise the casting of astrological horoscope know very little about real astrology. It is mostly guesswork on their part, and in some few cases is based on a studying of the books of the ancients, all which books were written in a mystical cipher which modern astrological students cannot properly read at all.

An average man asked: My father was cremated. He wanted it. None in our family had been cremated. I feel disturbed. Do you believe in cremation? If so, why?

Yes, I do believe in cremation. I do not see why anybody should feel disturbed because the physical human body is resolved into its chemical elements. That will also happen so in the grave, or if you put the body in quicklime, or do something else to it besides burning it up. People seem to think that when they are alive, because they put a finger in the flame and it hurts, and because the flesh is scorched and burnt, that a similar feeling is going to be experienced by the dead body when it is cremated. Nothing of the kind, and indeed a great deal more than that happens to the dead body. It is simply dissolved into its chemical elements, which are thus separated, freed. It is quick work, as compared with dissolution or decay as it occurs in burial, and it is horrible to think of this last.

Cremation is cleanly, it is sanitary, it is healthful; and esoterically speaking it is a much better thing, because it more quickly releases what theosophists call the astral body — not the human spirit-soul which has already passed to spiritual spheres — which

astral body clings to the physical corpse as long as that corpse has any semblance of the life of a human being. And this is not a good state of things to exist.

Cremation is a good thing. I have no time to develop the matter this afternoon, however. If you are interested in the subject, then study our theosophical books.

A lady asked: I wish to know what it is that keeps you together. Can I find it in your literature?

I think you can, in part; but I will tell you briefly what it really is that keeps us together. The thing that binds theosophists so straitly together, inseparably, is the wisdom-religion which we study. It tells us our common origin and our common destiny; it shows to us our utter kinship; it gives to us all the same body of doctrine, the same hopes, the same aspirations, the same explanations of life and being. It is a wonderful system of thought. Consequently we theosophists all have the same heart-feelings and the same beliefs. That is what keeps us together.

I am going to close my lecture this afternoon with answering the question I now hold in my hand. It has a Christian tinge of thought, and I have kept it till the last. It was sent in to me as a quotation from Clemenceau, and I understand that he is the Clemenceau of wartime, who recently died. At any rate, here is the quotation that is ascribed to Clemenceau:

"Our fathers awaited the Messiah. The Messiah is within us. The problem is to set him free."

Question: What would the result be if the Messiah in every human heart was set free?

I will tell you. This is a noble quotation from this man Clemenceau; and its thought is exactly parallel with what I have

told you myself this afternoon, and Clemenceau's words show how our theosophical thoughts are permeating the thought-atmosphere of the world. Men are picking these theosophical thoughts out of the air, without knowing where they come from.

The quotation is wholly true. When a man has become cognizant of the god within, has set this god free, so to speak, by giving up the petty personality of ordinary life — the man's own personal selfhood — and thus has broken the bonds fettering and binding the transcendent powers of the god within, then the Messiah, the risen Christ, the savior of each one of you, can manifest its sublime faculties and powers. Listen to the still small voice of the god within.

When every man becomes a Christ risen from the tomb of the lower selfhood, resurrected from manhood into divinity — as all men will be in the future on this earth, in future races — what a heaven human life will be! Think of it! No more wars, no more suffering caused by man upon man, no more striving of man with man; but brotherhood and peace and harmony, and mutual love and pity and compassion will prevail, each man for each other man, and each for all, and all for one.

It is so easy to do this; it could be done today, done tomorrow, if men would only see the ultimate and sublimest truth in human life, which is that each one of you is an incarnate god, a Christ as yet unrisen. Set the Christ free. Resurrect him from the tomb of the lower selfhood.

No. 45 (July 29, 1930)

## QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK

(Lecture delivered April 27, 1930)

CONTENTS: Each one is a Christ in his inmost being. — The great spiritual sages and seers came out of the life-stream of humanity. — The Occident has no real religion, no assured and standard science. — Refuges for sick beasts established in India thousands of years ago. — Humility and "humility." — Personal and impersonal love. — What is the cognizing faculty in us which recollects? — The poetry of the ancients. — Is the Theosophical Movement the only road of spiritual development? — Do the Orientals stand on a higher spiritual level than Occidentals? — Ultramodern scientific thinkers are becoming mystics.

How beautiful are the thoughts that sometimes pass through one's mind on hearing music which awakens, as it were, memories of a far-distant past — latent memories of a time when we were unconsciously akin with the gods who control and guide the universe, memories of the time when we were living sparks, god-sparks, just issued from the womb of timeless space, and with a realization — unconscious, not personal, not human, but divine as it were, spiritual at least — of the fact that we as entities, as inseparable parts of the cosmos, have our roles to play, each one of us, as collaborators with the spiritual universe.

The root of things being harmony, being divine love, and we being inseparable parts — each one of us an inseparable part — of the heart of things, you see what that means: that each one of you, each one of us, as individual entities, has that within us which can know all things, which can be all things, as the mystic

work of evolution unrolls its tangled fabric or web on the screen of time.

We are so blind, we human beings, so deaf to the inner spiritual call, so unseeing in our merely lower personal natures, that we know not what we are. We do not realize who we are, what our origin was, what our present work in life is, and what our future destiny is to be. We don't know, we don't realize, we have not come to see, the vision sublime, that at the core of the core of each one of us we are a divine being: that each one of us is such a divine entity; but when men realize this, when realizing it they enter into conscious communion with their own spiritual-divine selves, then you have the titanic men of the human race, the great spiritual seers and sages whom men in later times called the Buddha, the Christ, and by other equivalent names among other peoples. They are not different from the average men of mankind, except that they are farther advanced in evolution, elder brothers of the race. That is all.

Each one of you is a Christ in his inmost being. Why don't you be it consciously? Why don't you awaken to the sublime reality? Each one of you is a Buddha in the inmost of his inmost. Why don't you be it consciously? It is just as easy, easier by far, than being the small, petty, personal self, entangled in all its self-woven web of emotions and thoughts.

This is no new message; it is one of the most grand and encouraging teachings of the ancient wisdom-religion of humanity, today called theosophy. The trouble about it all is that you Occidental people don't want to realize these things; you don't want to believe it. You prefer to believe that you are merely a developed ape, or a worm of the dust, or some other fad like that. What a choice!

Where do these great ones come from? How came they into



being? They came out of the life-stream of humanity. What one man can be, any other man can be, if he do the same as they, if he live the life and obey nature's fundamental law as they did. That is all there is to it. Isn't that a gospel of hope? Isn't that encouraging?

Now, there are certain peoples who know these truths and try to live up to them much better than you Occidentals do; and I try to drive this fact home on every Sunday afternoon when I speak to my audiences. You Occidentals think that you are the "cocks of the walk." Yes, indeed you do! And likewise you think that all the rest of mankind is born to be your servers, your servitors, your servants. And yet there are parts of the world which brought forth brilliant, magnificent civilizations which reached the plenitude of their powers when your ancestors were running around the woods of the different European countries, when they were painting themselves blue, and, in general, indulging in the antics of barbarous peoples.

It is your turn now to enjoy prosperity; it is your turn now to lead in the van of material progress; but material progress is something built upon an inner urge, and when that inner urge stops — crash! Down goes the power! Unless men have an ideal and follow that ideal — a spiritual vision — they are doomed; and where is your vision sublime in the Occident today? Where is it? Show me! Religions, and varieties of religion, by the hundreds; philosophies of all kinds; magnificent scientific researchers, men of high intellectual capacity, searching, searching, searching, and changing their theories overnight. No steady rule to guide you by, no infallible law of action, no norm, to use the old word, in other words no high standard of thought and action based on nature's laws; but you are just advancing like little children at night along a strange way, step by step, step by step, following that little light and this little light, and utterly unknowing whither you are going.

Where is your guide? You have not any real religion. You have not any real philosophy. You have no assured and standard science. Your finest, or rather your most developed or outstanding achievement called modern science, you have not even a science upon which you can utterly depend, because it changes overnight. Now the fact that it so changes is in one way a fine thing. It shows that it is learning and progressing, shows that it is advancing; but where is that in which you can utterly trust: where is your scientific, philosophic, and religious standard? Where is your vision sublime?

Nevertheless there is truth in the universe. There is a system of philosophy, which will, if you follow it, lead you to the heart of the universe; and the Theosophical Movement was established in modern times in order to show to men the beginning of that pathway. Where is that beginning? Outside of you? No! Within you. You yourselves are to tread it; therefore you yourselves must begin it. Each one of you is the beginning of that pathway. Self-knowledge — where can you get it? By searching within. Right teaching, right thinking, right action — these are the three keynotes of human action, but where is your standard or guide? I tell you that the Theosophical Movement was founded by the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion in order to teach men how to discover this standard and guide, how to find this pathway.

These Masters of Wisdom and Compassion, whom theosophists call by various names — the elder brothers of mankind, or mahatmas, or the great sages and seers, or Buddhas, or Christs (the name matters not at all) live today and form a brotherhood of teachers; and they work in the silence and invisibly, because then men don't prevent their work by the antics which men play.

Do you know that one of the easiest ways by which to discover yourself is love, impersonal love: love which asks no reward,

which gives all and therefore gives itself? Love is an illumination. Love is inspiring; it opens the doors of the mind, because it cracks the bonds of the lower selfhood hemming around the god within. When you love impersonally then the divine fires flow out, and man becomes truly man. The hearts of you Occidentals are hardened, hardened with sorrow, hardened with misunderstandings, hardened by ignorance, because you have not had the vision sublime.

This past week, I believe, is called Kindness to Animals Week; and today, I believe, is called Humane Sunday. Now it is a beautiful thing that such a week should be called for by the public conscience. I have no doubt that most people in this country who look upon such a week with a moved heart, with a feeling of its moral beauty, and who feel that we should treat the beasts and all those beneath us, our younger brothers, with kindness, with pity — I have no doubt, I say, that most of you think that you are the originators of this grand idea. But were you the originators? How long is it since the beasts were considered naught but entities created by Almighty God either for your dinner table or to be killed off in what is called sport? "What a beautiful day this is! Let's go out and kill something! How we shall enjoy the fresh air!"

And yet there have been hospitals for wounded animals, there have been refuges for the beast-sick, in the Orient, for thousands of years. Some of the greatest of these hospitals for the wounded and sick beasts were established in India by the great Buddhist king, Asoka, and they existed even before his time.

Have you ever seen a man lash a beast? Have you ever seen the hunters scouring the forests and the marshes to get the rare plumes with which to deck your women's hats and garments, killing the parent birds and leaving the little ones to die? How you Occidentals love!

Do you think that nature tolerates those atrocities for long? Do you think that nature is so unevenly balanced, so chancy, that men can do what they like and escape scot-free from the results of their acts? The exact contrary is the truth. "As ye sow, so shall ye reap," said Paul of the Christians in his Epistle to the Galatians. And he said truly. If you commit an act of cruelty and it become a habit with you, your character becomes cruel, and you will act cruelly, and you will receive cruelty as a retribution, for that is nature's law. It is nature's reaction to what you have done.

Have a heart! Be yourself — your better self; and recognize the fundamental unity of all things that be in a common spiritual brotherhood.

Do you not know that your hearts are so hardened that if a man of another race come among you, you look upon him almost as a museum curiosity? If he does not eat as you do and clothe himself as you do and act as you do, you think that he must be desperately wicked or something else equally unfavorable to his character. Is that a large and generous view? Now, it is true that other nations feel in the same way. An Occidental goes to the Orient. They look upon him, I doubt not, in pretty much the same way and are doubtless more or less afraid of him. *But* they don't treat him as we treat the "strange men," as we call them who come among us.

We have no feeling of kindness for him; and only when such an Outlander puts on our clothes and eats our food and reads our books and adopts our ideas, do we think that he is even receivable in our homes — so great is your heart of kindness.

All that is very small-minded indeed; and it just shows that what I am telling you is true. You don't feel your kinship with universal nature; you don't recognize the existing bond of human brotherhood; and this last is the first key towards recognizing

your kinship with all nature, with nature spiritual as well as physical; nor do you recognize your kinship with the gods.

I know men. I have met numbers of them who think that the accomplishment of what they want to do is excuse enough for doing it. But I ask you: Is it? You know well that your own human laws tell you differently. If every man in the Occident, for instance, did exactly as he pleased, what would happen? We know where he would land, and very soon. Why not carry out that perfectly proper and righteous principle in all your life? Therefore feel with others. Be kindly towards all beings; be gentle; have an understanding heart. Don't you see that this is the road of peace, that this is the road to follow in order to understand yourself? It is the road that you must tread if you want to know the god within you.

The first question that I have before me this afternoon is in the nature of a little criticism of something that I said, I think, on last Sunday afternoon, and here it is:

In your lecture of last Sunday afternoon, you spoke of humility: had no use, as I understood it, for humble people, citing the character of Uriah Heep in one of Dickens's novels as an example of a detestable character, with which I quite agree.

Question: How would you answer an inquirer brought up in an evangelical church if he or she in beginning to read our literature should come upon these great words from Mme. Blavatsky:

"Be humble, if thou wouldst attain to Wisdom. Be humbler still, when Wisdom thou hast mastered." — *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 48 — and should say that the Bible taught its readers to be humble, and that H. P. Blavatsky does also?

Your version of it yesterday afternoon was satisfactory to me, but would it be to an inquirer just beginning to read our books? Will you kindly answer this question?

When I talk to people, I take it for granted that they will try to understand me; and I thought that I explained perfectly well that the humility that I detested, as manifest in the humble people that I compassionate, was seen in those people who come cringing and crawling around you, or into your room, like a worm, and make you feel so wretchedly unhappy! That is the kind of humility that I don't like — the Uriah Heep kind of thing. These people always seem to have something in the back of their minds that they want to get. I am afraid that I don't like them. I fear that I don't like humble people of that kind.

I suppose that this inquirer, kind-hearted, thought that I meant by humble people, people existing in what is called a humble situation in life, and of course I did not mean that. Some of the most interesting people whom I have ever known have been people who were born in the so-called lower ranks of human life — kindly, gentle, often well-bred, thoughtful, intellectual. One of the most interesting conversationalists that I ever knew was a shoemaker; and I remember once at home, when I was a boy, my daddy asked me why my shoes needed repairing so often. I told him that I had a shoemaker who was a friend, and that I wanted to help him in his business; and I said, furthermore: "He is the most interesting man to talk to I have ever known. He talks far better than you do, Daddy!" My father was a clergyman, you know, but he was a big-hearted man, and he simply smiled.

H. P. Blavatsky in writing the two beautiful sentences quoted from her says what I would say perhaps in exactly the same words, because the words "Be humble," are there used in a sense other than the way in which I used them on last Sunday.

*Impersonality* is the real meaning of the words "Be humble" in this citation; but I was pointing out on last Sunday that the humility which is detestable is exactly the opposite of impersonality, and is in fact an excess of personality. This kind of personality is detestable; and it is in fact the one first thing that we must conquer in ourselves and move away from if we want to live the life of true-hearted men.

Let me read these two sentences by substituting the word impersonal for humble, and you will see exactly what their true meaning is: "Be impersonal if thou wouldst attain to Wisdom," because personality blinds your eyes and you cannot see the truth. When a man is so full of his own ideas and his own desires and his own feelings that he cannot see his fellows' desires and feelings and ideas, he is blinded by his own lower personality. "Be more impersonal still when Wisdom thou hast mastered." You see how truly this substitution brings out the real meaning of these two sublime sentences. This is just another case where people misunderstand each other by not understanding each one the other's words.

Now, I know perfectly well that this kind questioner got my idea fairly exactly, but did not like what was thought to be an all-inclusive criticism of the word humble. I pointed out that the Uriah Heep type of man is one whom I do not admire. I detest humility of that kind. I like to see a man stand on his feet and tell me the truth as he sees it; whether I like his way of seeing it or not is another matter entirely. I then can respect him for his manhood. I may not agree with him, but that is entirely beside the point. I like his courage, I like his frankness, I like his sense of honor, standing up, facing his fellow men, and saying what he really feels and believes.

Now, that does not mean — and here I must be cautious or I will

get a note of criticism to answer on next Sunday — that does not mean that I think that every man is truly impersonal and courageous who is so full of his own egoism that he is utterly unconscious that he is a nuisance. That is again something else. I do not like this fault either; I do not ever think that egoism is courage. I call that idea simply a folly. We have to exercise discrimination in these things, use our judgment, based on our knowledge of the intricate characters of our fellow human beings.

Question Two before me:

The units of human society are the families; the ties by which they are held together may be called mutual responsibilities, trust, confidence, and also love. These may involve some individual sacrifices, but also they bring happiness, strength, and joy. These feelings seem to be of a rather personal order but nevertheless of an ennobling and helpful quality. Why do you depreciate all kinds of personal love?

Please, answer if possible on Sunday the 27th of April.

In the first place, I do not think that this questioner is quite just to me. It is true that I have often spoken of impersonal love, because it is lovely, it is so beautiful, it has no trace of the things that we all dislike. Impersonal love is also intuitive. Further, it is always kindly to everything and to everybody — to beings and things both great and small; but if a man's heart and mind are filled solely with a personal love, then he loves this but he does not love that; he loves something over there, but he does not love some other thing here, or *vice versa* — in other words, his love is limited in direct ratio with its personal character. That is the kind of love that is not wholly true, that is limited.

But the magnificent qualities spoken of in this question are not qualities of such a low, limited, personal affection. They are



qualities of the soul-spirit. Responsibility, trust, confidence, love — these indeed bring happiness, strength, and joy. Cultivate them indeed! Indeed they are high and therefore I love them. I never would or could depreciate anything that was beautiful, grand, sublime, impersonal, lovely.

But you must know that you won't understand these grand qualities nor truly feel them if your heart is filled with purely personal limited feelings and thought. Your heart will not have a place for them. Your heart will not contain them if it is filled with merely personal things — my wife, my home, my children, my country, my books, my — my — *my*! How about the other man's "my's"? Do you see now what I mean? It is precisely this selfish personal love which has brought sorrow, suffering, and misery into human life, just as impersonal love cleanses and purifies and makes men's hearts glad. Really personal love is never responsible, has no sense of responsibility. It cannot trust, it cannot truly confide, it cannot utterly give, because the "I" is there in strength all the time, and its one thought is: for me, for me, for me.

Don't you see that this is the trouble in the world today, and that all troubles and sorrows will cease in large, large, large, large degree when men and women can love each other impersonally, when men can love men, looking upon the fellow man as a human hero, and when women will trust their own sex, which they will do when they have this vision?

No, I most emphatically do not depreciate impersonal love, not even when it manifests through persons. But this other personal love, this limited scope of the feelings and emotions, this petty thing which blinds, which limits, which cramps, which destroys hope, which does away with aspiration, and brings no durable comfort into human life — I do not like it. I will have naught of it.

That does not mean that I do not feel my heart move with compassion for those who have not yet caught even a glimmer of the vision sublime. Yes, I know what it is to grieve with another's grieving heart; and I know how my own character has been strengthened by the impersonal compassion, the pity, the sympathy, which I have learned how to give.

Here is a question of quite a different type:

Are memory of music, memory of poetry, and the like, to be considered as acquirements revealing a certain kind of spiritual development, or are they merely faculties of the psycho-astral personality?

Please note first here, that music itself, poetry itself, are not spoken of, but the recollection of these, the remembering of these. Are recollection or remembering or memory merely acquirements, or are these various kinds of recollections the working of a psycho-astral faculty of the inner constitution of man? I say that they are both. The memory, as the divine Plato said; learning, as he said; genius, as he said; and all other similar faculties of the inner constitution of man, are reminiscences out of the past, coming from other lives, and manifesting themselves through and by the thinking organ within the human constitution — which is an organ of individual self-consciousness, whether you call it soul or mind or ego matters not at all. I refer to that which is the cognizing faculty; it is this which bears in the very fabric of its being the impressions stamped upon it by the events of past lives; and it carries these impressions which are stamped upon it like the impression of the seal upon the wax. These impressions on the psychomental fabric of the thought organ are called in their aggregate, the memory.

But what is the cognizing faculty which in recollection re-collects and cognizes, which in remembrance re-members, puts together

again and recognizes? Fundamentally it is the spiritual self within, the fountain of consciousness within. Even the beast can recollect music. It cannot recollect poetry unless indeed it recollect the rhythm of the marching words, as the lines are recited. And if this is so it arises out of habit, which when it becomes automatic is a kind of automatic memory or recollection. Exercise of any part of the psychological apparatus of man is an exercise of one of the organs of the psycho-astral person; and these organs are thrown into operation by the coming into the field of consciousness of something which has been known before, and is thereupon recognized, recollected — re-collected mentally.

It is, therefore, both an acquirement in the sense of coming again into the consciousness of a new life; and also the exercise of a psycho-astral faculty. But music it is, poetry it is, and all other similar things — the sciences, religion, philosophy — which are of a higher type of consciousness, and are actually the operations of the spiritual nature of the human being exercising its intrinsic energies and powers along one line or another.

Music is memory out of the past, a memory of a divine harmony innate in the being, in which a musical note perhaps, a musical phrase, awakens the percipient organ and thereby starts a train of musical thought, as I tried to point out to you this afternoon when I opened my lecture. Similarly poetry comes forth from the visioning heart, from the visioning mind, from the visioning ego. Poetry is a vision — and I am speaking now of the true poet, not merely of the versifier, but of the true, intuitive poet-heart — it is a vision, I say, into nature's structure and operations, which the human percipient organ thereupon attempts to interpret and to formulate in human language.

To our Occidental minds, poetry is mostly rime, outside of the

meaning of course. But I prefer the poetry of the ancients, which depended for its effect upon the ictus or beat, like the steady tramping of marching feet — the rhythmic beat of the magical words as they fell from the lips of the man who recited. You, writing thus, become musical in nature's own way. Such was Greek poetry, such was Latin poetry, such was Sanskrit verse. The ancients rimed scarcely at all. We Occidentals look upon rimes as poetry, and I really think that rime deprives true poetry of one of its most beautiful parts, and that is the power to bring forth rhythmic thinking in the mind.

A man who hears Occidental poetry is continually anticipating the end of the line in order to see how cleverly the poet may be able to rime musically. His attention is thus distracted away, first from the sense of the words, and next from the rhythmic beat of the marching feet. But listen to the poetry of the ancients. Get its beat, like the beat of a heart, and then your attention is distracted by nothing at all. You fall into the stream of the musical beat, and are carried along with it.

These lines from the Latin poet Ovid neatly express my meaning in their rhythmic beat:

Os homini sublime dedit,  
Coelumque tueri jussit,  
Et erectos ad sidera tollere vultus.

The path of the mystic opened by the modern Theosophical Movement is indeed most natural to people who have a mystic inclination inborn in their nature, but is it the only road of spiritual development? Is there not some other gateway to the path for those high-minded and noble people who have a more rational than mystical bent in their nature?

Of course. Haven't you ever heard the old saying that the path to

the heart of the universe is one and yet different for every human being? The meaning is that every human being himself is that pathway — that pathway which is builded of thought and consciousness and of the fabric of your own being. It is builded of the stuff of nature's heart. I know that there is a path to the heart of the universe for the man who calls himself a rational thinker, just as much as there is a path leading to the heart of the universe for the man who looks upon himself as one of religious bent.

Do you think that the scientist or the philosopher is not advancing, and can you tell me anything more mystically beautiful than the thoughts brought forth by our modern scientific researchers? Science and religion and philosophy are fundamentally one, operations of the human consciousness, for all these three are founded in the consciousness of man and represent merely three different ways in which man's consciousness tries to penetrate behind the veils of the outward seeming in order to reach the womb of being which to man seems to be outside of himself. That womb of being is within him. The religionist, the philosopher, the scientist — in other words the mystic, the philosopher, and the rationalist — can reach, each one, the heart of the universe along the lines and bent of his own character.

But — and I should add this in justice — there is a long road, by comparison with the one I shall speak of in a moment. It is also broad. It is the road whereon you have nature's streaming current of energy with you, and following this road you will reach perfection in due time; but this is the road of long-enduring slow evolution, moving ahead little by little in each life, through the incalculable ages.

But there is another road, steep and thorny, difficult to follow, but which the great ones of the human race have trodden. It is the

quick road, but the difficult one. It is the road of self-conquest, the road of the giving up of self for the All, the road by which the personal man becomes the impersonal Christ, the impersonal Buddha: the road by which the love for your own is abandoned, and your whole being becomes filled with love for all things both great and small. It is a difficult road to follow, for it is the road of initiation; it is the steep and thorny pathway to the gods, for when you climb the heights of Olympus you must tread the pathway as there it lies before you.

Yes, I tell you that the so-called rational man is more of a mystic at heart than most men realize; and I tell you also that the so-called mystical thinker is more of a rational thinker than most men realize. Examine, if you will, the minds of the great mystical thinkers as shown in the mystical literatures of the world, and those of you who are not acquainted with these literatures will be astounded to find how, after the fashion of category, category, category, just as the rationalists reason, the minds of the mystics have reached the conclusions that they have attained.

The difference between the rationalist and the mystic, as a rule, is simply this, and here is why I prefer the mystic thinker: the mystic has a keener sense of his oneness with all that is. This likewise is a teaching of the science of today. The ultramodern scientific thinkers are teaching you the same truth of your intrinsic oneness with universal being.

I don't like these absolute divisions of human thinkers into these different classes. I have searched for these absolute classes in my life, and I have found these supposed absolute classes to be so in superficial appearance only; and years ago, in my young manhood, I gave up the idea that these different classes exist as natural divisions in human life: necessary, watertight, thought-tight compartments; and what did I find? I found that if you can

penetrate beneath the shell of the personality, you will find all men feeling alike, all men thinking alike, and that the so-called rationalist and the so-called mystic and the so-called philosopher, as well as the so-called scientist, are such merely because their minds have been given that or this or the other bent, and thereafter they have followed that bent. But that bent will change to some other bent as evolution pursues its mighty work, its mighty labor.

Do you consider that some of the Oriental peoples of today, for instance the Tibetans, stand on a higher spiritual level than the Western nations which have reached such a high degree of intellectual and artistic civilization? It is the so-called Western culture which now seems to be spreading most rapidly; the Oriental nations are reaching out for it very eagerly and thereby they lose many of their own traditions. Does this mean an advancement or is it an illusion?

I think it is both. A question like this is exceedingly difficult to answer on account of the matters involved. There is such a thing as high evolutionary advancement, as having reached a high evolutionary stage, and yet going through a cyclic period of depression; and when I am asked which of the twain is the more advanced — contrasting such a case as that I have just spoken of with the case of a man who is more or less inferior to him in actual evolutionary progress but who happens to be at the pinnacle or acme of a minor stage of his growth, therefore manifesting better his powers — I always want to ask my questioner: What kind of progress do you mean? What do you mean by spiritual progress? Are you going to judge of a people by what it brings forth during any one period of time, when it happens to have attained the culmination of a cyclical period; or are you going to judge of a people by the outstanding characters that it produces — the lives that the people as a whole lead, the

noble thoughts that they continuously have?

This latter seems to be the better test. Simplicity, sincerity, a sense of one's oneness with the universe, a feeling of brotherhood, of kindness for all that is — things like these show spiritual advancement; and as concerns individuals, a man whose heart is filled with the vibrating energy of love, of impersonal love, stands incomparably more high to me than does a man who can pile up a big bank account, or who stands high in the political councils of the people, or who is an outstanding military genius. Which is the more human of the two? In whom of the twain are the sympathies the larger? These are the tests by which we may estimate and judge of spiritual progress or retrogression.

When I am asked more explicitly if I think the Oriental peoples stand on a higher plane than do the Occidental folk, I must answer first that I think it hardly fair so arbitrarily to classify the different races on the grounds of supposedly essential racial distinctions. I prefer to take the individuals. I have met men of high spiritual standing in the West as well as men of low spiritual grade, and I have met the same in the Orient. Nevertheless, we Occidentals are in a period of our evolution wherein the material things of life are brought to the fore. We are living in that part of our racial advancement in which the things of material life are considered of paramount importance. Money, political power, social standing, property, things like those, are all of them things that you leave behind you when you die. You don't carry them with you.

But, on the other hand, some of the races of the Orient, and the Tibetans in particular perhaps, are simple people, sincere people; they likewise have their material temptations, but, on the whole, life is on a higher plane there than it is in the West. The Tibetan, for instance, senses his oneness with universal being. To him, the



animals, the birds, the trees, the everlasting mountains, the snow, the glittering stars, the sun, the earth beneath his feet, are akin to him: life of his life, thought of his thought; having the same origin; destined to reach the same evolutionary end.

Such thoughts, for ages in the Occident, have been known only to the mystical thinkers, and yet they are the common heritage of the humblest Tibetan peasant. And oh, the solace, the comfort, the spiritual help, that ideas like these bring to a man!

You of the West have your flying machines, and are tormented with the noise; you have your automobiles tearing along the highways and byways and through the streets of your great metropolises, poisoning the air with their gaseous fumes. You have your trains rushing over continents, carrying you safely on errands of selfishness or of mercy bent. Do you take all these things with you when you die? Do they build up your character in firmness of manhood and provide you with the idealisms which differentiate you so largely from the beasts? Do they give you strength of will, in the better sense? Do they make you become impersonal? Can you sense the agony of your brother's heart more keenly by becoming inwrapped in these things of purely material value?

Answer my question, and then you yourself will answer this question that this thoughtful querent has asked me: "Which of the twain stands the higher in spiritual development?" The reason why the Orientals are so drawn to the Occidental comforts and inventions and sciences is for the same reason, but inversely applied, that we Occidentals are drawn to the Orient. We of the Occident have brought forth these things and have tested them, have proved them out, and as a result our hearts are sick. We have found these things out. But the simple children of the Orient — as we are simple children of the Occident — do not know yet

what they are, and suppose them to have real values, and consequently they are drawn to them to test them out — even as we have tested them out to our sorrow.

Meanwhile, you Occidentals listen to every turbaned swami who appears on the lecture platform. Your women follow him in crowds. Every new religion out of the East comes to you like a heaven-sent blessing, not merely because it is some new thing, but because your hearts are hungry and you have no spiritual food at home wherewith to feed your hearts. You have no vision sublime. "Which of the twain stands the higher in spiritual things?" was the question. Let your own hearts answer.

The time has nearly come for closing this afternoon, but I promised to comment briefly on a newspaper clipping that was sent in to me, concerning a new philosophical idea of time, to which idea Dr. Gilbert N. Lewis, of the University of California, has given birth in our age, although this conception of time is a very old one. I will read a few extracts from this newspaper clipping:

A revolutionary theory in physics, in which old age disappears from time [old age *from time*] was proposed by Dr. Lewis. . . .

The everyday idea Dr. Lewis called "one-way" time. The special kind he named "two-way," or symmetrical. Illustrating "two-way" time, he said with existing data an astronomer can predict an eclipse a thousand years hence, or calculate one a thousand years ago with equal accuracy; or a motion picture of the motion of the solar system could run backward and yet obey Newtonian laws as satisfactorily as in forward motion.

"Would you believe," said Dr. Lewis, "that events now transpiring are among the facts which decided Caesar to cross the Rubicon? I do not know that I believe it either, but I know

that analogous conclusions must be made in physics and chemistry. In these sciences if we think of the present as pushed into existence by the past, we must in equal measure think of it as pulled into existence by the future."

And again:

"Nevertheless, there have been many who have realized that just as a pack of cards, if indefinitely shuffled, will eventually return to its original arrangement, so any physico-chemical system, when left to itself, in its initial state, must return to that state. I do not say that the whole universe and every atom in it will sometime return exactly to the condition of the present moment, but I do say that if anyone has the temerity to apply to the whole universe the laws now adopted in the little republic of physics, this is the conclusion."

Which means, if you follow the thought strictly, that you are not only existing now but have existed in the past and will exist in the future; that things cannot be left to chance happenings; that evolution does not pass from A to B and that C, D, E, F, G, and the rest of the evolutionary alphabet do not exist at present. It means that this is a universe which contains both past and present and future at the same instant of time; that just as an oak is in the acorn germinally, that just as the future man is germinally in the germ-cell, so the future is germinally in the drama of the present and actually existing. For both past and present, and future which not yet exists but is, are but three phases or aspects of the eternal Now.

Do you get the idea? It is founded really on the intuitive conception of universal consciousness. Could it have had an absolute past, and can it have an absolute present, and does it make or create its own absolute future as it goes along through duration? That cannot obviously be, because it would mean that

there *is* no future at all, which is a philosophical absurdity. Do you see the point? Therefore this old theosophical idea which is now coming out again in science, shows to be true what I have so often told you from this platform: that our ultramodern scientific thinkers are becoming mystics, spiritually intuitive. All things everywhere dwell in an eternal, essential present, in an eternal, essential Now.

Furthermore, the reference to things returning in the future to the condition in which they now exist or to an identical condition of things in which the universe existed in the past, is no new idea, but is one of the ancient philosophical postulates of the entire world. It was the teaching of the ancient Persians as well as of the Neoplatonists, and indeed of all believers in the cyclical operations of nature: that after due time identical events return, but on a higher plane, so to speak, or with just sufficient differences to demonstrate steady evolutionary progress. This is illustrated simply by a man living from day to day. Each day he goes through the same routine of duties, but every day he is a little different from what he was on the preceding day and his duties are a little different from what they were, although in a general way both the man and his routine are pretty much the same at each cyclical daily return.

I wonder if I can make this matter of time a little more clear to you. The Christian Apostle Paul said in substance: All of us, all things both great and small, live and move and have our being in IT — in the all-enclosing consciousness of that sublimely greater entity, of which each one of us is an infinitesimal part, because in it we live and move and have our whole being. And this sublimer entity is again but an integral part of some other cosmic entity still more vast. What the future is to us with our short span of life, our short cycle of life, is infinitesimally small in the large lifespan of this greater entity. So that while we have been pursuing cycle

after cycle after cycle after cycle in the past — each one of these cycles being an earth-life, or each one of them a day — all this has been included, perhaps within a fraction of a second of the time of this vaster entity in whom we live and move and have our being, and whose present embraces our future as well as our past and present. These words 'past' and 'future,' are truly illusory.

The atoms of my body, of your body, are infinitesimal entities. Each atom is composed of a protonic nucleus which you can call an atomic sun, and of electronic bodies apparently whirling around that atomic sun in orbital movement. Now, one of these electrons will begin and end its entire life cycle of, let us say, some four quadrillion whirlings around its atomic sun in a time period easily comprised in one of our human seconds.

But let us pause and question ourselves: suppose that an entity on such an atomic planet called an electron, when that electron first began its life cycle of four quadrillion years, were to ask itself: Does the future exist now, or is there only a future which comes into existence when I, this important electronic inhabitant, "get there"? The entire existence of this little electronic planet in this atomic solar system, is comprised in one of our human seconds, and meanwhile we go living quietly on; and we now ask the same question that this hypothetical electronic inhabitant asks: Is there such a thing as the future existing *now* Or does the future come into existence only when we "get there"? How about that larger entity in whom we live and move and have our being, and whose cycle of existence is so enormous that the cycle of existence of our solar system is entirely comprised in a fraction of an instant of its time!

I hope that you understand these words and the meaning that they contain. This meaning is not difficult to understand. The past and the future exist continually at the same time, and that time is

the eternal Now. Your time at the present instant is Now. When you were a child it was Now. If you live fifty years more, your time then will be Now. Do you think that you bring the future into existence or create it because, and only until, and when, you "get there"?

Our ultramodern science is making wonderful progress, and I am hoping that the time will come soon when, in passing from materialism into mystical thought, science will become ethical — when our great scientific researchers will realize that the religious spirit is essentially the scientific spirit, and that the scientific spirit is essentially the religious spirit, and that essentially religion and truth are one, that essentially science and truth are one, that essentially philosophy and truth are one — all of which means that these three are essentially one. When man, exercising these three energies or powers of the inner faculties of his constitution understands that, he will realize that they are one, and then he will attain essential Truth. You can do this. You are, each one of you, but a feeble manifestation of the god within you, always trying to express its transcendent powers through your psychological apparatus. If you only knew now what you will see when you are at one with your inner god, what you will get interiorly in things of lasting, durable, permanent value, when you shall have reached into yourself and become at-one with your inner god, not one of you would have any present rest, so eager, so hungry, to be and to do would you become.

Believe it! Believe it! Get the peace, the indescribable peace, that comes to you from following this pathway, this inner pathway, to the gods. Be the god within you. It is peace, it is wisdom, it is love: it is the expansion of all your faculties and powers; for love, as I have so often told you, is the very cement of the universe. Allying yourself with that, you will become at one with the divine harmony which is love's other self.

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Vol 1, No 46

Contents

No. 46 (August 1, 1930)

## QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK

(Lecture delivered May 11, 1930)

CONTENTS: Mother's Day. Thoughts of Mother guide and protect. — The excellent psychology of fraternity among all theosophists. The irresistible power of almighty love. — Causes and cure for the present depression of humanity. The beast theory and the god theory contrasted. Our scientists are becoming mystics. — Astounding questions that children ask. Intuitions from the inner god. — What is the music of the spheres? — Interplanetary communication has existed for ages. — To those whose loved ones have passed on. — Rhys Davids on Buddhism.

As I was coming to our Temple of Peace this afternoon, I was stopped by a friend and reminded that this is Mother's Day. Now, I confess that I don't know exactly just what Mother's Day is, but I have a notion that it is a day set apart by common good feeling in reverence for the women who brought us into the world. We owe much to our fathers; but we men in especial, I think, in an especial degree, owe something to the women of whom we are the children. I have a notion of my own that a boy is nearer to his mother than a girl is. I don't know that a more beautiful word exists in any tongue than that which the human heart gives utterance to in the various languages, when it speaks in terms of affection, and in this one word: mother.

I believe that if men and women, when at the crossroads of temptation, thought at the time of the days passed at home: thought of the tender solicitude, the almost too personal affection, of the mother — these reflections would be a restraining force



like none else that human beings wit of.

I know that I myself would be incapable of a mean or an ugly or an evil thought when I picture to myself — when my mind goes back along the galleries of memory and I figure to myself — those days when, as a little boy, I studied at my mother's knee, when she taught me my alphabet. Beautiful, cherished, memories!

I think that from our mothers we men gain in larger degree even than from our fathers the impulses to noble manhood and manly action. The father to the right-minded boy is an ideal: he is somewhat of a terrific ideal sometimes, but an ideal nevertheless which is to be followed when we grow up and become a man like daddy is. But when we are in trouble, when our little hearts ache, when we don't know what to do or what to say, and seek someone to whom to turn for counsel or advice, to whom does the boy go as a rule? To his mother.

Now, friends, I turn to the questions that have been sent in to me for answer.

I was asked this morning by a friend: "How are you coming along in your attempts to unite the various Theosophical Societies into one spiritual brotherhood?" I answered: Things are looking good, very good indeed. I have received word from the most prominent officer of one of the largest of the other theosophical organizations which is very favorable, very kindly and wise, in its general spirit and in its vision; and I have received hopeful and optimistic communications from other parts of the world; all which shows that the Theosophical Movement at least is ripe for reunion and for the fuller realization that theosophists are banded together or should be banded together as a single corporate body of workers for humanity.

It is for that purpose that originally the great-hearted H. P.

Blavatsky was sent into the world; and we as Theosophists shall fail unless we follow the path that she laid down. It is futile, it is childish, to stand with your faces to the past. That past is indeed passed. Let us look to the Mystic East; and unless we can be Theosophists not only by the mind and in the mind, but with the heart, we are hypocrites and whited sepulchers, containing naught but the dead bones of the past.

From only one individual have I received an unfavorable reply. This individual is the President of a local Lodge in a certain country, and his comment to the invitation issued to him by the President of our own Lodge there was the following in substance: "I don't agree at all with the effort of Dr. de Purucker, your Leader. I think that is wholly bad psychology."

I wonder what that man has in his mind? What is he thinking about? Does he enjoy hate; does he like disunion; does he think that separateness and diverse interests are the way in which to accomplish our common theosophic duty? Why cannot he see that spiritual brotherhood is far above all matters of official organization whatsoever; and that in order to do our sublime work we should band together heart to heart, and stand shoulder to shoulder, and walk forward together hand in hand. Whether one belongs to this society, and someone else belongs to that society, matters not at all. It is principles upon which I take my stand; and I appeal to the common human heart and to our theosophic teachings; and, furthermore, I appeal to the power of almighty love, which will steal into all hearts and overleap all barriers. Its power is irresistible.

That is my psychology, and I allude to this in explanation but not in condemnation of this brother of mistaken views, and also simply in order to show what my own attitude will be if any other such remark or observation upon the work which I have to do

should be made by anybody else.

I have received from the highest possible source, the source of our theosophic light and inspiration, directions to work for unity, for common kindly feeling, for brotherhood, for peace, for harmony, for union. Those are the things that I am striving for. It matters not to me to what other societies the other theosophists may belong — not at all. They can retain their membership in their own societies. I simply call for help in carrying forward the theosophical work.

Is that good psychology? Is the appeal to brotherhood, to fraternity, to kindly feeling, to reunion — is that bad psychology? On the contrary, I believe that the force of these is irresistible.

In our own Society, friends, which I have the high honor to lead and the heavy responsibility to conduct, I am not a dictator, I am not a tyrant. We have no dogmas in The Theosophical Society. Our members can believe what they please. They can believe anything that they please. All they have to subscribe to in applying for fellowship in The Theosophical Society is: I believe in universal brotherhood.

I tell you that the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion founded the modern Theosophical Movement for one sole purpose, which has two aspects to it: in order, first, to found a spiritual brotherhood among men, worldwide, without qualifications, without frontiers or barriers, to which any honest heart might belong; and the other aspect of it is a diffusion into the intelligence of the Occidental world of the principles of the age-old wisdom-religion of mankind, bringing men hope, bringing men peace, bringing men consolation; and, above all else, destroying the fear of death, showing men that the universe is a vast organism, of which every entity anywhere, on earth or on Sirius or wherever you will, is an integral and inseparable part.

We theosophists must do our destined work. We cannot pause. My orders came to me to act and I have acted. I am quite indifferent to criticism of any kind. I am going ahead; and I thank the immortal gods that in the other societies, as a rule, I have met with most sympathetic, indeed wonderful, response.

Do you ask — some of you perhaps belonging to other Theosophical Societies: "Do you then expect to win over everybody to your (my) Society?" Do you want to know what my answer is? It is: I hope so, yes! But only through the power of almighty love and the conviction that here with us lies truth — on no other ground. We don't convert anybody in The T.S. I have truth to give; I have been sent to give that truth; I am ready to give that truth to those who come and come in the right spirit.

But in order to bring about what is my dream and my ideal — one common Theosophical Society of the world — never would I say to any other theosophist: "Abandon your own teacher, your own president, abandon your own society; cast stones at the helping hand which first fed you Theosophical food; cast stones at the Theosophical Society wherein you first saw the glimpses of theosophic splendor." Never! My message will be: "Remain true to the teacher whom you follow and love. I want no hypocrites in The T.S. I want no traitors in The T.S. But the people who come into The Theosophical Society, I want them to come to work with me for the establishment of one Theosophical Society of the world."

I am not seeking the points of quarrel, the points of dissension, the points of disagreement. Let them pass. Let them be as water that has flowed under the bridge of the present into the ocean of oblivion. I seek the points of contact; the points wherein all theosophists must necessarily meet. I want brotherhood, common feeling, kindness; and I should not be at all astonished, when I

am really understood, if the presidents of these other Theosophical Societies, the chief officers — I should not be astonished, I say, if they sought for admission into The Theosophical Society, once I am understood.

I seek the destruction of no other society. I want to help them all. I want to work with them. But just as I expect them to remain true to the colors under which they have enlisted, so I shall remain true to mine. But my dream is, my hope is, and I see it on the horizon of the future, a union — a reunion — in order to carry on Masters' work, of all true-hearted theosophists everywhere, under one banner, in one common corporate body. It is coming.

This is my first question, that is, the first of the questions that I have before me.

In an article entitled "Modernism in Science and Philosophy" in the April number of *The Journal of Philosophic Studies*, Professor Wilbur M. Urban says: "The present depression of humanity has its origin largely, if not solely, in man's degraded sense of his own origin. . . . We need new definitions of life and mind. . . . We moderns have got beyond our depth."

Question: Is not the above an indication (among many others which might be adduced) that there is in the world today a widespread vaguely-felt need for just such knowledge as is now being given out in *Questions We All Ask*

This is exceedingly kind of this questioner. Well, my answer to this question is, Yes; and I can tell you that because the teachings which I give out are not mine. My message is not my own. I am simply the messenger of those for whom I stand, and for whom I came, as my great predecessor Katherine Tingley did. I have originated naught, not one word; and could I add one word of my own to the holy message which I bring, I were not worthy to

stand before you on this platform.

This message is the ancient wisdom-religion of archaic times, from the earliest races of mankind given by great seers and sages to the human race; and all I do is to give it out anew as best I can. If there is anything unsatisfactory about it, the fault is not in the teachings, it is in me in so far as I have not been able to pass it over to you in a satisfactory manner.

Nevertheless, I have been trained to do what I can do, and I know that I have, in doing my best, done enough to show you where you can find more light, if light it is that you seek.

Now, I think that this Professor Urban is right also. Two men stand before me. One man says: "You (that is I) and I (that is he) are nothing but grownup apes. Let us act like apes. What is the use? We cannot be very much higher than apes, try as hard as we will. Only, don't let's get caught!" That is the gospel of the modern — forsooth — philosophy of life, the resultant of materialistic biological teachings. Tell a man that he is a beast, and make him believe it, and he will act like a beast, and he will utter snorts and sounds and groans like a beast.

But the other man looks at me, and I look at him, and I see shining in his face, sparkling in his eyes, recognition: I see the fire of a spiritual self there. I see intelligence; I sense self-control; I see wisdom; I feel the power of almighty love; and that man says to me: "Brother, have you the thoughts that I have? Do you feel what I feel?" and I say, Yes. Sons of the gods, we recognize each other.

Tell a man, therefore, that he is the descendant of spiritual beings, of the gods, and you fire his mind and heart with enthusiasm for high living and noble thinking; and that is the teaching of the seers and sages of all humanity for unnumbered ages.

Only some eighty or ninety years ago a newfangled modern

scientific theory was brought out, in an attempt to explain the resemblances between man's physical body and the beasts beneath us. And the result: Look at the literature that was in vogue forty years ago. Look at the greatest catastrophe in Occidental history that overwhelmed us in 1914. *Get* became the popular doctrine; get, and hold if you can. But the doctrine of the gods always is, *Give*: give yourself first of all. This latter is the pathway of manhood. Give all that is in you, heart and mind. Give yourself. I now ask you: Which is the more manly of the two? Ask yourself which is the nobler, the Beast or the Man?

Now, within recent years the old materialism of our fathers has gone by the board. It is defunct, it is moribund, it is dying; and new and brighter ideals are coming into the minds of the scientific researchers, so that they are actually proclaiming in many instances the teachings and doctrines that theosophists have been giving out for fifty years. Our scientists are becoming mystics. They are beginning to see a vision. Thank the immortal gods that it is so! Men like Professor Eddington talk openly, in a manner that would have ostracized them from all scientific circles fifty years ago, about mind-stuff being the fundamental of the Universe, thus reverting to our theosophical teachings; and indeed, that is the same as saying the esoteric religious and philosophical teachings of the entire world, and of every part of it, until the karma of our race, the destiny of the race, wrote across the portals of the beginning of the Christian era the fatal legend: The karma of Israel.

Yes, the degraded sense of man's origin is the cause of the moral depression of which this farsighted professor speaks. This arose as the resultant of the teachings of certain scientific biologists that men are but overgrown beasts, and that all that is in men is bestial, or has risen but a little out of beasthood; that there is in men no inner and divine light, no illumination, no spiritual

power, nothing in short of permanent value; and that when men die, they go to the dust, and that that is the end forever.

This is monstrous; particularly so when one recollects that there was not an atom of solid scientific foundation for those old materialistic theories. They were simply speculations, theories, evolved, doubtless, by honest men, but theories nevertheless, because the scientific researchers had revolted against blind belief, dogmatism, churchly obscurantism, and other similar things; and they did not know whither to look for truth.

Times have now changed. A new age is dawning. Scientists are becoming visionaries in the noble sense of the word, that is to say seers: they are becoming mystical. I certainly believe that this Professor Urban is right. We do indeed need new definitions of life and mind, and theosophists have been trying to give them to humanity for fifty years, more or less, last past, and we will keep on trying.

My little niece, about three years old, stood looking with wide eyes at her grandma doing the cooking. Presently she said: "Grandma, when I was a big woman like you, I used to do the cooking!" Not a word had ever been said to her about living before. Why don't we get busy and teach children theosophical philosophy, when they already have the sound basis of it in their normal consciousness?

Yes, I ask just the same question. Why don't we? So far as theosophists are concerned, we are doing it. But just as long as you have the notion that your child is nothing but a little beast, a lump of soulless flesh, a chemical product, you won't understand the wisdom of the child's soul, memories out of the past, that it itself cannot fully express or adequately explain, but which nevertheless manifest themselves in the strange utterances and sayings of children, and in their interesting questions. And I can



tell you, friends, that some of the questions that I have heard children ask and that have been sent in to me as having been asked by children, have astounded me, for they touch, in some instances, upon the profoundest questions of the occult philosophy; they are intuitions in the child's mind. The child does not mentally understand them, however. These ideas just pass through its brain, so to speak, from its own inner god, the latter trying to express itself through the as yet imperfect brain, and hence the child utters these often wise and deep sayings, these strange questions.

The divine Plato was right. It is all reminiscences out of the past from former lives. Why don't we remember our past lives? I have a question before me on that very subject which I will answer in due time. I will now simply say, at the present instant, that we do remember our past lives, but don't know that we do remember them; and we remember them because we express them as our character, as our instincts, as our impulses, our biases, our trends, our penchants, our tendencies. That is the way in which the memory comes streaming in to us from the past. The old physical brain was dissipated into dust, and most of our daily recollections belong to the brain, as for instance, what happened today — and therefore when the brain is gone, you don't expect to remember those feeble impressions of the daily life; but all the recollections and memories that you have innate in you, that express themselves as genius, as capacity to do, as power to think, as character, are deeply implanted memories out of the past when you thought and strived and acted and aspired.

Yes, that little child of which the questioner speaks probably had an intuition that in some other day it did the cooking for the family. And I suppose that Granny looked at the child and said: "My, I wonder what is the matter with little Susan!"

"Is not all life the mystic dance of atoms to the Music of the Spheres?" — From the *Science Wonder Quarterly*

That sounds just like the beginning of a poem, and the rhythm in it is poetic too. Well, I hesitated when I first read this question. Offhand my answer was: Absolutely yes. And then I thought: if I say that, and do not qualify it, then my audience will have in their mind the idea that I am alluding to nothing but this physical world. Life they will understand to be nothing but this physical universe.

And then, may I ask, what does this scientific writer mean by speaking of the Music of the Spheres? Eh? What? Was he just throwing in word-padding? What kind of scientific writer is he then? If he used these words sincerely, if he were, if he is, if he be, a true scientific thinker, he must have meant them; therefore he believes in the Music of the Spheres. So do I.

But what is this music? What produces it? What is the originating cause? And is not this Music of the Spheres a part of the cosmic life? Now, if you understand this question to mean, as a theosophist would, that the cosmic soul, to use an easily understood term, expresses itself throughout the immensity of space in all the complex aggregates of differentiation, in all the complexities of manifested cosmic being as one driving urge or energy: manifesting in one place as the Music of the Spheres, and in another spot as a dancing atom, dancing to the Music of the Spheres — if the idea briefly is that this cosmic life is one life and therefore one law through all and everywhere, then I say Yes.

But I am not satisfied with such a brief answer as that. I will tell you a little more about our theosophical teachings in this respect. The universe is filled with gods, divine beings, cosmic spirits, call them by what name you will, because the name matters not at all. These entities exist in the spiritual and invisible realms of being,

and all our physical universe, all our physical cosmos, is but the veil or garment covering this vast complexity of invisible planes, worlds, realms, spheres. Consequently, every cosmic or celestial body is the expression of an indwelling essence, composed essentially of consciousness-life and of spiritual substance, just as man is in his own limited sphere.

The usual fashion in the Occident is to divide man into a trichotomy, a division of three: spirit, soul, body. That division is good enough for ordinary purposes. Theosophists can accept that division as a usual way of dividing the constitution of man; which inner constitution expresses itself through man's physical being, and produces the man as you see him.

Now, these celestial bodies, said the ancient Pythagoreans, as they move, sing, because every movement in and of material substance makes a sound. The physical scientist will also tell you that. Had we the ears to hear, sensitive enough to catch the harmonious vibrations emanating from moving bodies on all the planes, we should be deafened with the harmony.

As an ancient Welsh mystic put it: "We should hear the growing of the grass"; also we should hear the atoms of our own bodies sing their composite hymn, each atom holding its own note. We should hear the tremendous outburst of melody of the celestial spheres singing as they swing along in their orbits.

Everything that is, is in movement of some kind, and therefore it expresses its life in a song. Every tiniest atom sings its own note; every electron in the atom sings its own note; and I wonder if some of you have never heard the harmony produced by a tree, the harmony inaudible to our physical ears. Have you never studied a flower on your desk and sensed at least some adumbration of the hymn that that flower is chanting? This is not mere poetry, to use a common expression; it is a fact. Every atom

of that flower, of that tree, is in incessant movement, therefore producing a sound; and because the flower is beautiful, because the tree is symmetrical, the combined sounds of all the atoms and electrons composing any one or each of these bodies, produce a sublime harmony; but more truly expressed because the atoms and electrons of these bodies produce the sublime harmony. Therefore is the tree symmetrical and graceful and is the flower beautiful and harmonious in outline.

It sometimes seems to me that I can hear the bodies of my fellow human beings sing. Consider what a universe we live in when every little pebble on the road, when every blade of grass, when every brook, when every building, when every flower by the roadside, when your own body, is singing each one a hymn — the dancing atoms singing in tune to the Music of the Spheres. Oh, think! Let your imaginations soar! Free yourselves from old crystallized ideas of a dead universe, and thus live, truly live! Know something of the universe in which you live and move and have your being.

Why has not interplanetary communication been consummated ere this? Shall we eventually establish communication?

What makes this kind questioner think that interplanetary communication has not been established? Simply because disbelievers in the possibility of such intercommunication have not invented machines to do it with? That is the only reason. I can tell you that there has been interplanetary communication for unnumbered ages. Do you desire me to explain that statement? The explanation is the simplest thing in the world. The great seers and sages, and every one of their higher disciples — those who have lived the life and have trained their inner faculties which they possess as men — undergo at least once in their life during

one of the periods of initiation — *must* undergo — a journey into the interplanetary realms, where they are bound to experience, individually, personally, just what the conditions are on the various planets, or on the moon, and on the sun. They cannot really *know* life, and things as they are elsewhere than on earth, otherwise.

Talking and teaching about these things is good, because they make you think. They give you ideas. They suggest thoughts. But you cannot know anything until you experience it yourself. I mean really *know*.

Interplanetary communication has been going on among the great sages and seers and their higher disciples for ages and ages in the past; and some of our theosophical teachings, those given to good men and true — those who can be relied upon and who can be depended upon to put self behind and to live a real man's life — these teachings are given to them. Knock, and it shall be opened unto you. Ask, and ye shall receive. But you must know how to knock, and you must know how to ask. It is as simple as anything. The How is as follows: Be true, be honest, be sincere. Aspire. Try to ally yourself with the inner god which is the core of the core of your being. Strive unceasingly to do this. Thereby you gain everything because you lose the petty circumscribing personality; but in losing the personality you gain the universe. You thus give up your petty wishes and circumscribing whims, and thus you become an incarnate god.

However, shall we eventually establish public interplanetary communication? My answer is, Yes, if this question means: Shall the scientists some day in the future find material instrumental means with which to establish communication with other planets? My answer is, Yes, in the distant future that will come, and many other amazing things will come too.

Furthermore, I can remind you of a prophecy that was made by one of our great teachers many years ago, and that is that some hitherto undiscovered planets will be heard before they are seen. I wonder if what is called static in radio, and other things like that, have been ascribed to the proper cause? I throw this out merely as a thought for your consideration.

Someone I know, not a theosophist, but one whose intuition is awakened enough to feel there is something worth while in the theosophical teachings and ideals, has lost a dearly beloved and close relative. What message would you give to such a person, concerning death and the hereafter? What words of encouragement and consolation would you send?

It is not so easy to answer this question, because people have such wrong ideas about death; and what most people want when they lose a loved one is consolation for their own bereaved personality. They really don't think so much about what is happening to the one who was loved and who has passed on, but they want consolation for "me." Now, isn't that true! And I don't like to feed the lower personal part of a human being. I don't want to strengthen it, to fatten it. Doing so makes things harder for the sufferers. I always feel like telling them the truth, and I do so.

But nevertheless, you cannot wholly turn from the cry of an aching heart even if that cry have a strong element of selfishness in it. It is a duty to give some answer; and so I think that I would say this: The one whom you loved came into this life out of the past, in strict accordance with one of nature's fundamental operations: the chain of causation, the law of consequences. You are here, and the loved one who has gone was also here, because both you and the loved one were placed here by nature's law, nature's operations, because of a chain of cause and effect,

reaching back into the interminable past, into many former lives on earth; and that chain of causation cannot be interrupted, nor broken, but will continue into the future. The same chain of causation producing other earth-lives, other reincarnations, will bring your loved one back to you — or more accurately will bring you both back more or less at the same time.

Love is mighty; it is magnetic; it is powerful; it unites loving hearts; its call overleaps all space; nothing can stay or bar its way. So far as your loved one is concerned, its destiny, for the time being, is a sublime one. It is released from the body. All pains and aches have ended. It goes into unutterable peace, into bliss which you, with your brain of flesh, cannot understand, for even your own human mind finds it difficult to put into that brain of flesh vibrations sufficiently keen to convey to you the message of the inner life arising in the core of your own being.

Have no fear for your loved one. There is neither heaven nor hell, but there is unutterable peace and rest and bliss beyond human understanding; and then, when this long night's sleep is ended, it returns — the soul, the ego — returns to a new body, to a new incarnation: then a little child is born anew on earth. There is your loved one. Death is but a sleep and a forgetting of all the sorrows and pains and trials and troubles of earth-life; and I tell you, friends, that sleep and death are one thing. I mean by that, that sleep is a minor death, and death is a major sleep.

A theosophist of many years ago, the American poetess Ella Wheeler Wilcox, who was a member of the Society when I was a boy, wrote a beautiful poem called "The Law"; and I copied out an extract from it and laid it on my desk for some future use, and I will now read this extract to you:

From body to body your spirit speeds on;  
It seeks a new form when the old one has gone,

And the form that it finds is the fabric you wrought  
On the loom of the mind with the fabric of thought.  
As dew is drawn upwards, in rain to descend,  
Or thoughts drift away and in destiny blend.  
You cannot escape them, or petty or great,  
Or evil or noble, they fashion your fate.

The reincarnating ego cannot but return; it cannot remain away.

Why are true simplicity and sincerity invariably closely allied?  
Are they affinities?

I do not think that they are affinities. I think that they are closer still. I think that they are two sides of the same thing. A person who is sincere is always simple and direct, straightforward and honest; and a person who is simple and direct is always sincere and honest; and a person who is honest is always sincere and simple. Invariably, it cannot be otherwise. Hence simplicity and sincerity are two sides of the same thing, like the two sides of a coin, or the two sides of a hand.

All great and beautiful characters are simple and sincere, and all evil characters and weak characters are complex, roundabout in thought and action, circuitous in operation, always hiding either themselves or trying to hide themselves — and such people hate themselves. They cannot remain with their own souls even for a short quarter of an hour. They must seek diversions, bright lights, excitements, excitements always, anything that will bring about the oblivion of the hated lower self.

What a life! Such people do not know themselves, do not know the divine powers within, have no real knowledge of the splendid capacities and energies locked up within themselves.

But take the contrary kind of person, the person who is calm, quiet, peaceful. He or she stands like a tower of strength and



attracts other people, and they feel his power, they feel his strength, they feel that there is something in him that they can trust. Such men and women have come into some recognition, however small, of the divine powers of the inner god, who or which is the core of the core of the being of each one of you.

Each one of you is an expression of such a divine entity. "Be ye gods," said in substance the Christian scripture, telling, teaching, advocating truth. Each one of you within is an unmanifest Christ — as the modern mystical Christians say, an immanent Christ; and in the Orient in referring to the same fact they speak of the inner Buddha. Why not therefore be the god within, with all the power, the increase in faculty, the strength, the wisdom, to be derived from so being; for by becoming that inner god you become consciously at one with the universe of which you are a child, an inseparable part; and just fancy what that means: drawing upon strength inexhaustible, wisdom without compass, drinking at the fountains of inspiration which flow from the heart of the universe. What a sublime picture!

Do you know what it is that prevents this thing from happening more frequently than it does? It is the sense of personal separateness that people are psychologized with in the Occident, imagining that they are utterly separate from all others, utterly different: instead of being all rooted, every one of us, in the common fountain of the cosmic life-intelligence-substance. It is this sense of separateness which is to us theosophists, as it is to the Buddhists, the Great Heresy, for it is the cause and root of all evil. It brings forth the craving for *Me: I want, I am, Mine*. And since every human being is filled with that feeling, as it is presently in the West, in the Occident, you can see for yourselves what the Occidental world is.

On the contrary, now comes from theosophists the beautiful

teaching of spiritual brotherhood, that men come most into their own when they live for others. Thus do they best grow. Thus do they develop their own faculties; thus do they grow strong and wise and really knowing. It is the way even to succeed in material life. A business conducted according to a shortsighted view, only for the merchant who has no care for his customers and whose mind dwells on the idea of "doing" his customers if he can — how long would such a business last and thrive? But give good value, live for others, give yourselves, and you receive in turn the universe, which in the core of each one of us is fundamentally you, I, every one of you.

Professor Rhys Davids, a famous Welsh scholar, in his book *Buddhism* wrote, many years ago, the following, as briefly outlining a teaching of the Buddhist religion; and as it is the same as the teaching of the Occult philosophy, in other words of theosophy, I will read this extract to you:

It is not separateness you should hope and long for, it is union, the sense of oneness with all that now is, that ever has been, that ever can be — the sense that shall enlarge the horizon of your being to the limits of the universe, to the boundaries of space and time, that shall lift you up into a new plane far beyond, outside, all mean and miserable care for self. Give up the fool's paradise of "This is I" and "This is mine." Leap forward without fear! You shall find yourself in the ambrosial waters of Nirvana.

Unspeakable bliss, boundless wisdom, unencompassed love — perfect, pure, and unadulterated consciousness.

No. 47 (August 5, 1930)

## QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK

(Lecture delivered May 18, 1930)

CONTENTS: Man can raise himself to the stature of the great seers and sages. — The human soul instinctively recognizes truth. — The "truth" of our fathers is in the dust heaps of history. — No authoritative oracle in The Theosophical Society. — What happens to the human being after death? — No post-mortem heaven and hell. — You are your own destiny. — How is character builded? — Truth must be *experienced*. — What does "Evolution" mean? — An apple seed cannot bring forth a banana plant. — Man the oldest life-stream on this earth. — What is "bad" karma and what is "good" karma? — Dorothy Arzner and "the life-force behind the world." — Every man has limitless capacities for becoming. — Man is kin with the gods.

When I appear on the platform before you I feel indeed as if the god within me had a Message to give to my fellow men; and that is indeed a fact. So don't look at the man of flesh who is standing before you; but listen to what I have to tell you — something of the wisdom-religion of mankind: belonging to no people, belonging to no time, but the heritage of all peoples and of all times. It is a formulation in human language of the structure and operations and laws of the boundless universe, a formulation made by great seers and sages, men who through initiation and who through a long-time evolutionary development, have learned how to cast the percipient spirit behind the veils of the outward seeming into the very deepest abysses of the Great Mother, nature, and who have brought back what they had visioned and

who gave it to their fellow-man; and that is the ancient wisdom-religion of mankind, today called theosophy.

A human being has within him, or her of course, powers, energies, faculties, in the average man not yet manifest at all, or but feebly, yet latent in most men, but cultivable, by which the average human being can raise himself into the spiritual and intellectual stature of the great sages and seers, and thus for himself penetrate behind the veil of the outward garment of Mother Nature, and see realities for himself.

Oh, what a promise lies in this! Think! That every one of you is the imperfect, alas, nevertheless the expression imperfect though it may be, of a divine entity: each one having his own inner god, which the mystical Christians of our time call the immanent Christ, and which the Orientals belonging to the Buddhist religion call the inner Buddha, and which the Brahmanical religious philosophy speaks of as the inner Brahma. You will find these teachings in all the great world religions and world philosophies. They do not depend on anyone's say-so.

The message which I try to deliver to you on every Sunday afternoon from this platform is not my own; it is a part of the wisdom-religion of mankind, and if there is anything about it that does not appeal to you in its presentation by me, then the fault is my own, arising out of my inability to convey that message to you; but yet, as I have said before, I have been trained to convey it in some manner, however imperfect that manner may be, so that I know, and I have found it true, that I strike responsive chords in human hearts, and I always notice an instinctive leaping of the human soul towards a recognition of these theosophical truths; and every now and then comes the silent cry from some suffering human heart: "My God! That is true! Why didn't I think of that before!"

There is the response; and that is the way in which the membership, the fellowship, of The Theosophical Society has been brought together — not by an appeal to authority, not merely by telling you that this wisdom-religion of mankind was formulated by the great seers, not alone by this; but by telling you that within each one of you there is this inner god, and that you can become it, become at one with it, be it, for it is your own divine essence; and thereby you enter into self-conscious cognition, relation, with the divinest powers that vivify and control the boundless universe.

Knowledge can indeed be had; and oh! how vain, how unwise, are the men who turn away from this possibility of recognizing all-embracing truth, simply because their brain-minds are filled with the teachings of the schools of the passing day, teachings which vary with every five years or so; so that the truth of our fathers is already abandoned and has become a part of the dust heaps of history.

How much better it is to look within in order to obtain truth, to obtain truth by *experiencing* it. It is the only way truly to know, to become truth yourself. It is our active brain-minds, filled with thoughts of the day, filled with desires of the hour, filled with the prejudices and opinions which are so transitory, which more than anything else these active brain-minds are afflicted with, which prevent our visioning of the truth, prevent our obtaining the vision sublime.

We Theosophists have no dogmas. We have no beliefs that anyone is required to accept before he can join The Theosophical Society. We have but one prerequisite to fellowship: a sincere belief in universal brotherhood.

Isn't it a wonderful thing that a man can be shown the way that all the great seers and sages of the past have trodden, and by

which he can journey to the heart of the universe? This is so because that heart of the universe is he himself. Do you get the idea? Every entity is an inseparable part of the boundless All, because he is its offspring, its child, so to speak, life of its life, blood of its blood, thought of its thought. And the way to obtain the vision sublime and to see that vision sublime growing ever more sublime forever, is by looking within, following the still, small pathway of the inner consciousness, which is what the ancient Greeks meant when they said, following the injunction of the Delphic Oracle — Man, know thyself!

There is the key. Turn your gaze inwards, not outwards; and this does not mean to be solely introspective and to abandon extraspection. That is not the idea. You must see in both directions. But do not seek for truth in any place except in the faculty which cognizes truth which is your inmost self, for it alone can cognize truth. Do you seek the truth about yourself in your hat, or in an old garment that you have cast off? The forum where you will find truth is in your own percipient consciousness. Isn't that fact obvious?

The world today is broken up: the world of men, the world of thought, is broken up into thousands of sects, mutually fighting each other, battling, quarreling; and more than anything else, friends, it is the duty of theosophical lecturers, teachers, to show to men the pathway of unity, of brotherhood, of mutual understanding, so that men may come together and understand each other and help each other, for we are all offspring of the cosmic life-consciousness-substance.

The first question on the list before me is this:

What is the theosophical teaching with regard to man's state or states after physical death, and where do theosophists derive that teaching from, as assuredly no one has ever

returned from the other world to tell them all about it. Is it just a speculation, a beautiful theory? I have a general idea of that teaching, but would like to have it authoritatively defined by you.

"Authoritatively defined!" No thank you! We have in The Theosophical Society no authoritative oracle who lays down the law of truth which others must follow whether they will or whether they nill. We have teachers; we have lecturers; we have writers; and we have those grand and sublime teachers of the race, the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion who founded the Theosophical Movement in this age, or founded it once more in this age; but we have no authoritative oracle of truth. We have no one on a throne speaking with the voice of authority: This must ye believe! None at all! But I can tell you what my studies and what my training have led me to know; and if it appeal to you, well and good.

I can only say that, as far as I know, the theosophical teaching with regard to the state of man after death is true, but I certainly will not say that I make this as an authoritative pronouncement. I have neither a right, nor a desire so to do. We have our Inner School, which is another thing entirely from the outer organization of The Theosophical Society, in which Inner School teachings are given with a certain authority, but an authority derived from love and trust, not from exoteric rules or position at all. Our Esoteric Section is one thing, but the outer Theosophical Society is another organization entirely.

I have often spoken of this matter of the post-mortem states of man, and I can refer you to other lectures given by me in this building at other times, which lectures are now being printed in pamphlet form. But I will cover the same ground again briefly now in answer to this question. When you ask: What are the

states of man after death? a theosophical teacher is immediately put in a quandary. What do you mean by "man"? Obviously you do not mean the physical body, because that is not the true man. It merely expresses the faculties of the man — so much intelligence, so much energy, so much character, such and such a form, etc., etc., etc. Do you then mean his thought, his mind, what is called his soul or his spirit?

But the questioner, I think, asks about the nature of the human constitution, and what happens to that human constitution after the physical body is broken up at death. Man is a composite entity. Theosophists say that he has a number of elements entering into that composite. He has thought; he has intelligence; he has love; he has affection; he has trust; he has a sense of duty; he has ethical principles; he has the sublime aspirations of his spirit. He has so high a realization of his place in the universe that he can cognize, even if it be unconsciously to the brain-mind, his intrinsic unity with the boundless All, of which the spiritual part of him is a ray.

Now, this constitution, combining all these varied elements of man, breaks slowly up after death — after the physical body is cast off. The physical body is but a garment of flesh, builded especially to express the inner constitution. The lowest part of man, the model-body, the ethereal body, which is just a little more ethereal than the physical body, and is in fact almost physical, is likewise cast aside at death. There remains the emotional part, the mental part, the spiritual part; and these parts slowly separate into two halves, the higher half and the lower half, the higher remaining as a unit and the lower part disintegrating.

Just pause a moment in thought. Study yourself, your mental operations, your feelings, your emotions. Do you think that let us say fifty or sixty percent of what you *as a human being* are today



is fit, is even decent enough, to go into the spiritual realms where the highest part of man's constitution goes? Even your love for your family, even your sense of human duty, even such as these things, are not divine enough to ascend to the portals of the sun where nothing but pure spirit may go.

So what happens? These human parts — our human loves, our human dislikes, our human affections, our sense of human duties, and all the human soul-part of us — is purified and cleansed naturally by the abandoning of the lower half of it; and the higher half, which includes all our aspirations and longings for better things, which on this earth have never received satisfaction but yet are a part of our character, are indrawn into the spiritual part of us, into the spiritual soul. I am now using very easy and simple language devoid of theosophical technicalities. This spiritual soul being a divine entity makes its peregrinations, follows its pathways through the invisible and spiritual realms. The understanding of this is not difficult.

Then, when the energies so impelling it along this pathway are exhausted, there comes a time when attraction, psychomagnetic attraction if you like, draws the reincarnating ego back again to earth, and that ego picks up, as it returns, *i. e.*, as it descends from the invisible and interior realms through the ethereal and lower ethereal spheres, picks up, I say, the elements of its constitution which it had cast off following its last death, because these elements inherently belong to it and are attracted to it. The life-atoms are attracted back to the descending soul, to the descending spirit-soul. It gathers all these life-atoms together again; and by these is again drawn to earth; a baby is then born, and a new human life on earth begins.

After death there is no heaven, there is no hell. Do you think that anyone of you has merited an everlasting heaven of perfect bliss?

Are you good enough? But outside of that: Could you die and be happy with the thought that you would be conscious in your human soul, for eternity, in an everlasting heaven of bliss, the while remembering the earth and its sorrows and pains, and the ones whom you love on that earth and also those whom you failed to do your duty by while you were on earth? Have you no idea of a conscience? Is nature so ill-ordered and disordered as to permit such a thing as that? Your own heart answers, nay.

You came into this life on this earth because you were drawn hither. This was the field of your activity in the previous earth-life, and you came back again in order to try to undo the evil you wrought in that past earth-life, and in other earth-lives; and because you were attracted back here, you naturally wanted to meet again those whom you formerly loved. Love is a mighty engine of destiny; it is a mighty power. So is hate.

There is no chance in the universe; everything is a majestic succession of event following event, all events being links in the chain of circumstance which man himself makes as he passes from life on earth to life on earth: from the inner spheres to earth and back to the inner spheres again. There is no outside god who says to you: "You there, go to earth!" You yourself bring yourself to earth because you are your own destiny; you are making yourself now to be what you shall be in the future, and what you are now you have made yourself to be in the past. No outside god is responsible. You alone have made yourself to be what you now are. You are your own child. You are now the parent of your future self. Nature is infinitely just. We get only what we have sown. We reap only what we have laid down as seeds of thought and emotion and action; and we reap them as character.

How is your character builded? By your thoughts, by your emotions, you make yourselves.

The post-mortem period is not something essentially and radically different from and apart from the life on earth. It is not divided from earth-life by an impassable gulf. There supervenes a short period of utter unconsciousness when the body is cast off at death. The post-mortem time is a period of cleansing, and then the human soul, as I have said, is withdrawn, indrawn, into the spiritual part of you — that is, all the part of the human soul which is noblest and best — and the rest of it goes to pieces, because the life-atoms of it are naturally destined to follow their own transmigrations, drawn hither and yon by attractions.

There being no heaven and no hell, there is nothing unmerited and nothing to fear. Oh! if I could tell you of the wondrous destiny of man; if I could describe to you in word-pictures what happens to the human being after death, you would be fascinated. Your hearts would leap, as I have said before, with glad exultation at the recognition of a truth that you have instinctively known, and have not known perhaps how to formulate in words.

But I can give you a hint as to where you may find some aspects of this truth. Study the old world religions, study the literatures of the old world philosophies, and you will catch a hint here and a hint there, and if you are clever enough and wise enough to put these hints together, you will get a fair pictorial outline, as far as the sages and seers who founded these religions and philosophies dared to tell the truth to the men of their time.

If you are interested and would like to know more, then come to this door and — knock! Knock, and it shall be opened unto you. Ask, and ye shall receive. But you must knock in the right way. If you want to know how, ask the officials of The Theosophical Society. This is a promise: these are not mere words; you can have truth. I can show you the beginning of the pathway leading to knowledge of truth, for you, for *you*, if you want it. But I cannot

tread that pathway for you. I can simply show you where the pathway lies. You yourself must walk along it. How could you ever grow if someone else grew for you? How could you ever know, if someone else studied for you? Knock, come in; ask with a pure heart, with a heart hungry for truth, and ye shall receive in full measure, overflowing.

The statement that no one has "returned from the other world to tell people all about it," is not true. How do you know? Why do you make a statement like that? How do you know that no one has ever returned from the other world? Are you sure? No, you say it merely because you have not heard whether it is so. Now, I tell you that there is power, faculty, and ability in the human constitution, in the human consciousness, which, when properly cultivated, can lead you behind the veils of the outward seeming, so that you may cognize for yourself. You can go behind the veil of matter, blinding to the physical eye, and you can bring back truth; you can know what passes behind what men call the visible veil and see what passes in the invisible realms. You can know what there takes place. The power and faculty are in you; they need only cultivation; you need only to be shown where this power and this faculty lie and how to train them and how to use them.

Again I say unto you: Knock, and it shall be opened unto you. Ask, and ye shall receive. Yes, there are men even today who can go behind the veil of the outward seeming and recognize truth at its fountainhead — who can cognize by experiencing them, the operations, functions, causal relations, of invisible nature. I have told you why: because each one of you is a part, an inseparable part, of boundless natural being, and therefore there flows through you all natural forces existent in the boundless universe — all powers, all energies; you are rooted therein; that universe is your parent; you are its children.

Come with me. I can show you the way, but you yourself must tread the path. You will not be carried to truth. Steep is the way, and narrow the path, that leadeth unto life everlasting, was the old saying, and it is a true saying; but oh! although that path be thorny and difficult at first, cannot you see the glory on the distant horizon? Look! It is worth giving up everything to attain it, for when a man gives up his life for the sake of the Christ within him, he shall find it because he finds the life universal.

Do you understand? Do you catch the thought? When you turn to your greater self, which is the higher part of your own constitution: when you become the inner Buddha, when you become the Christ within you, although you give up the physical personality and the mental personality and these crippling things which distract you and worry you and cause you to fret and give you pain and sorrow, you enter into the sublime light of the spirit, and exchange the personality for divinity.

Yes, there are men who have gone behind the veil of physical nature and know what happens to man after death. Men like you. They are not gods, but human beings, but great men, men who have been taught, who have been initiated, whose hunger for truth was so overmastering that they abandoned everything inferior for the light which they saw on the mountains of the Mystic East, and their reward was past all telling: knowledge, wisdom, consciousness of being universal, for the root of each one of you is the spirit of the universe. There is the beginning of the pathway. Follow it!

A German correspondent sends me the following excerpt translated from a posthumous work of the lyric poet Christian Morgenstern:

"It is today believed that man has been derived from the

animal. But how if the reverse be the case: if the animals be offshoots of humanity, a retarded humanity or a too hasty, too forward humanity, and therefore held fast in a primitive (lit. *zu fruhen* — too early) condition?"

Is not the poet's intuition of the truth in harmony with the teaching of theosophy with regard to evolution?

Yes, in a general way. I gave a series of lectures here some years ago, which lectures are now printed as a book, and I did my best, during the course of those lectures, to show my audience just what the theosophical teaching regarding evolution is. I brought forward a large body of testimony, of mainly biological character, showing, proving if you like, that the theosophical teaching of evolution is not that of the Englishman Darwin nor of the Frenchman Lamarck, nor of the German Haeckel, nor of any of the other transformists — which is their proper name — but that we use the word evolution strictly in the etymological sense, as meaning an unwrapping, an unfolding, a bringing out, of what is within, infolded, inwrapped, locked up.

Can anything evolve except the thing which is evolving? What does evolution mean? A continuously more perfect expression by that evolving entity, of what is latent within it. That is our theosophical teaching of evolution very briefly expressed. The evolved entity can bring forth nothing but what it has locked up in itself. Can the acorn bring forth anything except an oak? Can an apple seed bring forth a banana plant or a strawberry vine or a cherry tree? No, only an apple tree. It can bring forth only what is infolded, inlocked, inwrapped, in itself — in other words, its own fundamental character.

Now, it is our teaching that mankind is the oldest life-stream on this earth. He is obviously the most advanced. The deduction therefore is that he is in consequence the oldest, hence the longest

at school, and that is precisely what theosophists teach.

Everything that the earth at present produces, or has produced in the past, has been thrown off by the human stock as it wended its way up to the present through the far distant dim ages of the past, casting off at different times the germs of these inferior stocks which in their turn, each one of them, began immediately a period of evolution along its own particular line, eventuating in the different species, families, genera, classes, orders, whatnot, that you have today.

Why can this be? Why could it be? Because every cell, unless it be held locked in the grip of a dominant entity, such as is presently the case with man, has innumerable possibilities of evolution locked up within it; and if there be not a dominant power preventing the flowing forth of these locked-up capacities or possibilities, those capacities and essential faculties will come out, a rushing tide of life.

Do you begin to get the thought? In the early ages of humanity, man threw off cells from his body, both singly and in aggregates, as even now he is doing. And because the dominant human entity then had not the strong control over those cells of a man's body that now he has, thus at present preventing those cells from evolving each one along its own path, those cells in those former days were freer from the dominant influences of the human entity than they are at present, and each cell in those early days thus thrown off followed the line of its own cellular, dominant characteristic, thus eventuating in the various stocks that have inhabited or peopled the earth, stocks beneath the human. And even today any cell of a man's body, could the whole body live without the dominant human entity controlling it in its very strong grip: each such cell if cast off from the body, and we are constantly throwing them off, even today would begin a new line of evolution and thus start a new stock.

There is the key to the answer to the question asked. I could talk to you for a month, six hours a day, and thus have time to prove to you these facts, and I could adduce in this proof an overwhelming mass of biological evidence. Read the book that contains my lectures and you will find it all set forth there (*Theosophy and Modern Science*, published by Theosophical University Press, Point Loma, California: 2 vols., 1929, available online as *Man in Evolution* (1941).

Thus this German poet has caught the main idea, but he is not the only one to have caught this intuition. The idea that man is the oldest stock on earth, and that the anthropoid apes and the other beasts originally came from man rather than that man originated from the ape, is a relatively old theory and has been preached by a number of eminent scientific men. But human beings as a rule like to run with the hounds. They like to chase with the hunter. It requires a brave and courageous man who will breast the adverse current of popular opinion, and say: I stand for my own honest convictions despite all. Some scientific men in the past have done so in this matter of evolution, and their reward is now coming to pass — after they are dead. Some of these older biological thinkers are now coming into their own.

Here is an interesting question:

Is it an example of Occidental folly for people to talk about "bad" karma and "good" karma, as is so generally done in the West?

Aside from the fact, which I suppose everybody realizes fundamentally, that all karma is for the ultimate good of mankind, I have observed that in the everyday affairs of life it is impossible for a mere mortal to diagnose a particular happening as either good karma or bad. In my own life, events



have sometimes seemed to be very bad karma at the time of their occurrence, but within a year or two, have proved to lead to other events which would ordinarily be called very good karma.

If "we are our own karma," as you told us recently, then when we speak of receiving bad karma, we must mean that we ourselves are, at the time, "bad."

Could you please comment on this?

No, I think that this last deduction is wrong. The rest of the question is admirable. Good and bad are not absolute. We are happy, things are progressing well, we are prosperous; and something happens: things begin to go wrong and in such case we speak of it as "bad karma." But, as this questioner puts it, I also have found by watching what has taken place in my own life in the past that frequently the very things I did not want to come to pass brought blessings, and that what I called bad luck or bad karma at the time turned out to be something fine.

We call things good when they happen to please us, and when we do not like them, we say that they are bad; and I suppose that every man and woman here this afternoon knows how foolish that is. It must have happened to you all to notice that the very thing or things which at the time you did not like in some cases have turned out splendidly for you, brought you good luck, brought you happiness, at the very least put strength of fiber into your character, which is worth more than all worldly treasures: gave you insight, unlocked the powers of your heart, enabled you to think, in short made a man out of you. Good and bad are relative.

Nothing happens to us which we ourselves did not engender in the beginning. We sowed the seeds. Now the seeds have grown up

in us, and we say: My, I cannot understand how such a thing could have happened to me! But it has happened, and if you take it rightly and face it rightly, and react properly, and look upon it as just the thing that you would have chosen, you become collaborators with destiny, and become happy, and grow. Strength becomes yours. Wisdom grows in your heart. Think it over a bit.

Now then, let us look briefly at one phase of the subject to which I have not yet turned. Let us take the case of an exceedingly good and noble man. Suddenly he is stricken, let us say to make the case picturesque and pointed, with some loathsome and terrible disease. Nothing in his present life that he knows of has brought this about. He is suddenly and unaccountably stricken down, so that, for a while, he hates himself and his soul turns in agony to the gods who hear not, and he says: What have I done to bring this thing upon me? Shall we say that he was a bad man? No, he is a good man; but this is a case where past seeds, seeds of thought, of emotion, of weakness, in past lives had hitherto not yet eventuated, hitherto had not come to fruition but now do so. Now they come forth. In past lives perhaps they wanted to come forth and the man was a coward and dammed them back, in some way or other by thought postponing the agony until some later day; because I tell you, friends, that nature's fundamental law is that what ye sow ye shall reap, and whatever ye reap ye have sown.

The lesson of this, therefore, is: when misfortune comes upon you, when sorrow racks your heart, and when it seems as if all the world had turned against you, then be a man. Face it all, and have done with it; so that, in the future, when your character is stronger and more improved, you shall not have laid up for yourself some unworked-out seed of karmic destiny then to blossom and bring you greater unhappiness by far than it could now bring. Do you understand?

There have been great and noble men, disciples on the path, and advanced at that, to whom such occurrences have happened. Old karmic seeds of destiny, held over, dammed back, willed to disappear — now coming forth and apparently ruining a noble life.

A beautiful, helpful rule is the following: Whatever happens to you, meet it manfully or womanly. Look upon it as the very thing that you would have willed — and therefrom reap peace. It will pass, it will work itself out. It is a good practical rule of the moral law: repine not, keep your faces to the Mystic East of the future, fill your heart with courage, and remember that you are descendants of and kin to the immortal gods who control and guide the Universe.

Dorothy Arzner, reputed to be the third woman-director so far in the moving picture industry, was quoted in a recent interview as saying the following, which the reporter characterized as "extraordinary":

"I think that for some reason a woman's brain gets from the air the vibrations that bear on her problem. This sounds complicated. But it's no more complicated than the radio. Just the fact that millions of people are thinking about a particular thing has, I believe, a tremendous effect on the question.

"It is my belief that each human being has in his make-up the potentialities of every talent. We all have the latent ability to be artists or inventors. If the world in general desired sculpture more than anything else today, I honestly believe its concentrated thought could make a potential sculptor of any child; and practically instantaneously. To me a human being is neither more nor less than the means through which the life-force behind the world, and the thought-force inside the

world, find expression."

Question: As the most conspicuous expounder of theosophical philosophy before the public today, what would you, Dr. de Purucker, say with regard to Miss Arzner's alleged theories?

I thank this kind questioner for the compliment paid to me. I pass the compliment over to the majestic wisdom-thought, the ancient Religion of mankind. I think that this Dorothy Arzner has said a great deal of truth here. It is a teaching of theosophy that every human being has the capacity for becoming anything, *anything*: philosopher, poet, sculptor, artist, god, demon, good man, bad man, ordinary man. You can go up or down. You have free will, you have the energy of the universe working through you, therefore you have all its faculties and powers. You have the moral sense; you can choose your pathway — the one leading to divinity and unutterable bliss and peace and wisdom, or the one leading to ethical, intellectual, and individual dissolution.

Yes, there is much of truth in what this Dorothy Arzner says. But I don't think that merely if the whole world wanted a certain child to become a sculptor, that that child would immediately or within a long time thereafter, become a famous sculptor. Nature does not work in that way. While it is true that every human being has unimaginable, unimagined, capacities and talents lying latent within him, nevertheless you cannot be anything other than what *you have made yourself to be*. Consequently, unless you have built up the seeds of a genius for sculpture in your thought and therefore in your character, the entire willpower of all the world could not make you a sculptor over night — no, nor during many years. There must be the sculptor lying latent in your character, the fruitage of other lives, when the man sculpted — and so it is with other talents.

But it is good to see prominent people giving utterance to

thoughts of this kind. They are so like our theosophical doctrines in divers ways. Men don't know what is in them — and I come back to this thought on every Sunday afternoon, because it is a part of what I am here to tell you, of what I was sent to tell you.

You don't know what is in you; and when you come into a theosophical auditorium, you will not be told that you are miserable worms of the dust. You will not be told that you are naught except, as a French philosopher put it some time ago, an adventitious colloidal compost, an oxynitrocarbide of hydrogen, with a few other chemical elements thrown in to help out. You will not be told that you are damned, or that you will be saved; but my whole attempt is to tell you the truth about the universe and about yourselves as children of that universe — not my truth, not the truth of the founders of the Theosophical Movement, not Plato's truth, nor the Buddha's truth, nor Jesus' truth, but the exposition of the structure and operations of almighty nature. That is truth *per se*. And it is further my duty to show you how to get this truth yourselves — not to come here and take it because you are told it; but, if you understand me, you come to a theosophical lecture hall in order to learn how to put your feet on that wondrous path leading to divinity, the divinity within each one of you, your own individual inner god.

In the Occident you are not taught to study yourselves. You think that it is a most profitless and tiresome thing to do. On the contrary, I tell you that it is a most wonderful study! You can learn everything within yourself, because you have everything within yourself. A child of the universe, you have all within you — everything that the boundless universe contains. And one of the first steps is to see yourself as others see you.

I have often wondered how I myself look standing here on the platform. I have sometimes thought to myself if I could not ask

our good workmen here at the Headquarters to put a big plate mirror somewhere before me, in which I could see myself and study myself, not from vanity, but in order to see myself as you see me. I think that I would learn a great deal, and along this line of thought I may add that if a man ever thinks that he has reached the point where he can learn nothing more, then heaven help him, because nature will help him if heaven does not! He will learn a great deal — and very quickly!

Here is a little poem that a friend sent to me, that I think is very applicable to the remarks that I have just made: It is entitled "Four Men."

It chanced upon a winter's night, safe sheltered from the weather,  
The board was spread for only one, yet four men dined together.  
There sat the man I meant to be, in glory spurred and booted,  
And close beside him to the right, the man I am reputed.  
The man I think myself to be, a seat was occupying  
Hard by the man I really am, who to hold his own was trying,  
And though beneath one roof we met, none called his fellow brother,  
No sign of recognition passed — they knew not one another.

How true that is! And I think, friends, that one of the very best things for human beings to learn is not that they are so feeble and weak, as some philosophicules love to tell us, but that they enshrine, which means that each one of you enshrines, a divine being; not, however, that you are that divine being as fully manifesting in its glory, for that most certainly you are not.

A kind-hearted Hollander recently spoke of me as being something like a god-man. That is a magnificent ideal for me to try to live up to. I am not ashamed of having this ideal in my heart. It gives me something to strive for, for within me is that divine entity striving to manifest itself in the way that I have just spoken to you about; and if I cannot show at least some of the divinity working in my heart and mind and soul and being, I have no right to stand here before you as a theosophical teacher.

Tell a man that he is a dog and acts like a dog, and if you catch him unawares the next day you will probably find him acting and thinking somewhat like a dog. Tell a man, on the other hand, that he is kin with the gods, his parents, and is their offspring — which is not poetry but actual fact — and that he has within himself unimaginable powers: that he can be anything in the Universe, for the Universe is in his very core, in fact the heart of the universe is his core, and you give him a sublime idea, a magnificent ideal. You set something before him which, if he is at all a man, he at least longs to think about and strive towards.

This ideal keeps him from doing mean and ignoble things; for we all know that such things are not godlike. It teaches him compassion, pity, modesty, and manliness. It teaches him that the almighty love working in his own heart is the same almighty love working in the universe; for that love is the very cement holding things in the universe together. Look within! Find out what is within you! Turn to the light!

No. 48 (August 8, 1930)

## QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK

(Lecture delivered May 25, 1930)

CONTENTS: Man's only oracle the voice of his inner god. How to let that voice speak through us. — A way to translate Nature's greatest mysteries. — A spiritual brotherhood of theosophists, not a political federation. Who dare oppose the call of the spirit? — H. P. Blavatsky's centennial. World-convention of theosophists at Point Loma proposed. The real date of H. P. Blavatsky's birth. — The phrase "infinite personal God" a contradiction. — The pathway of evolution beginningless and endless. — Karma the antithesis of predestination. — A shaft at psychological complexes. — The mysteries of memory. — A "continuous John Smith" not desirable. — Past lives recorded in character. — Look to the glorious future! A rousing work to the pessimist. — A messenger from the Brotherhood of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion.

I like to speak to a crowded hall, because I have something great and fine to tell you; and I think that I shall adopt the suggestion of one of the great sages and seers, of going out into the byways and highways and inviting those whom I meet to come in to the Feast. Theosophists here in Lomaland have a reputation of being very proud, very exclusive, very reserved. It is not so. Do I look proud and exclusive and reserved, as if I didn't want you to come? I am very glad to see you indeed, and I am glad because I have a Mmessage to give to you, a message which is not mine, but his who sent me, the same as was said by Saint John of the Christians: "This teaching is not mine, but his who sent me"; and in my case it



is the teaching of the wisdom-religion of mankind, which no body of men originated, which no individual gave birth to, which is not the product of cogitations in the light of the midnight oil, nor of cogitations brought forth after much reading; but is, as I have so often told you, the fruitage of the visioning of great spiritual sages and seers of what takes place behind the veil of the outward seeming; in other words, a formulation in human language of the nature, structure, operations, and laws, of universal nature.

So it is nobody's message in particular, but is yours as well as mine; it is the message of every one who understands something of it, and he is therefore in duty bound to give it to others who know it not. It is not from any modicum of pride, of spiritual pride, that a theosophical lecturer, teacher, writer, will tell you that the message which he is attempting to give to you is not his, but theirs who sent him, who taught him. He simply states the truth.

I have been speaking from this platform for 47 weeks last past, on my present subject, and this is the 48th week; and during these weeks I have been answering questions that have been sent in to me — questions of all kinds, on all subjects: questions scientific, philosophical, religious, and whatnot — and I think that I shall speak for two Sundays more on this same subject entitled Questions That We All Ask — that some of us ask at least — and try to give to you the theosophical answers to them, as I see these answers — not *in verbis magistri*, that is, with the authority of a judge, but with the authority of the Lodge of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion behind me insofar as I can truly construe and understand and therefore truly give what I myself have received.

We have no infallible oracle in The Theosophical Society, except that inner voice or light which vibrates strong and clear in the

soul of every normal man and woman on earth; and the only problem is how to let that voice speak through us and not have it obscured by the workings of our ever active and imperfect brain-minds. There is the problem. It can be done by raising one's inner nature ever higher and more high, until it enters into self-conscious communion with the god within, with what the mystical Christians of modern times call the immanent Christ, and the Buddhists of the Orient call the inner Buddha, and the Brahmanists speak of as the ever-living Brahman, residing in the seven- or nine-gated city within, which the early Christians would have called the temple of the holy spirit.

If men and women only knew, as I tell you again and again, what they have within them: if they only knew the undeveloped and unevolved — largely because unrecognized — powers and faculties that each one of us has within: if men knew this, I repeat, then without any exaggeration I can say that in my judgment all the problems of the world would be solved — problems political, problems social, problems of the family — all problems, of the individual as well as of the race. Then there would be an easy and certain solution of them all, for I tell you that knowledge of the existence and reality of this inner divinity is a pathway to wisdom and peace.

Such wisdom and peace are not brain-mind stuff that is inserted into your mind which you have to accept because some religious or scientific bigwig tells you so to do. Such attainment is a becoming, it is an inner growth; and as you grow, as you become, you see the vision sublime on the mountains of the Mystic East, and you can interpret that vision for your fellow men. That vision is knowledge: certain, sure, not subject to doubt, and when you have it the brain-mind is stilled. Argumentation then ceases, because you *know*. And how do you know? Because of your being rooted in the universe, children of it, inseparable parts of it; each

one of you having this divine being within you, which is the very core of the core of your being, and therefore by joining yourself — your human conscious self — with this god within, you become at one with the spiritual powers of the universe, and can translate into human tongue nature's greatest mysteries. All knowledge is there within you. There also is the seat of intuition; there is the seat of genius; there is the seat of wisdom and of knowledge and of almighty love which knows no barriers of space or time, which overleaps all frontiers and which allies us to the gods immortal who control and govern the universe.

I think that I shall deliver two more lectures on my present subject, Questions We All Ask, and then I shall take up one question on each Sunday and make that the theme of my afternoon's discourse, and endeavor to answer that one question more or less in full, because I realize that answering so many questions on one afternoon makes the present lectures imperfect in fullness of exposition. I have not time to develop any one particular theme.

Furthermore, I want to become better known by theosophists belonging to other Theosophical Societies. I want them to know me and to understand us, in order that there may be peace, peace and the feeling of mutual brotherhood, among us. Lack of knowledge breeds suspicion; lack of understanding breeds hatred. When people understand each other, then disputes largely stop. Such disputes as may arise are superficial, even at the worst.

Do you know what I have in mind? I am dreaming a dream, I see a vision, and that dream, that vision, is a unification of all theosophical hearts, is a uniting, a reuniting, of all theosophists in one common spiritual brotherhood of the world, for only human weaknesses and lack of mutual understanding have kept us apart

from uniting under that one single banner of theosophical brotherhood in order to do our common sublime work for mankind. Union is our duty and we shall fail wretchedly unless we achieve it.

Thoughts like these, endeavors like these, ideals such as these, take no account of disputes. Past history is as water that has flowed under the bridge of the present into the ocean of the past, into the ocean of oblivion. Let us look to the future. Let us work together; let us be one. Who dare oppose the call of the spirit? The one who refrains, the one who refuses, the one who steps aside, the one who will not listen and aid, places himself where he belongs, not rightly under our Masters' direction in the Movement for Brotherhood. Let each of the various Theosophical Societies continue, if it so please, along its own path, continue to do its own especial work, continue to do its own labor among men; but let us at least unite on fundamentals and work together for common peace, for brotherhood, and thus help each other in working out our common destiny.

I want to destroy no other society. I want to help them in all things that are good and theosophically true and noble. That is my pledge; and just as I cling to principle with a will that is adamant, not budging an inch from what I feel and know to be right, so also I recognize that in others this spirit exists; and I know that time, the great solver of all problems, will make all things clear and straight.

I have no fear; I know what we have in The Theosophical Society; I know what my own training has been; and I know somewhat of the difficulties that the other Theosophical Societies have to face and to overcome. In these respects my sympathy goes out to them wholeheartedly. But as long as we look to the difficulties and refrain from looking to the future, we have a veil before our eyes;

and we are not doing our duty.

Let us overleap the difficulties; let us rend this blinding veil, and see the light of the immortal spirit streaming from the spiritual heights. We can do it. That is what I am going to work for; and my invitation is a challenge, and I venture to say that no one who prizes his or her standing in the world of theosophical thought and activity will dare to say Nay when the test comes. My heart is filled with understanding and sympathy, not with reproof.

Do you hear the doves of peace murmuring in our dome? Isn't that beautifully symbolic?

The first question, friends, that I have to answer this afternoon, is the following:

Dear Dr. de Purucker: I hear that your society is taking an active interest in preparing an appropriate celebration of the centennial of H. P. Blavatsky's birth, next year. Being a theosophist, or trying to be one [that is wise!], but not attached to your Society, I am not familiar with what may have been already published by your organization on this subject. As our party is leaving San Diego this week, we would very much appreciate knowing something of your plans, if you are ready to make them public, on Sunday, May 25th, when we expect to be present at your lecture in the Temple of Peace.

It is a little premature to speak of just what our plans are. But I want to take advantage of this question, friends, in regard to one matter which is very important, I believe. Next year is the one hundredth year since the birthday — the hundredth anniversary of the birth — of H. P. Blavatsky, who founded the modern Theosophical Society; and I want to choose this year in order to make it memorable in the annals of the Theosophical Movement — of our own Society and of all other Theosophical Societies also,

I hope and pray.

I have an idea that it would be a splendid thing to call a world convention of theosophists of whatever affiliation to meet here at Point Loma in our Greek Theater and in our Temple of Peace, celebrating the anniversary of the birthday of H. P. Blavatsky; and to extend an invitation to all the Theosophical Societies of the world [*Applause*] to meet on common theosophical grounds of brotherhood and understanding, in an attempt, not merely to come together, to get together as the vernacular has it, but to meet each other and to expose, each to all and all to each, our common problems, and thus to see if we cannot arrive at an understanding which will enable us to work together, and wholly, and fully, and properly, to fulfil our Theosophical duty to the world.

It is shameful that the Theosophical Movement of all movements existing in the world today should be split into factions and sections; it is wrong; and every true theosophist must feel his heart sink with shame if this condition continues. I am pondering deeply over this and I have not yet decided as to the psychological moment when to send out the invitations to the heads of other Theosophical Societies. I think it might be better to wait a few weeks or a few months perhaps, in order that the officials and members of the other Theosophical Societies may understand me better and realize that I am not an agent of destruction trying to undermine their splendid work, but will realize that I ask for their co-operation and actual brotherhood; that I want their help even as I can give them mine; and when I say mine, I speak as the Leader of The Theosophical Society — our help. Surely we can unite on spiritual grounds of brotherhood and thus most wonderfully help each other in mutual theosophical service.

I was asked the other day: Well, your plan is a beautiful one; but

does it simply mean that you are trying to undermine the other societies and gather their membership into your membership so as to grow at the expense of others? And I said: Not at all. That is not what I want. I hope that The Theosophical Society, in taking the lead in this movement on spiritual grounds, on grounds of altruistic theosophical principles, will be enabled to gather under its majestic wings the other Theosophical Societies, but not in order to annihilate them, to wipe them out of existence. That runs diametrically contrary to my idea.

But while I realize that this is a beautiful ideal to work towards, as I have said, I recognize the existence of problems in the other Theosophical Societies; and furthermore to destroy those Theosophical Societies is the very last thing I would wish to do. I want to help them to grow, to become strong, especially those Theosophical Societies which have clung more or less closely to the sublime message of theosophy, the message of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion. But I want to help them all. I want them to grow, I want them to wax strong; in accordance with the vision I have in mind of which I have just spoken, I am working to achieve what I desire from within their own ranks. I have received many sympathetic responses from members of these other societies who tell me in all heartiness of feeling and in all sincerity that they are going to present the matter to their own officials, to lay the matter before these latter and thus see what can be done to help me and themselves also.

Now, that spirit is grand; that is the beautiful, right, proper, theosophic thing to do, and I am grateful. I am working from within these other societies as well as with our own beloved Theosophical Society. I have nothing to hide either in purpose and objective or in motive. I am absolutely sincere and straightforward. I want to help them all, as I have said. But I do not disguise the truth from you. I am looking forwards as our

common ideal objective to one Theosophical Society of the world, and if anyone can show me some one else who has more of the truth than I have, I shall recognize my duty and will follow. But on the other hand, I know what I have been trained for, during many long years; I know what I have been sent to do. I know what I have come for; I know what my duty is; but I recognize that our brotherhood, our other theosophic brothers, also have a duty to perform in the world.

The first step, therefore, I hope will be the uniting of all our Theosophical Societies into a common spiritual brotherhood, one in fact and not merely in name, not a mere quasi-political federation. Oh! for heaven's sake, let us avoid mere political forms — and strive to attain one common spiritual brotherhood consisting of these different Theosophical Societies, each society if it so chooses working along its own pathway, the officials of each society remaining at the helm of their respective societies, and the members remaining true to their own respective societies, each one to each one. If I cannot immediately attain the formation of one common Theosophical Society into which all the others shall be gathered, at least I can attain the next best thing, and that is a spiritual brotherhood, a brotherhood of the heart as well as of the mind.

I want, as I have said before, no hypocrites and no traitors in The Theosophical Society. I want helpers, brothers, comrades. The reunion I look for will come! How beautiful a thing it is for men to dwell together in peace and unity!

H. P. Blavatsky was born in Russia on July 31st at about a quarter of two o'clock in the morning of that day — that is, according to the old style of the Julian Calendar; and the reformed or Gregorian Calendar, which prevails today in the countries of the West, was then eleven calendar days ahead of that date. So



therefore, the celebration of the anniversary of the birthday of H. P. Blavatsky should be held on August 11th, and I am thinking of this day in 1931 for the opening of our Convention of all theosophists to be assembled here at our International Theosophical Headquarters at Point Loma. I see great hope in this — the one hundredth anniversary of the birthday of the greatest theosophist of modern times: the greatest in one sense, that H. P. Blavatsky was the chosen one sent by the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion into the world to organize and to be the first to conduct the modern Theosophical Movement.

That is one of the things that we shall celebrate at the Centennial next year; but to me it is one of the most important things, and I speak of it now because my heart is full of it.

The next question before me is an odd one, and I don't quite understand it, but nevertheless I think that I grasp the main idea:

Does the general belief in a personal God forecast a merging or imbodiment of universal mind into one divine being to express the intelligence of mind, who will be looked upon as God?

Well, in the first place, I do not think that belief in an infinite personal God is general. It has been general in the West for many centuries, but my studies have not shown me that the idea of an infinite personal God, one infinite, supreme person — what a contradiction in terms! — has been universal at all. On the contrary, the idea is local, belonging to the theology of the Occident only. All the great seers and sages of the great religions and philosophies of ancient times, of the Orient, and of the Mediterranean countries — that is the countries surrounding the European Inland Sea — taught, on the contrary, a supreme god of their pantheon, whether he was called Zeus or Jupiter, or called by some other name; but beyond this supreme deity there was the

Boundless and the Inexpressible, that which theosophists call by the generic term parabrahman, or, "beyond Brahman," which is not a single infinite entity, but which is just the contrary: the boundless and frontierless infinitudes the boundless All, filled full with universes like ours, concrete of, compact of, composed of, hierarchies innumerable, interpenetrating, interblending, interlocking, and forming the inexpressible vastness of parabrahman — boundless and frontierless ALL.

At the head of each such hierarchy there is its supreme hierarch, which is the origin of it, and also its ultimate destiny or goal. You may call it a supreme god if you like, but supreme only for its own hierarchy; and the word supreme is merely a human expression. You may say, if you love your Occidental human terms, that this supreme hierarch is a "personal" god; but by using that totally erroneous expression you are painting an imaginary divinity in the colors of your mind, and furthermore express thereby your own smallness of understanding by ascribing to so vastly great and sublime an entity the attributes of humanity.

No, the consensus of the most illuminated religious and philosophical opinion of mankind has always been to the contrary of the existence of an infinite personal god, and is just what I have tried to point out to you in a few words: that the universe is filled full with gods in all degrees of development or evolutionary progress. You may call these divine entities by some other name than gods; call them cosmic spirits if you like; it matters not what the name is because the name signifies nothing much, but try to get the idea and to understand that these gods, these cosmic spirits, exist: each hierarchy of them, each class of them, each range of them, existing in realms or spheres or planes or worlds, appropriate to them and for them, just as we human beings exist in this realm or sphere or plane or world appropriate

to us — or rather we humans have bodies appropriate to such plane or world or realm or sphere.

We humans are expressing ourselves — our powers and facilities and energies — on this plane or in this world; and when one speaks, as this thoughtful but I believe not sufficiently thoughtful questioner does, of "an imbodiment of universal mind into one divine being, to express the intelligence of mind, who will be looked upon or regarded as God," does he realize what he is saying? There is an attempt to limit, to make of abstract divinity a being of personal limited character, however great or vast the mind of the questioner may imagine such divinity to be.

On the contrary our teaching is that there are beings innumerable, endless hierarchies of them, endless ranges of them: greatest — and only greatest because we must use some word — intermediate, and least — and only least because we must use some human word in order to convey our idea. Yes, the hierarchies of these beings are endless in number, and for purposes of convenience we speak of them as gods; and oh! how much greater and more sublime this conception is than any other, for it signifies an open pathway of evolution for every evolving entity and thing, and this pathway is beginningless and endless, and exposes to our vision distant horizons which, as we approach them, recede into the farther distance; and thus we understand, begin to have some adumbration of understanding, that growth is endless, that evolution has no frontiers.

This is the third question that I have before me:

What is the relationship (if any) between predestination and karma?

Karma, as of course you know, is one of our theosophical terms. It is a Sanskrit word, which very briefly and adequately expresses

what is popularly called the law of cause and effect, and which I more accurately define perhaps, as the law of consequences, to wit, that every thought and action produces a consequence, an effect, which instantly becomes a new cause producing some other effect, and so on forever.

Predestination — as I suppose it is taken to mean in the Occidental theological sense of the word — means something which is foreordained by "Almighty God" to take place, whether those things or entities which themselves are foreordained will it or nill it. It really is a form of Occidental theological fatalism.

Consequently, the answer to the question is: between predestination and karma there is no analogy whatsoever. Karma is founded in the exercise of free will from beginning to end; karma is founded on self-choice, signifying that as ye sow — what ye think now, what ye do now — ye shall reap, for ye are the sowers. The seeds ye sow become your character. You sow a thought: the thought becomes an act; you sow that act, the act becomes a habit; you sow that habit, that habit becomes a character; and in sowing that character, you make for yourself a destiny.

Whereas predestination is quite a different thing. You are created *nolens volens* according to the theological theory by God Almighty; you are placed by divine power in a certain sphere of life; all that happens to you is foreordained, although you are nevertheless supposed to have free will. How can you exercise that free will? I never could reconcile this perfect contradiction. And furthermore you die when at your creation you were foreordained to die.

I don't mean to be unkind, but this idea of foreordination, or predestination, to me seems to make of human beings simple marionettes on the stage of life, and therefore it is a most

hopeless and despairful teaching; but our theosophical doctrine of karma runs wholly to the contrary, and therefore it is a teaching of hope. What ye sow ye shall reap. You have the choice. Sow good seed, and reap good in abundance. Sow evil, and reap unhappiness and pain, bitterness and sorrow. That is our teaching.

Ye are gods, says the Christian scripture, which is also our teaching, for the inmost of the inmost of every one of you is a divine being, as I have already told you this afternoon. You are, in the inmost of the inmost of you, a god; you are children of the higher gods who control and guide the universe. Your nature possesses free will as a part of its essential being.

That is the teaching of karma; it is the exact antithesis of fatalism or predestination; karma or free will is a godlike quality. Pray get the thought clearly. You are the makers of yourselves, you are the makers of your own destiny; you are your own children today. You are now what you have made yourselves to be in the past. You are the eventuation, you are the fruitage, you are the consequences, the results, the effect, of what you have made yourselves to be. Begin now therefore, and make yourself better than now you are, grander, nobler; let the energies, powers, faculties, of the god within you, appear, come out, prevail, and thus will you grow. Be what you are within! That is true evolution, for thus you unfold, unwrap, develop, your inner faculties and powers. Be in actuality in the future what you are even now in your inmost essence — sons of the Sun.

What is the cause of the present great unrest? Is there a new (to us) leaven working? Has every past age hid its period of unrest?

Of course. Why should our age be exceptional? Our age is merely the child of past ages. We are the resultants, the consequences, of

what has preceded us. What happens now is merely a copy, therefore, with necessary changes, of what took place in the past. Every age had its beginning, its culmination in glory and in splendor, and then came its decay and fall. And in growth there are always periods of unrest: there is not merely one period of unrest in every racial cycle, but many such periods.

Look at the small periods of unrest that recur constantly, even in social and political affairs: periods of depression some people call them, periods of expansion other people call them. But periods of unrest are times in which more easily to grow; they are times of change. Do you know really what these periods of unrest are? They occur at the points of changing cycles, when the old gives way to the new. There was a great period of unrest at the time of the downfall of the Roman Empire, which lasted for two or three or more hundreds of years; and as every one of you may know by reading Greek and Roman history, you will find therein smaller periods of unrest, and so it is today.

We are at present passing through a period of unrest, simply because cycles are changing. We are leaving the past behind; we see new doors before us, new opportunities are coming, because a new cycle is opening. Let us be on the ascending arc of progress. Do you want to be with your faces turned to the past, with your back to the light? No, look into the future!

My kind friends ask me all sorts of questions. As I have said before, I sometimes feel as if I were a perambulating encyclopedia.

The next question is an example of one of quite a different type:

Psychologists claim that the memory of the past is the only way we can bridge over the gaps in consciousness caused by sleep and prove to ourselves that we are continuing entities.

As the ordinary man recollects nothing of any existence previous to this terrestrial life, does not this failure of memory strongly militate against the doctrine of reincarnation?

Why? *Why* Have you a strong memory? Will you then please tell me all that you did yesterday? What did you do on the 6th of January ten years ago? Do you remember it? You don't. Well then, you did not live on the 6th of January ten years ago, if you follow this foolish argument. There you are! This idea, that because you do not remember things, you then were not alive, is obviously foolish. Why don't these psychologists think a little bit more, and theorize a little less! I have very little patience with these psychologists, I tell you frankly. I have found their theory out, and I mean this too!

In these days you can work wonders with this word psychology. Whenever you don't know what an answer to a condition is, you can say that it is a psychological complex, and then people will think that you have said a whole mouthful! Well, but have you? Have you said anything of value at all? Now, please answer me. I don't want to be unkind to anybody, but I crave an answer to this question. Do you understand your problem a bit better merely by calling it a psychological complex? I think that the man who reasons like that indeed has or is afflicted with a psychological complex!

But furthermore, how about the very frequent cases of amnesia? I was reading in this morning's paper — I think it was in this morning's paper — about a man who could not remember who he was. He was reported as passing his time in muttering a couple of names, and the police of New York were trying to trace who he was and where he came from. Well, according to this idea of lack of recollection that the question embodies, this man does not exist, because he does not remember himself.

Memory has many mysteries. We constantly forget. Because we forget things, are we therefore to understand that those things did not exist, or that we did not exist when they happened, or that they did not happen? To me this argument of lack of memory is positively foolish. I don't believe any one of you remembers what you did on the 6th of January last, five months ago. I do not. If something happened on that 6th of January which hurt me or which overjoyed me so that it burnt itself into my mind, doubtless I could remember. Had it been something most unusual which stirred the very fabric of my being then doubtless I would now remember it. In such case memory of the event is so strongly impressed on the tablets of the physical brain-mind that recollection is easy.

"Continuing entities"! Now, there is what is to me another foolish remark. People think that they want to be continuing entities forever the same. They think that this means to be always conscious as now they are conscious. Well, just pause and think a little bit about this. Do not so easily take things for granted that you hear as being true, or because the psychologists talk to you in long and awkward words, and you are thereby impressed to think that they mean something. Continuing entities! The idea is but a repetition of the old Christian theological idea, or doctrine, of an immortal soul which is never going to change essentially. John Smith dies, and John Smith remains forever John Smith. Immortal gods! I don't want to be a continuous John Smith; I want to grow to be something greater and nobler, which means to change and therefore not be a continuing entity.

Continuing entities! In other words, this means that a man at twenty-five years, or thirty-five years, or forty-five years, wants to be forever just as he then is; he wants to be a continuing entity, always the same, perhaps knowing a little more, but forgetting it. I don't want to be a 'continuing entity' in that sense of the word. I



want to grow, to find my consciousness change, to find it expanding, so that in the aeons of the future my consciousness will from being personal become divine, will in fact be divine, therefore cosmic, embracing the universe in its sweep. As a man, I cannot be that, and hence I cannot forever be a continuing human entity. Do I want to be forever a continuing man, as I am now, all the time, with my feeble faculties? How absurd! Pray think, think a little about this!

You see the stupidity of these psychological arguments. Because we cannot remember what happened some time ago, and as memory is the only "proof" that we have of being a "continuing entity," therefore because we don't remember, we are not continuing entities, and we did not exist before. Marvelous! How can you remember your past lives, when you cannot remember the past part even of today? You have not the same physical brain now, nor the same physical body, that you had in your last life. You have changed; you have grown. You are not the 'continuing entity' of the last life, the John Smith or Mary Brown that then was. You become better always because you evolve. I hope so, at least! I am sorry for you if you are not growing, and if you are growing then you are not a continuing entity, which means fixture in a certain condition of consciousness and with certain personal attributes.

I am now going to say something that offhand may sound contradictory to you, and yet it is the holy truth. You do actually and indeed remember your past lives. And do you know how? *Because you are yourself!* You remember it all as character, as the stream of consciousness that is yours. That remark is not so terribly abstract. All your hopes and aspirations are actually recollections of the hopes and aspirations of the former life and of your former lives. Your character is but the present consequence or product or result of that former life and of those former lives.

You pass from life to life, not as a physical body, not as carrying with you all the incidents that happened to you, and which you forget an hour afterwards, but you pass from life to life as a character; changing, growing, expanding, and not two consecutive seconds of time the same; and therefore you are not a "continuing entity"; and thank the gods immortal that it is so.

Think! How many perfectly horrible things has not each one of you done in the past? Do you want to be a continuing entity in those things? Nature is more merciful than man even wants her to be. Before each reincarnation, the reincarnating ego drinks of the River of Lethe, of the River of Forgetfulness. What a horrible thing, what a nightmare and mental and spiritual torture, it would be if we could remember our past lives and realize the horrors of all kinds that we then did and then suffered! Consider this thought. Even in your present life — and the very fact that you are in a theosophical auditorium shows that you are a superior kind of people — even in your present lives, as superior men, and superior women of course, would you like to have the perpetually burnt-in realization always present before your vision of what you have done in the past? You can bless your almighty stars that it is not so! Have you ever thought of the ghastly record that must be in the past of most people in former states of interior evolution to that which they are in now?

No, I for one turn my back on the past. I look to the future. I look to the rising sun; I look to growth; I want to become greater than now I am, and I am growing; but the past has made me my present character, and I know myself to have been in the past the original of all that I am now. Recollection is stamped and engraved upon the fabric of your being, as your present character. That is where memory inheres; and how often has it not happened, surely at least once to all of you, to me it has happened many times: sometimes you may pass a street corner,

or walk under a tree, or see a face, or enter a room, or hear a clock strike, or see a cloud passing over the face of the moon: I know not how, I know not why, but instantly recognition comes with the feeling "this has happened before! 'I feel the skirts of familiar things trailing at my side,' " — as the poet Whittier, I believe, phrases it.

Recollection, remembrance, memory! Yes, you remember everything of the past because it is stamped in your character. And I will finish this question by turning to a phase of it that I have not hitherto desired to touch upon; but in order to complete my answer, I now speak of it. There will come a time in your evolutionary growth when you will consciously remember the past. You won't be able to avoid it. As the tree grows from the seed, does it not pass through all its phases? Is not every one of them stamped into the very fabric, shape, and substance of that growing tree? So also is your character builded. Everything that you have thought, every emotion that you have had, every impulse of your soul, laid its mark indelibly on the fabric of your constitution; and one day in the far distant future, when growth shall have opened your inner eyes and the scales of blindness shall have fallen away from your vision, then you will see; and I can tell you that nine hundred and ninety-nine times out of a thousand you will turn your faces from the picture, preferring to look into the future where there is greater hope and a more glorious outlook, and forget what will then be to you the sad and often sorry pictures of the past.

Do you now see the idea? To say that because you don't remember a thing, therefore this lack of remembrance is a proof against our doctrine of reincarnation, is simply saying a thing which is stupid because it is untrue.

How far reaches the power of our thoughts? When we have

lost a person who is very dear to us, and we think of him with all our love, will our thoughts reach him after his death? And when he is far away, would it help a person when we send helpful and loving thoughts to him?

Yes, indeed. Love knows no barriers either of space or of time, for it is the very cement of the universe, which holds things together, and therefore is nature's fundamental activity, nature's fundamental law, and it is the universal bond of union among all things. Love is all-penetrating. It will not only eat away the obstinacy of the stoniest of human hearts, and dissolve the substance of the most adamant of human minds, but it will slowly infuse its life-giving warmth everywhere. Nothing can bar its passage, for it is the very life-essence of the universe, and no one, however proud in his own vanity he may be, is proof against the working of almighty love.

Love, impersonal love, will reach even the dead, that is to say the nobler part of those who have passed on, and will help them in the sense of comforting them. It will surround them with a bulwark; it will give them peace. Love is protective; love is puissant; it is all-penetrating; and the more impersonal it is, the higher it is and the more powerful.

I will answer two more questions. The first is in the nature of a communication. I think it is a criticism, and therefore I take pleasure in reading it to you:

Dear Sir: I have attended your lectures on several occasions, and am indebted to you for your thoughtful exposition of many aspects of life. May I summarize my general impressions and ask your comment on the result?

When I consider the forceful efforts you make to modify the minds of your audiences, and (am I not right?) the general

consciousness of a still wider audience of human mentality upon which your earnest thought must impinge, I confess to a sense of the futility of your effort.

The very facts which you advance undermine the hopes you have of improving the status of humanity. The many outstanding figures of history of whom you speak — Lao-tse, Gautama the Buddha, Apollonius of Tyana, Jesus the Syrian age, and the others — are so vastly above the average of humanity that they dwarf the rank and file into a hopeless mediocrity.

Would you maintain that these great ones were ever of the ordinary human type? I cannot avoid the feeling that we average mortals are of a *fixed type*, possibly due after long, long aeons of evolution to blossom into something different, but at present just human, plain human, mediocrity, made to look the more sadly deficient by the presence amongst us at times of godlike beings, from what source I know not.

You speak of a process of initiation through which men may join the ranks of these great ones. I do not presume to criticize what I do not understand; but even if it is possible, by great effort, for one of the average human type to be transformed into a higher type, then I still question whether a change in the general status has been accomplished.

Personally, I like my kind — I like to like people, and I like them to like me — but the sense of our general lack — a deficiency, a futility — presses at times very heavily, and is only accentuated by the bright pictures you paint, without, so far as I can see, giving a definite means of making some radical change.

Hoping I have not been obscure in my thought, I remain —

Yours, etc.

Here is a man trying to make a pessimist out of me! He thinks that because I preach a gospel of hope and joy and peace and brotherhood, everybody is so wholly and completely mediocre that there is no hope for anybody becoming greater than before. Well, look at me; look at yourself! In surveying us thus, you will find your whole answer there. "Man, know thyself," said the ancient Greek oracle, for in so doing, he comes to know the boundless universe, for he is rooted in it, its child, and everything in that universe is in him, active or dormant as the case may be.

Those great ones whom I have so often held up in picture to you, I have held up to you as examples of what you may become yourselves if you will, and this is done by developing the god within you. That is all there is to say about it.

It would be horrible, unspeakably awful, if I were to say that it is nature's truth that you are just helpless worms of the dust, destined to perish, and all of you to perish everlastingly when you die, and that there is nothing in the future for you except utter and complete annihilation of you as spiritual entities. This is the grotesque doctrine of extreme materialism; and what hope on earth would that nightmare of thought give to you?

But I tell you that the core of the core of every one of you is a divine being, is a god, and you manifest its transcendent powers, although ill, although poorly; and my message to you on every Sunday afternoon is to be as much as you can in your present state that god within. Let its divine powers come out and thus you as human beings will grow and expand in both wisdom and knowledge of life. My urge to you is to do it now, to begin now. I show you a pathway of evolutionary growth, and I tell you of a gospel of hope — of hope everlasting, of growth infinite, beginningless and without an end forever.

You are, each one of you, in the core of the core of your being, divine; a divine entity is the source of all your inner faculties. Evolution brings these faculties out; and oh! how I pity the man or woman whose mind is so stilted in the petty lessons of earth that it has learned, and whose heart is so enfolded within the cramping bonds of egoism, that it cannot even feel the truth which its own divine self whispers to it night and day. Your own intimations of glory, the whisperings of your own soul, are of splendor. Why not listen and follow and be — be the Christ latent within you, as the Christians of the modern time say. Be the Buddha within: a child of the sun, glorious, radiant in your inmost being.

Or, if you prefer to think that you are but an overgrown ape, destined to die and become senseless dust — well, what can I do for you? I suppose that it takes all kinds of people to make a world! For my part, I prefer to recognize the gods who are my kin. A god myself in my inmost being, I challenge the god within you to awaken!

Here is the last question:

You have often said in your lectures that you have been sent to give a message. Who sent you? Will you tell us about this *who* or these *whos* who sent you?

Now, isn't that a little pointed? Suppose that this matter is a secret that belongs to me alone? But the question is fair enough: I have made the statement and I put my heart in it. As I have made the statement, you have a right to ask me questions about it. I will therefore answer briefly.

It was the great ones of the human race, our elder brothers, who sent me, the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion who trained me to deliver this message. The message is not mine. Were I capable

of adding one syllable out of my own chief, my own head, I were not worthy to stand and talk to you. Every good and noble man of the past and of the future, may say the same thing, if he has this message to give to his fellows, and every good and noble man or woman of the past and of the future in a certain sense may say the same thing that I have just told you.

The greatest master of all for each individual is his own inner god; and when you make an alliance and become at one with this inner god, you have thereafter neither rest nor peace in a personal sense any more. You have no more time for selfish leisure, but you are driven with an urge that will not be denied to go forth and tell your fellow men the message with which your mind and heart are filled.

But a theosophical Leader, a theosophical teacher, is indeed somewhat different, because in this case — and I will now answer the question, it is in my case — he is sent by the Brotherhood to teach. I know that the world is filled with prophets of many kinds and with false prophets, all proclaiming great things, and often making claims which are without foundation of fact. I have for these no word of condemnation or censure. I know only that I was sent to deliver the message that I was sent to deliver, and I try to do this as best I can. I have nothing but love to give to my fellow men. I ask for your sympathetic hearing in giving that message. I ask for cooperation in trying to give it to the world. I never harbor hate or blame for others, although my heart is filled at times with pity and sadness.

Such then are they who sent me; and this I know: that every one of you, if his gaze is turned upwards, upwards to the spirit within him, to the core of his being, will instinctively recognize truth when he hears it, and will recognize sincerity and honesty when he sees it; for each one of you human beings has an infallible



guide, an infallible leader, who never betrays, and by whom you may always test what you see and hear. This is within you; and the many who have recently been coming in to The Theosophical Society who formerly were members of other societies, have, in many instances, told me — and these I take into the Society because they are not abandoning their own society and their own teacher, but have been free and were seeking for help and comfort, and thus come to me, and I give to them what I can — they have told me that they recognize at last, after many days, that they have come "Home." These men and women are not traitors; such as these men and women are not hypocrites; they were those who, for one reason or another reason, were homeless and wanderers on the face of the earth. They are now at peace!

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[Vol 1, No 49](#)  
[Contents](#)

No. 49 (August 12, 1930)

## QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK

(Lecture delivered June 1, 1930)

CONTENTS: Curious ideas regarding theosophists. What must a theosophist believe? Shall I reincarnate as a mosquito? — Heard over the radio: Belief in Judgment Day, Adam and Eve, Noah's Ark, incompatible with the reincarnation theory. God's heavy responsibility. — Is God a cosmic fiend? — Finding for the Christians their Christ. — Science often crystallized dogmas. — What were we before we were born? Where were we? — Every tree, every flower a teacher. — A word about the 'living dead.' — What are the tests of a true theosophist? — Does a theosophist ever get love-weary? — The Occidental viewpoint in regard to the study of the self.

I have been wondering, while listening to the beautiful piece of music for the violin, Raff's "Cavatina": as to just what you were expecting to see in a theosophical teacher — some imposing individual, someone putting on airs of importance? Instead of that you see only a man. Some people today have extremely curious ideas as to what we Theosophists are. Even today, after the more than fifty years of teaching that the Theosophical Movement has given to the public, some people seem to think that theosophists believe that the souls of human beings reincarnate in the bodies of the beasts, and that from the bodies of the beasts they return again into human flesh — all of which is entirely fantastic and wrong, for it is not our teaching nor our belief.

As an English girl said to me many years ago: "You know, I am interested in some of your theosophical teachings; but I just simply cannot swallow the idea that in my next birth I am going

to be a mosquito or a cab horse!"

I said: "You won't be; you certainly won't be. Your soul, the spirit within you, on account of the stage of evolution that it has attained, is separated by an almost impassable gulf from the evolutionary stage of the thin and slender ray of light which animates the feeble body of a mosquito, or from the somewhat stronger ray of light which animates the body of a cab horse. You would not be at home in the body of a mosquito."

"No," she said, "I would not! But what must you really believe in order to become a theosophite?"

I said: "You mean a theosophist."

"Oh, it does not matter — *fites* or *fists*," she said, "they are pretty much the same!"

I answered: "You are not obliged to believe in anything. You are not obliged to accept any dogmas. We have no formal creed to which you must subscribe. All you need to do is to give an honest adherence to the principle of universal brotherhood."

And she answered, "I like that, I will sign!"

That young lady was a highly intelligent person.

Does anyone here really think that theosophists as intelligent people believe that a human being, with the almost godlike splendor of his mind and will, reimbodies himself in the physical vehicle of a flea, or of a mosquito, or of a cab horse? If you do so believe you are quite wrong.

There is a certain perversity of mind in some people. As a matter of fact, nine hundred and ninety-nine people out of a thousand in the Occident today know pretty well just what we theosophists do teach, at least along the lines of our public doctrines. But I think

that the root and cause of much of the popular misunderstandings of what our theosophical doctrines really are arises in the bosom of the churches.

This noon, coming into my office, I found a communication from one of my comrades here stating that this morning, over the radio, there was broadcast a dialog on "Reincarnation," originating in the I. B. S. A., which I presume stands for the International Bible Study Association, or something like that. I do not like to advertise the vagaries and follies of other people, and especially of such well-meaning people as those who broadcast this morning evidently are; but I thought that I would speak of it this afternoon, in illustration of what I have just said, that there is a certain perversity of mind in some people which prevents them from being fair in their treatment of others who differ from them.

Now, isn't that perverse? If a theosophical speaker were to say anything against the sincere religious convictions or beliefs of anybody on earth, he would not be a decent theosophist, and we would tell him so very quickly.

The friend who wrote to me this communication, said that he rushed for his notebook — he is a rapid stenographer — and thought that he would take down bits of this radio dialog, in order to send these scraps of the dialog in to me for my perusal; and he did so. He arrived at the receiving instrument when the dialog had almost been completed, but he got some few stray bits of this Christian wisdom which was broadcast into the ether, and I am going to read these bits to you. They will interest you; they may make you laugh. It made me sad to think that any intelligent man should stand before a radio audience and utter poppycock, foolishness, of this type, which he must know arises out of his own ignorance of the doctrines that he is attempting to talk to his audience about.

Here are the paragraphs taken down in shorthand [the words in square brackets are G.deP.'s comments]:

"The thousand years will be the Judgment Day [Doesn't that sound familiar!] and that is when all the wrongs of earth will be made right. How much better and more reasonable that is than to keep on coming here to earth as a little baby thousands of times, especially when we don't know who we were, and suffering for some wrong we are not conscious of having committed.

"If you want something that will not lead you astray, take what the Bible said and forget the dreams and imaginings of a demon-controlled medium."

"Now, Frank, I had only one question; now I have got another one. Reincarnation teaches that every time a baby is born, in that baby is a soul of an individual that lived on the earth before. Now there are many more people being born than are dying. Now, can you tell me where these extra souls are coming from? I should think the supply on the other side would be exhausted."

". . . Anyone who believes in reincarnation must of necessity reject the Bible entirely; for the Bible teaches that man is a direct creation of God, who first created Adam and Eve and then told them to replenish the earth. Their first children were born before anyone had died."

"Now, here is my question: Whose soul got inside of those babies? From then until now the population of the earth, although reduced to eight persons at the time of the Flood, has, on the whole, been gradually increasing, thus proving that the reincarnation theory is absolutely a fraud and a deception."

"Well, I cannot answer any questions. It does not figure out

just right when you come to think of it, does it?

"Now, when we understand what the Bible really teaches [He is wise!] and realize that all of the old creedal ideas that are so repugnant to reason [He has learned wisdom!] have no support in the Bible, but that it holds out a real hope of life through the resurrection, I don't see why we should go on hunting around for a lot of other foolish notions that are no better or more reasonable than the creeds themselves. I am going to stick to the Bible. I like it, and I believe it is the truth."

What do you think of that? This speaker is going to stick to the ideas that the world was created in six days and that God Almighty grew so tired on the seventh day that he had to rest. He is going to believe that the world is about six thousand years old and perhaps a little older, and that the other half of mankind began its existence from a rib, which was taken out of the first half of mankind. He is going to believe that the grasses and the vegetation and the fruit trees existed and brought forth their kind before there was any sunlight to enliven and fructify the earth — and much more of the same kind of thing.

This radio broadcaster knows nothing at all about our teaching of reincarnation. He takes it for granted that God created Adam and Eve, and that Adam and Eve had their children; and he says that if reincarnation is true, where did the souls in these children's bodies come from?

Taking the literal Biblical story for truth, of course he cannot believe in so reasonable a doctrine as reincarnation and must believe, I suppose, that God created the souls for the children of Adam and Eve, thus throwing upon God all the heavy burthen and responsibility for all that Adam and Eve, and their children and the later members of the human race, did wrong and did aright, did and left undone.

How about the illumination that modern science has thrown upon the nature, origin, and destiny of the world and of mankind? Do the Christian churches teach the Bible literalisms today, even if they reject the credos?

Isn't it foolish to talk in this way and set up your own understanding of the literal meaning of a religious scripture as being the explanation of what the divine has done? If God — do you believe in him, the old-fashioned Christian God? — if God created every soul that is born in the body of a little child out of nothing, God according to the theory, being all-wise and all-good, then God foresaw and permitted all that every man and that every woman does; for God being all-wise, eternity and infinitude and all that in them is are in the divine vision. Therefore God is responsible, and not the human beings; and to say in the same breath that a human being is created with a free will is simply an evasion of the issue, because even if this were so, knowledge of the use that would be made of that free will by human beings must have existed from eternity in the divine mind, and therefore in creating souls, the divine mind must have created them knowing and therefore permitting the use of these free wills in such or such or another way. This obviously takes all sense of moral responsibility away from human beings. At any rate it relieves man of the onus of moral responsibility.

The problem of evil so called in this old-fashioned Christian view becomes unsolvable and the problem of good becomes equally unsolvable. I can tell you that any human conception of divinity which makes of that divinity a cosmic fiend, creating some men unto damnation everlasting and others unto an everlasting and unearned heaven, is a conception that I reject with horror. The universe is guided by justice and almighty love; and monstrous human vagaries and dreams such as these have no place outside

of the nightmares of literal and uneducated and heartless men. I do not say this unkindly, but I am giving you a few of the thoughts that as a young man, even as a little boy, I had.

My father was a Christian clergyman, a good and noble-hearted man, and I remember well the many conversations that we had upon these subjects. I remember having often seen the heartache in his face; but before he passed away, I saw knowledge break through his mind like the coming of a glorious sunlight, and he told me that I had freed his soul.

No, life is guided by infinite justice; love is the very cement of the universe — it is the very heart of things; and love, with its expansive power, will penetrate everywhere, and nothing can withstand its influence: no human heart is adamant or stony enough to shut out its beneficent and life-giving rays; for it is the very core of the fabric of being, and men who act by love and with love and through love, expressing itself in human mind and heart as kindness, fraternity, goodwill, brotherliness, and compassion, are working with the very laws which govern and control the Universe, and thereby show their kinship with the immortal gods — with the hierarchies of the divine beings who hold the universe in charge and in guidance.

Before leaving this matter I would like to point out one thing more: that we theosophists, among the other work which we have to do, also have a feeling that it is our duty to show to Christians the real meaning of their Bible in its two parts: to show them that like all ancient religious and philosophical scriptures, their Bible has a mystical and esoteric basis, and that if you can understand the real meaning of the Jewish Bible and of the documents which form the New Testament of the Christians, you will find there the same wisdom-religion of mankind which is today called theosophy. The literal interpretation of any ancient world



scripture or philosophy is one which will never give you truth, for all these ancient world scriptures and philosophical documents were written in a cipher, in metaphor, in tropes, in figures of speech. Theosophy gives to you the real key. This is a very definite statement, but it is a true one, and with this key you can open all these old religions and philosophies, open their doors; and thereby you can discover the same fundamental system of religious-scientific thought in the background of them all, which fundamental system is, the ancient wisdom-religion of mankind today called theosophy.

So therefore, no theosophist would reject the scriptures of the Jews or the scriptures of the Christians, or the scriptures of the Buddhists, or the scriptures of the Hindus, or the scriptures of the Taoists, or those of the Confucianists. None at all. Theosophists say: Study them, probe them; go to the bottom of them. Get the truth underneath the often ludicrous surface meanings. There in the deeper meanings you will find theosophy.

Do you remember what I have often told you theosophy is? It is the formulation, in human language and terms, of the structure, processes, and laws, of the universe; and theosophists are finding for the Christians their Christ, finding for them the real meaning of the Christ; and this is done by telling them to study themselves; for in the core of every one of you there lives a god, your own divine essence, a divine being is in the very heart of the heart of the heart of each of you; and the mystical Christians of today begin to have some adumbration of that fact, and they call this inner divinity the immanent Christ, and the Buddhists for ages have called it the inner Buddha; and the Hindus speak of it as the Brahma in the seven-gated city of the self within.

In you is the essence of divinity; and future ages, as evolution brings into ever greater manifestation the powers locked up in

you — future ages, I say, will bring forth these spiritual-divine powers, and in those days of the aeons of the aeons of the future, men will walk the earth like gods and behave like gods, and speak like gods, for they will think and feel like gods — and all this simply means that evolution will bring forth in the future what is at present locked up within. Each one of you is a child of the gods who guide and control the universe according to law — which law is the essence of their own being; and you are children of the gods, and your future is to become gods like unto your divine parents. Even the Christian scriptures speak of this in their declaration: "Know ye not that ye are gods?"

Here is a very interesting question that I have received:

I have never been able to believe in the special creation of each human soul, even when a sincere Episcopalian. Such a dogma seemed to me to render the inequalities of human existence even more inexplicable, and it is certainly not in harmony with the New Testament teaching that "God is love." But what were we before we were born, and where were we? I spoke of my difficulties to a clergyman. He had no answer to give, and was so much troubled himself that he begged me never to mention the subject again.

It is odd that two questions should have come in to me containing matter of almost identic type. Yes, as I have pointed out in discussing the former question, how different are the teachings of the ancient wisdom-religion of mankind which form the key and the background of all the great religions and philosophies of the past: different from the teachings, on the one hand, of modern religious Occidental thought, dogmatic as it is; and, on the other hand, different from the teachings of scientific materialism, which only too often is as crystallized in dogmas as is the Occidental religious thought.

The doctrines of the wisdom-religion give you hope; they teach you to look upon yourselves as collaborators with the gods, who guide the universe; for that, in fact, is what you are. They show you that you are responsible for what you do: that as ye sow, so shall ye also reap, and that ye are indeed reaping what ye have sown — a doctrine of responsibility and hope, for it means that ye can carve your pathway into the future as ye will and how ye will.

You can make yourself relatively soon — without waiting for the slow tedious evolutionary process, but by exercising your innate divine powers — you can make yourself, I say, a quasi-divine being before the generality of the race reaches that stage. Those men who have succeeded in doing this are the great and spiritual luminaries who have so brightened the pages of human history in the past. Jesus the Syrian sage, Gautama the Buddha, Krishna and Sankaracharya of India, Lao-tse and Confucius of China, Pythagoras, Plato, Empedocles, Apollonius, and many more of the Grecian lands, and others again whose names are even today household words in every civilized home.

These are the men who, through will and understanding and hard study, and self-discipline above everything else, have become more or less allied with the god within. They have manifested the transcendent powers of this inner divinity, and therefore shine as teachers, leaders, of their fellow men. Think of the hope in that! Think of its beauty! Think of the justice of it! Think of the dignity it clothes men with!

Ye are what you make yourselves to be. Climb and grow in increasing splendor, spiritually, intellectually, and even physically. Or, go downwards. Choose! Ye are gods in your inmost parts. Be they! Be it, each one of you, in thought, in action. Fill your lives with the splendor of the love within you. Be loving and ye shall be lovable. Your faculties will grow and increase, and ye

shall shine in splendor among your fellow men. Conviction will lie in your voice, and your very face will carry hope and consolation to others.

"What were we before we were born, and where were we?" Such is the question. We were what you might call spiritual atoms of life, spiritual souls if you like to adopt a popular expression, resting in utter peace, in utter bliss, after the last past lifetime on earth, as ye rest at night after a hard day's work; and just as ye rise in the morning refreshed and ready for the fray anew, to act and conduct yourselves like men, so when this centuries-long rest and repose of the soul, the human soul, is completed, ye are drawn back to earth, to the field of your former labors, to the scenes ye loved before, to the hearts ye stimulated, or that ye broke. What ye have done ye shall pay for; and is not this just? Could any normal man or woman do an unjust act, bring tears to a human eye, and feel happy, unless that same hand wiped those tears away, and unless reincarnation gave you the chance to do this?

Nature is innately just, exact, methodical, in her operations. Ethics are not a matter of mere convention. They are based on the very structure and fabric of the universe. If ye sow seeds of hate, envy, disintegration, dislike, ye shall reap some day the seeds ye sowed; and if, on the other hand, ye sow seeds of kindness, brotherhood, helpfulness, pity, mercy, compassion, and love, ye shall reap what ye have sown; and how manly it is so to act, so to live, and so to die!

"Where were you?" You were winging your way in the spaces, carried whither your impulses and attractions drew you, indrawn into the bosom of the divine part of you, your monad, your inner god. That inner god, when freed from the human chains binding it, localizing it on earth, passes in its wonderful peregrinations to

other planets, to other spheres both visible and invisible, and especially invisible; and the human soul, resting in the bosom of the monad, of its divine part, of its parent, is carried along with it, until the attraction draws the monad again towards earth. The human soul then begins to awaken: begins, so to say, to stir uneasily in its rest, for it is recognizing nature's call to be up and doing anew; it is now refreshed, it is now rested; and in a little while a baby is born and a new life begins for that same human ego.

The following is a beautiful thing:

Notwithstanding the persistent call of the open spaces, it is apparent that many people cherish an inner preference for a dwelling place "among the trees." Why? Do sturdy trunks and sensitive whispering leaves speak a language that the soul of the observer can interpret sufficiently at least to suspect that he is in the presence of divinity, a divinity that desires to commune and mingle with the divinity that is stirring within man, quickening his imagination, steadying his emotions, and developing a serenity of spirit that trees are a majestic imbodiment of — teaching him to unfold naturally as trees do. Is not every flower and tree a teacher?

A poet here speaks. Yes, indeed. Every tree, every flower, every atom of the mineral crunched under your feet as you tread the surface of the earth: everything that is, had you the seeing eye, you could learn from. Have you never looked into the bosom of a flower? Have you never studied the beauty, symmetry, glory, around you? Have you never looked at the rising or the setting sun, and marveled at the paintings on the western or eastern horizon? Have you never looked deep into the eye of a fellow human being, looked with a seeing eye on your own kind? Have you never found marvels there?

Are ye dead? Why, everything is a teacher, have ye only the ears to hear, the senses to take the teaching in. How well Shakespeare understood this, how beautifully he expresses it in his *As You Like It*, Act II, scene 1:

Sweet are the uses of adversity

....

And this our life . . .

Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,  
Sermons in stones, and good in everything.

What a wonderful world we are surrounded with, and how blind men and women are as a rule! I have trained myself to open the seeing eye, and nature speaks to me in tones which grow with each year of my life more entrancing, more wonderful, because I myself am growing greater inside. My understanding is broadening and deepening. The whispering of the trees, the susurrus of the leaves and their rustling, the slow boom of the waves on the shingle of the shore, the chirp of the cricket, the cooing of the dove, the sound of a human voice — strident though oft it is — contain marvels for me. I recognize my kinship with all that is; I realize that I am but one element in a most marvelous mosaic of life in which I am inseparably bound, and that even as the vision grows it becomes ever more beautiful and sublime; and I know, I know that the vision sublime is there, and I strive to see it ever more clearly.

No wonder that the old Greek philosopher Pythagoras spoke of some people whom he called the living dead — alive in their bodies indeed but asleep in their souls, without vision nobly to see, unconscious of the cosmic stream flowing through their own hearts. But when that inner something within you is awakened, once the Buddhic splendor, as theosophists say, begins to shine within you, however feebly in your own mind and heart, once

you become conscious of your oneness with the cosmic life and intelligence, then you will obtain all that I have spoken of, because the god within you is beginning to act.

The next question that I have received for answer is the following:

It is asserted that The Theosophical Society is the one channel through which pure theosophy flows. It seems that other theosophical organizations make a similar claim. Many orthodox churches claim for themselves that their particular church is the chosen vehicle that pure Christianity functions through. This tends to bewilder the student and layman.

In the floral kingdom does the rose claim priority over the obscure violet, the pugnacious thistle, and other "lesser breeds without the law," or is it superbly and fragrantly indifferent about it? Is it beautiful by being what it is?

Yes! Its own beauty is enough. But this questioner does not state his question properly. The Theosophical Society through its succession of Leaders never has claimed that it is the only vehicle on this earth through which pure theosophy ever has flowed. On the contrary, our teaching is very clear that any genuine Theosophical Society, giving the message of our Masters of Wisdom and Compassion, and indeed, any organization not bearing the name theosophical which nevertheless teaches any genuine Theosophical doctrine, is a vehicle for a pure flowing of the theosophical truth. That is what I have often said myself. But do you find pure theosophy everywhere? I am positively forced to say in sheer honesty that I doubt it. I leave the decision with you.

Theosophists throw no bricks at other people. I never cast mud at any other society. I think that it is a contemptible thing to do. It is true that there are today theosophical societies which do not

teach all the original theosophical doctrines, even in a more developed and elaborate form, but actually do frequently introduce new ideas that are contrary to those original age-old theosophical teachings. But these societies are of course entitled to do that, if it pleases them thus to qualify and change their theosophical standing; and if the members of those theosophical societies like this and prefer it to the archaic traditions, I feel that they have at least a right to take their place in the sun — most emphatically so!

But when you ask a member of The Theosophical Society who knows its history — for instance, should you ask me, were you to ask me — my private opinion about it all, then I can only tell you that our chief happiness is in having continued from the first in unbroken succession and without change — which does not prevent a more elaborate and developed presentation — the teachings of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion, whose messenger to the modern Occidental world, H.P.B., brought the principles of those teachings to us. I do not condemn those who differ from those teachings, but I do not accept them; that is my position and I believe it to be also the position of the vast majority of the members of The Theosophical Society. Those who differ from us have a perfect right to their place in the sun; they have a right to teach and to work, as long as they are sincere. Their sincerity and impersonality are the tests for gaining my respect, and if they have these they will win that respect. And if I can, I sincerely desire to work with them.

I long — and it is the dream and ideal of my heart — to bring back into union and indeed into reunion every society calling itself theosophical, and every member of every society who calls himself theosophical or his society theosophical. Let them retain their own societies; let them be loyal and true to their own president or teacher, or their chief officer by whatever title he



may be called. If they are honest and true and believe that they have truth, they have my respect, although I may not be able to accept their teachings as being theosophical. But that is my affair; and what I here say as regarding my own stand in this matter applies equally to every member of The Theosophical Society, which I have the honor to lead. You have never heard a true theosophist throw mud, throw dirt, or speak in unjust and untruthful terms of any other human being. But that does not prevent us from studying the beliefs of other men and from expressing the results of our study, if such should seem good to us, in speech and in print. That may be our duty.

No, I have never said, nor has any one of my predecessors ever said, that The Theosophical Society is the only channel on earth through which the great Masters of Wisdom and Compassion work. That would be a preposterous claim. They work everywhere, where there is a chance to enlighten their fellow men, to help, to give light and truth. Our theosophical ideal is the glorious sun shedding its life-giving rays on all, nor does that sun look to the color of the skin upon which its rays fall, nor does it question what another's belief is, or where the individual was born or what his history was last year or a hundred years ago, or in the last incarnation, or in ten incarnations ago.

But all this does not mean that theosophists do not cling strongly to our own sublime theosophical teaching. It does not mean that we vacillate in principles which to us are true. On matters of principle we are adamant; but it is the adamant hardness of the diamond-soul — to use an ancient mystical expression — indifferent to its own woes, but hungering to alleviate the sorrows and troubles of others; hard as adamant for itself but tender to those who need help, reflecting in its crystal bosom every genuine ray of light arising in another human heart.

In all your Sunday lectures I hear you stressing *love*. To love means to help others, but I find a vast multitude who do not want to be helped, who prefer to drag their noses in the dust no matter how often one lifts and points them to the sun. I have observed men aiding unfortunate, disturbed fellows only to find their efforts balked by lack of initiative on the part of those being aided. Do you theosophists never become love-weary because of the hopelessness of your efforts?

What a gloomy picture! I tell you that it is not hopeless! It is the most hopeful thing that I know of. It is the most productive! If this kind questioner had ever felt his (or her) heart stirred by love there never would be any question of becoming love-weary! Love is too beautiful, too penetrating; it remakes the whole being; it is immortal; it never dies; it is all-forgiving, full of charity, never weary, for it is the very divine energy which holds the universe in its place and all things in order.

To love means to be harmonious, to fit in properly with all other things. Love-weary? Why, don't you know that human beings simply cannot resist love? — impersonal love, especially. Personal love is but a reflection of the divine love, of the impersonal love; and personal love is fallible, because the ray is so feeble. But once the soul is illuminated with love's holy splendor, then you live. Love-weary? Merciful gods!

There is something beautiful about a human heart which can give itself without thought of recompense or of the pain that the giving temporarily may cause the giver. Just think of it. Love is peace; love is harmony; love is self-forgetfulness; love is strength; it is power; it is vision; it is evolution. Its power so expands the inner nature that slowly you become sympathetic, because you become at one with the entire home-universe in which you live and move and have your being; and because it is harmony itself, and

because it is of the very essence of the core of the Universe, you become at one with the divinity in the heart of all things. Think of what that picture means.

Love is not weak. Love is not mawkish sentimentality. Love sometimes can be severe and stern, just because it is true love. Love is ever gentle in its sternness — sometimes stern when most forgiving and gentle. Impersonal love is divine. It illuminates the heart; it broadens the mind; it fills the soul with a sense of oneness with all that is; so that you could no more injure a fellow creature than you could do a wrong deliberately and willfully to some thing, or to the individual, that personally you love best on earth.

Love is mighty. It is the greatest thing in human life, because it is the greatest thing in the life of the gods, of which human life is but a poor and inadequate reflection. No! I never become love-weary. The more I love the more does my love grow, because the more expanded my nature becomes. I have no doubt that if I loved personally, for me, for mine, for myself: then I can tell you that within a short time I would doubtless grow weary of it. I would then hate myself.

But real love, impersonal love, runs in the other direction. The whole nature pours out its glorious stream of sympathy for all that is. Life becomes ennobled from the very beginning, and you see before you, even on those distant horizons of the future, of which I have so often spoken to you, you see there in the distance, complete understanding of everything, with everything, and a reunion of all entities and things into one consciousness, wherein hatred, strife, disunion, misunderstanding, will have vanished away.

You can have this feeling even now. It is in you. It is a part of you. Cultivate it. Be the god, at least in some small degree, which you

are in your inmost part, and let the divine splendor pour forth.

There is such an infinite variety of things ranging from the bewilderingly beautiful to the grotesquely ugly, all intensely interesting to contemplate and study, *without*, that I find little or no inclination to look *within*. What shall I do? There is a ray of hope in the fact that good music strikes a responsive chord *within*. Is this latter a good beginning?

And then a quotation:

"What a man really has, is what is in him. What is outside of him, is a matter of minor importance."

And then a question:

Is *anything* of minor importance?

Many things are; many things are less important than other things, but only relatively so. Yes, this is a typical question emanating from a broad-minded, a big-hearted Occidental. Alas, such questions arise precisely because in the Occident for centuries and centuries and centuries past, all the teaching has been to look without, instead of looking within and then studying the without. It is thus that men have lost themselves. The averaged man in the Occident hears almost with wonder the teaching so familiar to the ages of the past and to the entire human race, that everything of value is within you. Your understanding is within you, your heart is within you, and the forces of the universe.

You could not understand, you could not feel, if you had them not within. Indeed, you would not even be. Isn't it obvious that the first thing for a man to study is himself, to study what he is within, and that there can be nothing so fascinatingly interesting and so interestingly fascinating as the study of the god within

you?

"What shall I do?" What a pathetic question! Oh, my comrade and brother, have you never loved? Have you never given yourself unquestioningly, without thought of recompense or results? Given yourself to some noble work, to some big ideal? If you have not, you have the first lesson of life to learn. Such is the way to begin the study of the self: learn to forgive what you dislike within others. Learn to love. Then all the divine arcana of your inner being will become manifest unto what hitherto has been so unseeing or uncomprehending — your own imperfectly developed brain-mind and psychical nature. You will then feel the divine working within your own breast, and you will have neither peace nor rest until you can become allied more and more and ever more with this wonder within your heart.

That is the way by which to study the self. Give yourself. Learn to forgive. In doing so you will have your hands full; you will be meeting yourself at every turn, at every corner. And you will require all the manhood in you. But oh, the rewards — they cannot be told, so great are they! And learn to love, because when once you love impersonally, without thought of reward, loving beauty for love's sake, loving harmony and justice for love's sake, not for your own, you will come to know yourself, for the heart of the heart of you is divine love.

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[Vol 1, No 50](#)  
[Contents](#)

No. 50 (August 15, 1930)

## QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK

(Lecture, delivered June 8, 1930)

CONTENTS: All real teaching is a call to awaken. — Truth needs no embroidery. — The present wave of psychism perilous to human sanity. The fate of early Christianity. Psychism is not imagination. — Are ethics mere conventions? — Does frequent repetition of a truth become tiresome? — Objections to the theosophical policy of unity based on hearsay and misunderstandings. — Are the doors of The Theosophical Society open to all? There are no backstair methods. — Theosophically speaking, exactly what is universal brotherhood? — May the imagination be cultivated, and if so, through what agents? Don't confuse imagination and fantasy. — What is karma? — What is reincarnation. — Noble verses from the *Dhammapada*, a scripture of the Buddhists. — Man is his own self-maker.

This message of theosophy, this sublime series of doctrines, is the ancient wisdom-religion of the race, of humanity — not the fruit of lucubrations conducted in the light of the midnight oil, not the fruitage of the excogitations of philosophers or scientists or dogmatic religionists, but a formulation in human language of what the great seers and sages of the race have seen, who sent their seeing, visioning spirit behind the veil of the outward seeming, and seeing were enabled to understand, and understanding to interpret, and interpreting to bring truth to their fellow men.

It is out of this foundation of truth, setting forth the nature, structure, and operations of the wonderful universe in which we

live and move and have our being, that the teachings today called theosophy arise. Nothing that any theosophical teacher could say out of his own mind could add one iota to this foundation. All that a theosophical lecturer, or theosophical interpreter, can do, is to give you a vision, an insight, into that which his mind and will are attempting to set forth, and this is done along the waves of thought, running into your minds. Is not all teaching conducted in this way? Is not all real teaching, after all, an appeal, a call, to that in you to awaken which cognizes, recognizes, and then knows?

The appeal, therefore, in the ultimate, is a statement addressed to the inner god in each one of you, for each one of you is a feeble manifestation of a divinity dwelling at the core of the core of you: and therefore such an appeal is to this inner god to come forth in human lives, to stand forth, and to show its greatness. The mystical Christians of the Occident call this inner god, the immanent Christos; the Buddhists, as I have so often pointed out to you, speak of it as the inner Buddha; in other religions the same thought is expressed in divers ways; but always is the truth the same, always is the meaning identic, in whatever form or phrasing by which the message may be conveyed. Always it is the same appeal. "Man, know thyself," said the ancient oracle at Delphi in Greece: for if you know your inner self, if you become at one with the god within you, you become thereby allied with the very heart of the universe, become at one with the spiritual-divine energies, powers, substances, of which you are, each one of you, an inseparable part; for verily, in holy truth, every man and woman is a god manifesting through an imperfect human tabernacle.

That inner divinity is the source, the fountain, the origin, of all things that make men truly men: that make men great and grand and noble, that give men understanding, that give men knowledge, that give men compassion, that give men love, that

give men peace. What bliss it is to recognize one's kinship with all that is; to feel and to understand, and in feeling and in understanding thereby to act in accordance with the realization that one is akin to the gods who guide and control the boundless universe.

So anything that any speaker could add to these marvelous thoughts, so uplifting and so inspiring, would be like adding meretricious ornament to the beauty of a flower. The duty of a theosophical teacher, of a theosophical lecturer, is to tell truth, without any embroidery, without any ornament, simply setting forth as best he can and may that with which his own soul is permeated and filled.

It does not matter in what language the lecturer may speak; it matters not at all in what time he may live or have lived. You will find, if you examine the foundations of all the great world religions and world philosophies, that the founders of these all taught one essential truth which in fundamentals is identic in all parts of the world.

Your Occidental world in particular needs this message badly, very badly indeed. Occidentals are heart-hungry for truth, for something that will withstand searching investigation: something that will not merely survive the test, but will by that very investigation, have the beclouding veils of mere human opinion stripped off, so that divine, holy truth shall stand revealed. The duty of every theosophical teacher is to lift at least a corner of the veil of Isis, so that the divinity underneath that veil may send forth into human consciousness its supernal light.

To some minds the light of this divinity is blinding. Such minds are not strong enough to bear its transcendent beauty and splendor; and that is usually the case in the Occident today, so that our theosophical teachings have had to be given forth in



more or less simple form, in forms easily understood, so as not to overtax the untrained mentality of Occidentals.

There is a great and impending danger to human sanity in the Occident today. Do you know what it is? It is the danger of psychism — psychism, so popular because misunderstood. It is the same peril that invaded early Christianity and finally overcame it, so that belief in miracle and dogma succeeded the teaching of holy truth emanating from the great avatara Jesus later called the Christos.

The danger in psychism is not that it is an event in the psychological history of mankind, and thereby merits a certain amount of study. That is not the danger. Study is always proper. Study of it is not the danger. But the danger is this: that unless you have the foundation doctrines, in other words the key to it all, through ignorance your attention is distracted away from spiritual things to the illusions of the lower mentality, to the intermediate or psychical nature, and thus the glorious sun of the spirit is lost sight of, for you then see but the murks of the befogging brain-mind.

There is a wave of psychism passing over the Occident today which bears in its train the possibility of the loss of human souls — the loss of one incarnation at least, in which those souls might have learned more, and might have grown into greater, nobler, beings more helpful to their fellows. Men's attention is being drawn to these things of psychical range which all die when the body dies, which have no essential permanence, which tell you no fundamental truths, which often merely captivate the fancy — which is not the same as the imagination, for true imagination is a spiritual faculty.

It is the great truths of the spirit which men should study, as embodied in the age-old doctrines which represent in human

language the operations, structure, and foundations of the great Mother, nature, the source of us all.

These are the doctrines or teachings which it is the duty of a theosophical teacher to set forth to you; whereas it is the dangers lying inherent in the psychical realms against which the great Masters of Wisdom and Compassion have spoken, and in no uncertain terms: Beware of the false lights of maya, of illusion! — seductive, attractive, often captivating because misunderstood. These lights are like the moonlight working its unholy magic at night. On the other hand, turn to the sunlight of the spirit within you. Learn eternal truth which varies never from age to age. Let your heart expand with the divine energies latent within it: love, compassion, pity, understanding of others, kindness, the vision of beauty in the light of love, and of love in the light of the beauty that itself emanates.

Learn to forgive, for forgiveness is sublime. Learn to love, for to love is divine. Love is the very cement of the universe, holding things in orderly sequences, keeping things together, and providing the great fundamental motivating force which in men expresses itself as noble and exalted manhood, thus producing noble civilizations.

I tell you that ethics, morals, are not mere conventions. They are founded in the very symmetry and harmony of the universe, and that symmetry and that harmony are the outflowings of love — at least that which human beings call impersonal love because they have no other name for it; and in human hearts it expresses itself as love. Essentially it is harmony, it is beauty, it is order, it is peace.

I refer to these matters so often during the course of my Sunday afternoon lectures that sometimes the idea has come to me: I wonder if I am stressing these thoughts too frequently and too

strongly? Do I tire my audiences by repeating things which are in themselves beautiful and grand? I cannot believe it. A good thing will bear repetition, and repetition is one of the best ways by which to drive truths home. Do I weigh upon these sublime thoughts too heavily? Do I speak too long about them? That too I doubt. At any rate my own feeling is that before I have the right to touch upon more recondite matters of the philosophy, it is my duty to lay the foundations in general principles of thought, and these general principles, simple as they are, are not readily and easily expressible in a few short sentences. It is by repetition that they become fixed in the mind and prepare that mind to receive the mental superstructure of detail.

A friend sent in to me this morning a little story. I am going to read to you this little story. It is as follows:

A clergyman was questioning his Sunday School concerning the story of Eutychus, the young man who, listening to the preaching of the Apostle Paul, fell asleep, and falling out of a window was taken up dead.

"What do we learn from this solemn event?" asked the clergyman. The reply came from a little girl: "Please, sir, clergymen should learn not to preach such long sermons."

I now come to the questions which I have to answer this afternoon, and the first one is the following:

It seems to me, as an interested observer of what is going on in the theosophic world today, that the objections that some evidently earnest and sincere workers for theosophy urge against your policy of union of *all* members of The Theosophical Society, who are true to the original program of its founders, are due to vague impressions, misunderstandings, unwarranted inferences, surmises, and

hearsay. Am I not right?

Yes, the questioner is right; but the existence of these objections against my hope of union is not surprising. I do not expect people to understand all that I have in my mind, nor would you expect everyone to know all that you believe or work for. I do not wear my heart on my sleeve, nor do you. If I saw a man so think and act that, as the saying goes, he exposed his heart on his sleeve, I think that I should be a little suspicious of it all. I might be inclined to suppose that he is merely an actor, clothed with the habiliments of the stage and one who wants to make an impression on his audience by wearing on his arm some flaunting signal of policy.

I certainly do not tell all that I think. I most emphatically do not say all that I mean. But whatever I do say is truth, and comes from my heart. Consequently, how can anyone doing as I do not be misunderstood? How can anyone be completely understood, anyone who is obliged, as every real Leader is, to keep a great deal of his heart's hope behind the veil of privacy? But what I have said has been true, and what I say and what I will say will be true also.

I yearn, I long, for the day when the Theosophical Movement no longer will be split up into different and differing bodies, alas! but will become one spiritual brotherhood in actuality and not merely in name. It is shameful that a movement founded to preach brotherhood, to teach it, to live it, to enact it, should present to the world an example of a house divided against itself; and the sooner we theosophists recognize this truth and try to correct any such existing fault, the better for us.

My invitation to other theosophists or theosophical Societies is a challenge to those who in their hearts feel as I do. How beautiful a thing it is for brothers to dwell together in peace and unity! Can

we not forget superficial differences, overlook the differences and mistakes of the past, and stand shoulder to shoulder, hand in hand, and go forwards towards that mystical East, on the mountains of which you can even now see the light of the new era, of the new sun?

Have the vision; for those who lack it, sooner or later will regret its lack — and I do not say this with anything akin to unkindness in my heart: those who cannot see what is coming, who lack vision, who try to place themselves in the path of the on-coming wheel of destiny, will find themselves in the rear, broken, forgotten mayhap, but in any case with hearts straining under the agony of the realization of a great and high chance, seen, had — and refused!

I do not expect the members of other Theosophical Societies to come to me and throw themselves on the ground at my feet and say: "I am going to come over to you. I want what you can give to me. Your Theosophical Society is the only one that teaches truth. I am going to turn against my Leader, against my President, against those I love in the Society in which I first saw the gleams of theosophic light."

I would say to such a one: "Stand up! If you come to me in all earnestness of heart and sincerity of purpose because your instinct for more light is not satisfied, then you can join us if you will and we shall be glad to receive you; but if you come to us merely because your feelings have been ruffled in your own Society and your heart is still in your own Society, then I would say to you: 'Return to those to whom you belong.' "

The truth of the matter is: the doors of The Theosophical Society are open to anyone; and anyone may become a Fellow if he believes in the principle of universal brotherhood, and whether he is a member of some other Theosophical Society or not. This

seems clear enough. Anyone can join us who accepts the only prerequisite, which is a belief in universal brotherhood; and it matters nothing to me to what other Theosophical Society he may belong. But I want him to come to us with a full and sincere heart.

Furthermore, those who have long since left other Theosophical Societies and are, spiritually speaking, homeless and wanderers, to them likewise the doors of The Theosophical Society are open and we will gladly welcome them as collaborators in our sublime work. Such as these last need our help and they can help us. They are not traitors or hypocrites.

As to traitors and hypocrites: I want no traitors and hypocrites in The Theosophical Society. I want true-hearted men, men who will not abandon what they believe to be right and true. My appeal is to the human heart, to the human soul, and I shall win, for nothing can withstand the all-penetrating power of almighty love, of sympathy, of kindness, of utter sincerity, of longing for peace, unity, and brotherhood. Those who have no conception of this I feel should remain in their own Theosophical Societies.

Nevertheless, let us all work together. That is the first step on the path. Then — and this I will frankly say — Yes, I do want all theosophists to join us. If they come aright and in the proper spirit they will be very welcome. I want all true and noble hearts in The Theosophical Society. Our Constitution has no barriers against any true-hearted man. It bars none. We theosophists have no dogmas. We are searchers of and learners for more truth, and students of truth.

As for me, in my office I am not a dictator, I am not a tyrant, I am not an autocrat. I am simply a man who is loved by those who know me. I want to see the time when the gods and the blessed Masters of Wisdom and Compassion bring it around in the karmic cyclic sequence of events when there will be but one

Theosophical Society of the world.

But I never act unfairly. I use no backstair methods. My appeal is straight from my heart, to the heart of others, and I have said to all: Here is my hand. Take it. Love will win, and sincerity and pity are its handmaidens. Oh, how blessed a thing it is for men to dwell together in peace and unity! I would that I might live a thousand years in the depths of the most awful hell, if by my own personal suffering and agony I could bring the light that I have, and the love with which my heart is filled, into the hearts and lives of my fellows!

Do you not know the wondrous story of the buddhas of compassion, of the holy order of the Buddhas of Compassion, who reach a point in their own evolution when they renounce, give up, resign, all further personal advancement for the time being; who turn around on the evolutionary pathway so to say, and remain in the realms of illusion and pain, on our earth for instance, in order to help their less progressed fellows? There indeed we see compassion sublime. Theosophists are taught that this is an ideal towards which we all should aspire. However imperfect we may be, however feeble our efforts for self-improvement, nevertheless if our hearts are pure and our minds are earnest, our *will* will be adamant in its strength, and we shall move steadily forward in the direction of peace and brotherhood.

To bring peace to men, to give them hope, to give them light, to show them the way out of the intricate maze of material existence, to bring back to one's fellow men the knowledge of their own essential divinity as a reality, and not as a mere poetic phrase, but as a real thing — oh! is not that a sublime work? I break hearts of stone; and one of my duties is to smash prejudices imprisoning the souls of my fellows. Every true-hearted

theosophical lecturer, student, teacher, leader, has that duty. But it must be done with the utmost kindness, with the utmost sympathy, with an understanding heart seeing and pitying others' difficulties. Let us not forget that.

The corner-stone of theosophy is universal brotherhood. What is the theosophical definition of brotherhood? Of what does it consist?

In the first place, brotherhood is not a mere political system in the theosophical view. It is a fact, an actuality, of great n

nature; and theosophists understand it to mean the fundamental and therefore intrinsic unity of everything that is, for all entities and things are rooted in the one life-spirit, or spirit-life, all issuing from the one great central source of being; therefore one life flows through all, one intelligence manifests everywhere in thinking entities and in various degrees and after different manners, according to the individualities of the ones who express it: one Cosmic Life fundamental, one cosmic substance fundamental, one cosmic understanding or mind fundamental. For the world is filled full with gods, and the human host is but one minor example on this small earth of ours, of the principle and nature of hierarchical existence.

The universe is composite of vast and innumerable hierarchies of spiritual beings whom I call gods, existing in various evolutionary stages — high, intermediate, low — just as men are; and these very beings not only infill, inspire, invigorate, but guide, the universe and all other universes outside the frontiers and boundaries of our own home-universe.

Do you realize that every time you put your hand on a human being, you are touching the garment of a god? That statement is not mere poetry; it is an actual fact of being. Make an appeal to



that god within your fellow man. If men can be swayed by an appeal to beastly and ignoble passions, they can be swayed far more easily by an appeal to the spiritual energies and forces within them, for their understanding is spiritual. Comprehension is a spiritual faculty. And what human heart has ever resisted love?

Brotherhood is, because it is the essential oneness of all that is — all things, all beings everywhere — and is simply another way of saying that the cosmic life, which for purposes of convenience we call the one life, is really composed of innumerable hierarchies, armies, multitudes, of spiritual beings, in all-various grades of evolutionary development; and these hierarchies themselves exist in spheres and realms which are high, intermediate, and low. These stages of existence are without beginning and have no conceivable end; and this is the pathway of growth, of evolution, for every being and thing that is.

Growth is beginningless and endless; and man for instance, in his present state on this earth, in his present evolutionary stage, is passing but a short period of time on this globe of ours, before going onwards to greater heights. What a picture of splendor and hope!

Here is a question of another kind.

The following are some questions that have long puzzled me:

1. Is smoking cigarettes a good or a bad habit?

Do you smoke? I do, but I don't smoke too much. Therefore I think that smoking is a good habit — for me! It might be a bad habit for someone else. I think that I will refuse to answer this question, because if I do answer it in detail, I should be sure to step on somebody's sensitive toes, and I don't want to do that. I really think that it is enough to say that "it all depends." If you smoke

moderately and don't overdo it, and especially don't do it if you have too much of an appetite for it, then probably it is not a "bad habit." You might do worse, a great deal worse, than smoking a cigarette occasionally; but I know that if I gave even a diplomatic answer like this is, and gentle as this is, some people would not like the answer. No, I don't think that smoking in moderation is a bad habit for some people. "It all depends!"

Question 2. Why does it seem that leaders, reformers, or teachers, of a "real life," have such bad karma? A man of the street seems to encounter less.

Isn't it presuming a little bit to say that those who love their fellow men — I am now speaking of the real leaders and reformers, not of busybodies and of mischief makers, but of those who really long to help others, and who do it — don't you think that it is presuming a little bit to say that they always have bad karma, *i. e.*, what the man in the street would call bad luck? I think so.

This is what really happens in the cases of outstanding human characters: those who have high and noble ideas are so swayed by them, so charmed by their intrinsic beauty, that their lives are ennobled, therefore changed, therefore strengthened; and they act like strong men. Acting like strong men, the reaction against them is strong. Some people say that they are trouble makers. Isn't that what was said of Jesus, the Syrian avatara? Is not that what was said of the greatest Initiate on earth in recent times — Gautama the Buddha? Isn't that what is said of every proponent of truth even in minor degree — of every man who has stood for liberty of thought and for liberty of souls? Have they not, most of them at least, been called trouble makers, mischief makers — persecuted, chased, hunted, derided, oft ignored (happy fate!), and sometimes foully done to death?

Whereas the man in the street — he is a good fellow, perhaps; but often he belongs to the class that the great Greek philosopher, Pythagoras, called the living dead — living in the body, but dead to all the nobler and higher parts of his being. Naturally a man like that won't irritate anybody in particular. His path is an easy one. So is that of a cow! Give me a man!

Even a man like the Christian Church Father Athanasius, even a man of that type, bigoted and mistaken as he was, can be looked upon as a strong and sincere character, for he had the manhood to say: *Ego Athanasius contra mundum* — I, Athanasius, am against the world! A man who can face the crystallized and bigoted notions of the world of his day boldly and without fear evidences true manhood, whatever we may think of his grotesque and mistaken notions; and every great man in similar circumstances has said the same.

Therefore perhaps you now see why the man on the street has an easy time, has much less to struggle against than the great and outstanding characters of history. He does not amount to much, he does not count for much; and people simply leave him alone. But the men who move things, who set things going, who are the thinkers and disturbers of smug notions and crystallized thoughts — such men as these disturb people, irritate people, as I do sometimes!

At any rate, while the statement in the question I believe to be wrong, nevertheless so far as I am concerned, I prefer to undergo the difficult karma of strong and virile manhood, even if men call such karma difficult and unfortunate, if in doing my duty I can do it manfully and have my conscience clean and free of all stain, and my heart empty of all guile. When the spirit works within a man, then he acts, and acts strongly; and usually it will be a long time, and history shows it, before other men understand him and

leave him in peace.

The next question is the following:

In what manner does the imagination act as a connecting link between the mind and the soul? Is it a positive state — a wire along which the current passes — or may it act as a stimulant in itself, stirring mind and creating a passage through mind for the spiritual concept? May it be cultivated? Through what agents?

Is there any faculty that man possesses that cannot be cultivated, evolved, drawn out, increased? Of course imagination can be cultivated. Do you know what imagination is? This question is based on a statement in *The Wine of Life*, written by Katherine Tingley, my great-hearted predecessor, who wrote of imagination as being "the bridge between the mind and the soul," meaning by these words the brain-mind of the ordinary physical man on the one hand and the spiritual soul on the other hand, which spiritual soul is the garment of the divinity within, the inner god.

What is, then, imagination? Imagination, in the first place, is vision. It is therefore called the image-making faculty, the ability to see pictorially things as they are. In one of its phases it is also the faculty of seeing into the future. It is visioning; and the brain-mind translates these visions as images, pictures, and therefore men give to the faculty a name in accordance with the product: imagination, image-making. Imagination is therefore vision, and this vision is a spiritual quality, it is a spiritual faculty.

Don't confuse imagination with what the divine Plato called the fantasy. Fantasy is, as it were, the mere distorted reflection of vision, somewhat as the deceptive rays of the moonlight, seen in still water, give you a fantastic picture of the real thing. Such is fantasy. Whereas imagination, properly called spiritual

imagination, is vision, which the brain-mind images or translates as pictures. Thus, then, this vision of reality, of the truths of the spirit, of the heart divine of things — your own inmost — is a "bridge" between the divinity itself within you and the brain-mind of you, which brain-mind is the mentality of the ordinary man.

Through what agents may the imagination be cultivated? Through love, aspiration, sympathy, will: these four go together. Love opens your nature; its power is expansive. Sympathy enables you to feel with others, with other things; your being vibrates consonantly with the vibrations of other beings and entities, and this is sympathy. Aspiration is a reaching upwards to higher realms; and will resides in the feeling, the faculty, the sense of knowledge, expressing itself positively in the conception: I know.

The man thereafter becomes immovable. Actually as an energy, will is a current of spiritual force streaming from the god within down into the physical brain-mind; and naturally, therefore, there are many varieties of will; because there are many varieties of brain-mind which color and sometimes discolor the stream; but I have given you the fundamental idea.

Of course the imagination can be cultivated; and oh! how wonderful are the rewards of that cultivation, for it eventuates in the vision sublime!

As a French mystic of the Middle Ages, Bernard of Clairvaux, once said: "Empty all personality out of yourself." In doing so you are merely casting aside the veils and the garments of your interior constitution which blind you and becloud your spiritual being, and hide the inner splendor. Empty all personal things out of yourself: what is left is the Real; and when the distracting influences of all these personal thoughts and imaginings in the

mind are emptied out, as Bernard of Clairvaux said, then you become simple with the divine simplicity of the god within you. All great things are simple; all things of matter are complex; and the difficulty in obtaining sheer truth is not that truth is complicated, but that it is so sublimely simple that our complicated brain-minds have difficulty in grasping it and holding it, and making it a part of us — in other words, retaining as a part of itself the splendor from within.

You cannot know truth except with the knower; you cannot understand anything outside of you except with and by and through the understander within you; and yet what is outside of you is likewise within you, for you are an inseparable part of the Universe, of which you are a child. Go, therefore, within; follow the pathway within. Ascend along the Rising Arc and join the gods, your kin. You can do it. Every normal human being can follow that pathway, if he has the spiritual imagination to vision it, the love to follow it, the aspiration to go higher, sympathy with it, and the will to hold to it; and this pathway leads to the Heart of the Universe — which is within yourself.

Who is the heart of the universe? You, in your innermost divine essence. *Aham asmi parabrahma*, says the Hindu: I am the Boundless!

I have been attending some of your Temple services and have heard you speak several times of reincarnation and karma. They are interesting subjects and seem to solve some of life's problems, at least as far as I understand them. Will you please give the theosophical teaching of: What is karma? What is reincarnation?

These two questions provide subjects for a week's talk, and this kind friend supposes that in a few moments of time, in an afternoon devoted to answering many other questions, I can set

forth two of the fundamental operations of nature insofar as humanity and other equivalent entities are concerned!

Karma is a Sanskrit word. Literally translated it means "act," "action"; but this Sanskrit word is a technical term, and therefore do not let your understanding dwell too long on a mere technical word. It means far more than a mere word. It signifies a doctrine, and the doctrine is this: Every self-conscious entity has free will, because the inmost of the inmost of the inmost of itself is rooted in the divine. It uses this free will in action, which is karma, and because the universe is filled with vast hierarchies, multitudes, armies, of other beings, acting in identical fashion, there is therefore a consequent reaction upon the actor, for your action is thrown back upon you so to speak by these other entities, and this originating act of the actor and the reaction of nature when combined as they always are, produce effects which theosophists call by the technical term karma.

Karma means — and now I explain it — the teaching of the law of consequences: that every action is a cause which produces an effect, which effect instantly becomes another cause which produces its effect, and this second effect instantly becomes another cause: this series of actions and reactions thus producing a chain of causation which is beginningless and endless.

Some people call the law of karma, as they express it, the law of cause and effect. That definition is descriptive, and is an imperfect way of phrasing the facts. I think that you will understand the doctrine more clearly if I call it, as I often do, the doctrine of consequences, meaning that whatever you do has a consequence or result. You cannot think, you cannot move, you cannot act, without changing things in your life — things spiritual, things astral, things physical, things mental, all kinds of things, things on all planes — because your apparatus of

consciousness, your inner constitution, runs through all the realms of nature. Whatever you do, because it is preceded by a thought, energized by your will, produces a result which reacts upon you, immediately or at a later day. Whatever you think or do or feel produces a consequence, and sooner or later that consequence will react upon you. You originated it, you did the act, you caused the happiness or misery of yourself or others, and nature reacts upon you and in turn brings to you happiness or misery — to yourself or to others, and usually to both.

"What is reincarnation?" It is the working of the law of karma so far as human beings are concerned, and this working consists in the rebirth of the acting and thinking entity into other human bodies. These rebirths are brought about by your karma, by the consequences of preceding thoughts and feelings and acts, thus producing in each human being his own individual chain of causation consisting of cause and effect, effect and cause, cause and effect, effect and cause, and extending over the so-called abyss that men in their ignorance call the oblivion of death.

Nature makes no mistakes; and as man is a part of spiritual and astral and physical nature, therefore whatever happens to man happens strictly according to natural law. You came here to earth because you are bound into this chain of causation of which you yourself are the producer. You made yourself to be in former lives what now you are; and what you now are thinking and doing and feeling will make yourself to be what in after lives, lives in the future on earth, you then will be. Karma and reincarnation are inseparably combined together and are really two aspects of one thing, like the two sides of a hand, the two sides of a coin.

In the *Dhammapada*, a wonderful scripture of the Buddhists, the nature and condition of karma is expressed very beautifully, in



the four or five opening verses of this scripture which I wrote down for you this morning. These verses contain in brief the whole essential teaching of what karma is — indeed, both of karma and of reincarnation.

1. All that we are is the consequence of what we have thought. It is based on our thoughts. It is all derived from our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with a thought of evil, suffering follows him, exactly as the wheel follows the foot of the ox that draws the cart.

2. All that we are is the consequence of what we have thought. It is based on our thoughts; it is derived from our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with an innocent and pure thought, happiness follows him, exactly like a shadow that never leaves him.

3. "He treated me badly; he struck me; he overcame me; he robbed me" — in those who cultivate such feelings hate will never cease.

4. "He treated me badly; he struck me; he overcame me; he robbed me" — in those who do not cultivate such thoughts, hatred will die.

5. For hate never is overcome by hate at any time. Hate passes away through love. This is the ancient rule.

Such is also our theosophical teaching. This teaching is sublimely instructive and illuminating; and how greatly it dignifies man! It shows man to be his own self-maker. It shows him the pathway of evolution as his own creation, as his own production; for he himself is the path of evolution that he follows; and this is what Jesus the Syrian avatara meant when he said: I am the Path, the Way, the Life. Every great seer and sage necessarily teaches the same thing; and of every entity and thing in the universe can the

same be said. You are your own path; and you can consciously ally yourself with the gods who guide and inspire the universe, if you will. Or, if ye so will, contrariwise ye can go down into what the ancient Mysteries called the bottomless pit.

Choose therefore your own pathway and may the immortal gods and your own inner divinity inspire you to choose the upward way. Love is the first step on this upward way. It is all intermediate steps and it is the last, if indeed there be a last. Love is also the last and highest initiation on earth, and here I mean impersonal love, for such love is divine. Forgiveness is the movement of the heart which will lead you to make that first step; and therefore I say: Learn to forgive, for it is sublime; learn to love, for it is divine!

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[Vol 1, No 51](#)  
[Contents](#)

No. 51 (August 19, 1930)

## QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK

(Lecture delivered June 15, 1930)

CONTENTS: Does the average theosophical lecturer realize his ethical responsibility? Ethics are not a mere convention. — Is every man a spiritual law unto himself? Is the world a cosmic anarchy? — Dr. de Purucker answers the question: "Who sent you, and by whom were you taught?"— Sure tests of a true theosophical messenger. — Each one of us is the way and the light. — Theosophical belief in world teachers based on a profound and mysterious doctrine. The two classes of world teachers explained. The case of H. P. Blavatsky. — Dr. Robert A. Millikan and cosmic rays. — The "superstition" of the ancients has become the scientific teaching of today. — Professor Eddington and mind-stuff. — An explanation of universal cycles. — Where theosophy and ultramodern science meet. — The true theosophist. Self-forgetfulness leads to the self divine.

Does a bringer of a great message stand in the light which he tries to give to others — not as a hindrance to that light, do I mean, but does he realize the full purport of what he himself is saying, throwing his thoughts through words into the hearts and minds of his fellow human beings? I mean, does the average theosophical teacher and lecturer realize the heavy responsibility that lies upon him for the ideas and ideals that he gives to others, thereby changing the current of their thoughts, consequently molding their characters, and hence altering their destiny?

This is indeed a heavy responsibility; and I will tell you frankly that sometimes I have marveled at the courage — shall I call it

courage, or perhaps is it not rather ignorance, the blindness, the audacity — of some whom I have heard speak, telling tales of what they thought were the teachings of the wisdom religion, and utterly incognizant, apparently, of the effect that what they say might have upon the characters, and therefore upon the destiny, of those who listened, who understood, who therefore were affected, and whose lives were, in consequence, changed.

Am I my brother's keeper? How can I be otherwise? Is not every son of man the keeper of his brothers, in the sense that he acts upon them, and their minds and hearts react against what he says to them? Do you see the heavy ethical responsibility that lies in all this? And, without any wish to be unkind, I will tell you frankly that when I read the reports of some of the lectures that have been given on public platforms by itinerant speakers, itinerant lecturers, my heart is oft sunken in my breast, for I know what such men are bringing upon themselves by talking as they talk.

There is law in this universe — things are not ruled by chance — and a man cannot think or speak or act without affecting other beings, to their weal or to their woe. The sense of ethical responsibility has been largely lost in the Occident. Men do not realize that our whole exterior universe is but the garment or shadow of something invisible, of the inner life, of which each human being, and indeed every entity, is an inseparable part; for all entities and things are rooted in this inner life, and therefore it is obvious that whatever any one of us may do reacts with corresponding force upon all other entities and things.

Ethics are not a convention; morals are not a convention; they are rooted in the harmony, in the central laws, of being. The good old rule: Do as you would be done by, is not a mere conventional phrase, found out, invented, by some great mind, but is a simple statement of natural fact; and I feel a heavy responsibility on

every Sunday afternoon when I ascend this platform and talk to you. I do not choose and weigh my words, because that would make what I say to you so stilted and artificial that your very brain-minds would tire before you had fully heard what I have to say.

But I come with a heart filled with a love for my fellow men, and with a desire to give to them the best that is in me, and all that I can give; and thus at least in some small degree I can give unto you what I myself have received. I know that it is good; I know that it is wonderful; I know the help that I have had; and with my heart filled with this spirit, I know that no matter what mistakes I may make — and no human being is exempt from error — nevertheless my heart is pure, and therefore whatever I have to say goes to you with purity and sincerity and manhood behind it. Please remember this.

I speak rather strongly on this matter, because I feel rather strongly about it. Each one of us is a keeper of his brothers, for we are inseparably bound together by unbreakable bonds of destiny and of origin, because we are fundamentally all one. In religious matters especially, in matters of high philosophy in particular, in matters of science also very greatly, it is by no means unimportant what a lecturer, a speaker, has to say to others. That man is a hypocrite — and I withdraw not one word of this — who will stand on a platform and tell you things as truth which he himself in his heart of hearts does not know to be true. Pity him, for the laws of harmony, of inner beauty — which is spiritual symmetry — which control and guide the universe, will bring to him his guerdon of recompense or retribution. Even unto these men of mistaken genius, our sympathies should go out unstintedly, for I can tell you one thing: that the great and the strong, the high and the noble, are less in need of human sympathy and pity than are those who err.

We are all human. To err is human; but let us at least make our errors rebound upon ourselves alone, if we can, and not make others suffer for our imperfect and wrong thoughts and for our misdeeds. Above everything else let us remember that we must not mislead others. Nature will not tolerate it, for harmony, justice, truth, are the very heart of things, and it is this symmetry in law, this harmony in law, which keeps things coordinated, organized, and everything running in orderly sequences.

The first question that I have received for answering this afternoon is the following:

Do theosophists teach the necessity of organization and system in human affairs, especially in religion; or do they hold the belief that every man is a spiritual law unto himself, and is his own pathway unto the Divine?

We do hold that every man is his own pathway unto the Divine. We do not hold that every man is a spiritual law unto himself, for that would mean that there is no heart of being, that there is no fountain of light and intelligence, but that the world is a cosmic anarchy in which everything is driven hither and yon, by impulses arising solely within the individual: in other words it would mean that there is no cosmic organization, but that everything is disorganized, that there is no cosmic system, but that everything is unsystematic.

Of course theosophists believe in organization and system. But in the case of religion, do we believe in systematized religion and in organized religion system — the fruitage of men's mere brain-minds, their unilluminated minds — no matter what great claims may be made for such a system? No, in such we do not believe, at least, I do not, speaking as one theosophist. But just because I believe that every man is his own pathway unto the divine within

himself, to the god within, just so do I believe that things fundamentally run in organic and systematized sequences: in other words that there are law and order in the universe, and that law and order should prevail in every well-thought-out organization or system. In fact law and order mean organization and system.

Do I then believe in "organized religion"? If this phrase means merely another ecclesiastical system, another yoke on the overburdened shoulders of an already priest-ridden world, then my answer is, No. Immortal gods, save us from the fate of our fathers!

Precisely because every man in the core of the core of his being is a divinity, a god, and is therefore his own pathway unto divinity (precisely as Jesus the great Syrian initiate said, when he declared, "I am the way") for that reason I bow my head before the opinions of no other man; for my appeal is to the god within.

But contrariwise, just because I am a god — feebly, poorly, manifesting through my human mentality, an imperfect vehicle — do I recognize that all other men and entities, whether they be gods, intermediate, high, or low, likewise have at the core of the core of each one of them a bright and flaming intelligence, an inner god.

And therefore do I believe in system, in order, in organization; for when heart meets heart, when understanding meets understanding, when sympathy responds to the call for sympathy, all disputes about the soul stop (as Emerson so nobly said), and men instinctively recognize that they must help each other, for they are all limbs of a common spiritual entity; and in order to help each other, they must organize, and each one give up the lower part of himself to the mutual welfare and benefit of all; because in so doing he gains most, he gains intimate union,

communion, with the god within, each one of these inner gods being an expression of the love which is the very cement of the universe, holding things in order, in system, in organization; for love is magnetic, it is electric, it is all-permeant and holds everything in harmony and peace.

Suppose, on the other hand, that every man or every self-conscious and thinking entity equivalent to a man on earth, were a personal law unto himself, then what should we see everywhere? Disorganization, disorderliness, lawlessness, consummate anarchy, and hate and selfishness rampant. Pause a moment in thought over this, I beg of you. Yes, theosophists believe in organization and in system; but we are not slaves to either. We are not a church; we have no priesthood; we have no dogmas. Each one of us spiritually speaking is a priest-king, exactly as every human being is so in the inmost of the inmost of himself, if he only knew it; but being a priest-king in our divine part, we have the sense of kingly union, or raja-yoga, with all that lives.

We are responsible; every one is the keeper of all the rest, of all other things; and his responsibility becomes consciously, self-consciously, the heavier just in proportion as his own evolution is the more advanced. Do you expect much from the stone, or from the insensate stock? But you expect a great deal from a god, or from a god-man. Yes, every human being is a pathway unto the divine, the pathway of his own consciousness; and this divine is attained by man's union with his own inner god. *Aham asmi parabrahma*: "I am the Boundless" in my interior parts, as truly said the Hindu sages of old. And with that grand conception comes immediately the necessarily subsequent thought: *Tat twam asi*: "That art thou!" What a text these two statements of truth furnish for a lifetime of reflection! What a sublime hope!



I get all kinds of questions sent in to me for answer. The one I next take up is a personal one. I will tell you that I hesitated to bring it with me to the Temple this afternoon for obvious reasons. I will read to you this question, and then probably you will understand just how I felt when I myself first read it.

May I ask a personal question, without wishing to give any offense? Sometimes in your lectures you speak of yourself as having been taught, and as having been sent. Who taught you and who sent you? With apologies for the personal character of this question.

I could give you two answers to this question, and either one would be true. I am inclined to give you both answers! They will supplement each other.

In the first place, when one's heart is filled with the sense of an unaccomplished duty, and this goads you and pricks you and gives you no rest, then what does one do? If it is a right thing to be done, then you do it. That is what sent me, and this is one answer to the question. Every normal man and woman has at least at times the same feeling, the same inspiration from within, the same urge to do — to go and to deliver the message with which the heart is filled, and in my case this is the message which I have been taught. This overpowering inner urge therefore, is the first answer to the question. And the second is like unto it, and complementary of it. It is this: I was taught by the same teachers who sent H. P. Blavatsky to deliver her message to the world. There and by them was I trained; and this is the second answer to your question.

"Believe not," said in substance the Syrian sage of old to his disciples, "men when they come to you and tell you: 'Lo! I am the Christ, follow me!' Or when another one comes and says: 'Lo! I am the Christ, follow me!' Believe them not." But when one comes

before you, in the name of the Christ-spirit, and tells you to follow truth whose ringing tones are heard in every normal heart of man, and who speaks in the name of the god within, in the name of the inner Christ, in the name of the inner Buddha, then, said in substance the Syrian sage, "He is my own. Follow him."

Do you see the difference? No theosophical teacher, lecturer, messenger, writer, will ever tell you, for instance: I alone bring you truth. But he will say to you: "I am a student of truth; this is what I have learned; this is what I have been taught; thus have I heard, therefore this is the message that I come to bring to you. You yourselves, each one of you, are an inner god in the inmost of the inmost of you. There within you is the foundation of truth everlasting, therefrom flow illumination and the soothing and refining spiritual influences of love and harmony and kindness and compassion and pity and peace. Follow these."

He will also tell you at the same time that the great seers and sages of the human race, forming a brotherhood still extant on earth, are an organization, a society, teaching a formulation of divine truths, these truths expressed and systematized in human categories and language so that men's minds can understand them; and this systematic formulation of natural law and truth is the wisdom-religion of all the ages, today called theosophy.

Thus will a theosophical teacher speak to you. Thus will a theosophical writer speak to you. And I can tell you that the statement of Jesus, one of these Masters of Wisdom, is not contradictory of what I have just pointed out when he said: I am the Way, and the Life. Do you think that it was the young Hebrew man alone who spoke? Do you think that the body alone spoke? The body itself and by itself is naught but a carcass. No, it was the bright and flaming intelligence speaking through that body, it was the living god within it; and every one of you is such a god in his

inmost parts; and therefore every one of you can say, with equivalent truth and with the strength and power and conviction belonging to his own status on the evolutionary pathway: I am the Way and the Life everlasting. So indeed are you! Therefore ally yourselves, each one of you, with your own inner god, and thus know the truth. It was the Christ within, the inner Buddha, the god within, who thus spake.

It is rather curious that three questions on closely similar lines of thought came in to me for answer this afternoon. The third and last is the following:

I am interested in your Sunday afternoon lectures, and I would like to ask you a question. I have not infrequently heard some people talk recently about world teachers. Do theosophists believe in world teachers, and if so, who and what are they? And what are the signs by which ordinary human beings may know them and recognize them?

Here again is a human heart asking for a sign! And with perfect right and propriety! The question is absolutely right and justifiable. Are you going to trust your immortal destiny to all and sundry, unless you see the *insignia majestatis*, the signs of majesty — spiritual and intellectual? You would be foolish to trust anyone in so serious a matter unless your own spiritual nature recognized the majestic spirituality of the one whom you accept as your teacher.

Of course theosophists believe in world teachers. But do we believe in all claimants who may announce themselves as world teachers? Certainly not! What kind of people do you think theosophists are? Are we a lunatic society? No. I have been in the Theosophical Movement as an active Fellow of The Theosophical Society for more than half my lifetime, a good deal more, and from boyhood I have been trained in theosophical thought, and I

have not found that theosophists are either brainless or lunatical. I have found them on the whole to be a very solid-minded, thoughtful, careful body of people, very earnest at heart, very true, very kindly. Yes, theosophists believe in world teachers, but we accept only the real ones, and only where the *insignia majestatis* are clearly discernible.

Now, there is a very mysterious doctrine about this our belief, or rather a doctrine that is mysteriously wonderful, recondite, grand, on which our belief is founded, and I am going to give to you a brief outline of this doctrine. Detail I cannot now go into. It would take me a dozen days, lecturing all day long, and half the evening besides, I dare say, to set forth in its fullness what this mysteriously wonderful doctrine is; but the following is a brief outline of it.

The universe is filled full with gods, with cosmic spirits if you like the term better — with divine beings, hierarchies innumerable of them; and these hierarchies innumerable are the very framework and structure of the universe both invisible and visible. And the visible is but a cross-section of the universe, as it were, so that the invisible realms and spheres, filled with these entities — divine, quasi-divine, and but little higher than human beings — these invisible realms, I say, are therefore by far the larger part of the body corporate of the boundless spaces of space.

Everything that exists has its niche and place in nature's majestic scheme and structure. This is the hierarchical idea and it also means that nothing ever can be lost or radically separated from all other things. The human race, for instance, is a hierarchy on the human scale of evolution. Consequently, with the world filled full, infilled, with divine beings in all stages of evolutionary progress, varying as men also vary in their smaller degrees, and just as we have great men and men intermediate in power and

character, and inferior men, just so are the gods existent in all stages of evolutionary advancement. Furthermore, all things hang inseparably together. All things are fundamentally inseparable, so that what happens in any one portion of the Universe, ultimately affects every other portion of the universe.

Is our earth, therefore, with its burthen of inhabitants radically separated from the rest of the boundless universe? How can that be? Of course not. We do not occupy such a unique and perfectly inexplicable situation. We are but one small globe in a boundless universe, yet that small globe has all the powers and potentialities of divinity within it, for it is an inseparable part of the whole, therefore partaking of every part of that whole.

Consequently, what these gods do who infill and actually make the universe is felt even by men on earth; and as all beings everywhere are all interconnected, we humans receive occasional visits, as it were, from one or another of these divine beings whose karma — in other words, whose origin and destiny — is connected with ours. These divinities, these divine beings, cannot manifest directly in and upon physical substance, for their own spheres of activity are entirely too pure and high. They cannot immediately and directly touch or influence physical substance, except by remote control, so to speak. Therefore, their way of reaching mankind and teaching men is through vehicles properly trained and prepared: high-minded men, spiritual men, men in whom the inner god is at least beginning to manifest itself.

Such a great man was the Buddha; such a great man was Jesus; such another man was Lao-tse; such a man again was Sankaracharya, the great founder of the Adwaita Vedantic School in India.

Furthermore, these world teachers come at periodic times, and this is an important fact to remember. Everything in nature

moves in cycles, in orderly sequences. There is no disorderly action. Do you get this clearly? These world teachers manifest their transcendent powers at proper times, at cyclical intervals. Study history as far as history is known, and you will see their appearances, which will give you important hints for study.

Now, there are two kinds of world teachers — those I have just spoken of, divine entities who manifest through some great and sublime human being who has, through evolution and striving and aspiration and love, raised himself spiritually so that the god may manifest through him; and, on the other hand, there are human world teachers; and of these latter there are again two classes. One of these two classes we call avataras, and the other of these two classes, employing our own theosophical expression, we call the buddhas of compassion. The difference between these two classes of human world teachers is the following: an avatara is one who is, as I have just set it forth to you, a great and noble human being whose nature is translucent to the energies and illumination issuing forth from a divinity. Such an avatara was Jesus, such was Sankaracharya. These two are examples of human avataras, world teachers as we call them.

The other class of human world teachers are the buddhas of compassion; and do you know what these are? They are the noblest flowers of the human race, men who have raised themselves from humanity into quasi-divinity; and this is done by letting the light imprisoned within, the light of the inner god, pour forth and manifest itself through the humanity of the man, through the human soul of the man. Such a one we call a buddha of compassion. I feel that this last class is the nobler and higher of the two human classes, for, through self-directed evolution, as our beloved Katherine Tingley so frequently said — through sacrifice and abandoning of all that is mean and wrong, ignoble and paltry and selfish, through opening up the inner nature so that the god

within may shine forth, in other words through evolution — they have raised themselves from mere manhood into becoming god-men, man-gods.

What, then, are the signs by which we may know these?

Remember that these two classes of human world teachers are, on the one hand, a human being who becomes the human vehicle of a god; and, on the other hand, the buddhas of compassion who by self-directed evolution and effort have raised themselves from manhood into human divinity. What, then, are the signs by which we shall recognize one or the other of these two general classes?

The Buddha, the greatest and noblest of the sons of men who have ever lived in recorded history, the most compassionate, was the very incarnation of wisdom and love. He brought peace, he brought the knowledge of love and compassion unto his fellow men; not only by his example in his daily life and by his teachings did he show unto men the way everlasting, but he also taught his arhats, his disciples if you like, the great and wondrous mysteries of the esoteric wisdom-philosophy of the world. He founded what is perhaps today the noblest religion on earth; and in his name never has a drop of human blood been shed. Never has there been any direct religious persecution in Buddhist lands. Never has there been an intolerant ecclesiastical system and priesthood derivative from or founded upon the teachings of Gautama the Buddha!

"By what signs shall ye know them?" I have told you. How do you know a good man from an evil one? In this question you have the key to your answer. Shall I go into detail and blind your understanding and mislead you with a wealth of detailed illustration, because your experience may not be just the same as mine? Or shall I give to you a hint, knowing that your hearts will gather my meaning? The latter I do.

Do you know, since these world teachers come at cyclical periods, who the world teacher was who came most recently? At the proper turn of the cycle? It was the messenger of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion, H. P. Blavatsky. It is moral and spiritual qualities which sway the hearts of men, and not talk. It is truth and love unbounded which steal into the hearts of men which sway their minds and therefore their destiny, and not talk.

H. P. Blavatsky came at the cyclical period: she suffered, she taught, and then when her work was finished, she went Home. Her case belonged to the first class of the two kinds of world teachers which I have described to you — a great and noble human being who was the vehicle of a lofty intelligence working through that grand human nature — a true world teacher.

Be not deceived! Nature is not mocked. I have heard it said that H. P. Blavatsky was not altogether such, because she had ways about her, and did things that the speakers did not like. What did she do? She smashed prejudices, she broke open stony human hearts, and let the divine light flow out and flow in. She battered to earth all mean and ignoble shams that came under her attention. With her titanic intellect, with the urge of the spiritual energy driving it and guiding it, she never hesitated to tell truth, and to tell it in no uncertain terms. I am reminded of Jesus in the Temple driving out the money-changers. He too was a "trouble maker"; he too was a "mischief maker." Pause and reflect!

This is a question of quite a different type.

What have theosophists to say regarding the so-called cosmic rays so marvelously investigated by the American scientist, Dr. Robert A. Millikan? Does this all mean that the universe is in a continuous state of regeneration instead of being in a continuous state of running down, as former scientists used to teach?



This is a good question. It shows that people are beginning to think. You know, I suppose, what the old idea was in the days of our fathers and grandfathers: that we lived in a wholly material universe, and that there was not anything else. There was not any interior — no invigorating, no inspiriting, interior; there was just the shell of things, an empty shell. In fact it was not even thought of as a shell; it was just it, and there was no interior at all.

Everything ran according to what are called natural laws, arising nobody knew how or whence; and consequently everything ran haphazard according to these laws. Atoms chased each other all around the universe; and that was all there was to the idea; and in fact it seemed to be the idea that atoms did not run in circles except by chance! This was the happy conception. "Fortuitous concourse of atoms": those of you who have my age will remember what a noble phrase that once was thought to be.

Now our scientists are beginning to see visions and to dream dreams. They know more about things; they do not dogmatize — so much! They are beginning to think more, and to have a vision. That is a great and saving grace — having a vision. It opens the doorways to the entrance of truth into human hearts and minds, and inculcates modesty. We now find our great scientists saying that the so-called material universe is not fundamentally matter at all — that matter is nothing but another form of energy, and in fact that energy and matter are fundamentally one thing, which is precisely what theosophists teach and have always taught, and precisely what the ancients, the great men of the ancients, in all countries and in all ages have taught.

The superstition of the ancients, called superstition by our fathers and grandfathers, is the orthodox scientific teaching of today, at least in general principles. We have men like Professor Eddington in Britain speaking about the fundamental of the universe as

being mind-stuff. How familiar this sounds to those who have studied the thoughts and the literary works of the ancients! How familiar to theosophists this is! Only we give to this cosmic fundamental another name; but what does the name matter if the idea is the same, if this courageous and eminent scientist has seized at least the end of the Ariadne's thread which will lead him out of the labyrinth of ignorance and materialism into the glorious sunlight of spiritual and intellectual freedom?

Cosmic Rays! Millikan has done a wonderful work, adopting an idea first enunciated by a German scientist. The great American has carried out in research work and development of theory this fundamental idea, until his energy and tireless faculty of resourcefulness and research have enabled him to see, and in seeing to tell us, what he has found out about one of the unknown parts of the universe: these cosmic rays.

When you remember that the entire physical universe is builded of atoms, and that these atoms themselves are builded mostly of holes, so-called empty space — merely called empty because we do not know what that still finer substance called emptiness is, with which even the atoms are filled — when you realize that the so-called apparently dense and physical universe is mostly holes, empty spaces, then you begin to see how unsubstantial this material universe is, and your mind is led on by thought after thought, if you follow logical processes, first to sense, then sensing to begin to realize, then realizing to see, that this physical universe is but an expression, an organic garment, so to say, of the energies, powers, forces, faculties, and of the directing intelligences, existing behind the veil in the invisible realms and worlds.

Cosmic Rays: what are they supposed to be today? I will read to you something that was sent to me yesterday or the day before,

by a friend. It is a clipping from the *Times* newspaper of Los Angeles. I won't read all of it, because it is a bit long. I will read a few extracts.

Cosmic rays have their origin in the energy released when clusters of hydrogen atoms fall together in interstellar space and create the common elements out of which the universe is made. . . .

In his 'cycle in cosmos,' the California Institute head advances a theory which sets aside the age-old scientific belief [Age-old! seventy or eighty years, a mere scientific babe, and already forgotten, gone to the dust heap!] that through the gradual loss of energy the universe eventually will again become a void without form. Instead of this gloomy forecast, the cycle-theory holds out hope that electrons annihilated in the stars do not die, but have a rebirth in radiant energy which ultimately becomes the stuff of which new stars and worlds are made. . . .

This cosmic cycle-theory supposes that the annihilation of positive and negative electrons in the stars gives rise to the radiant energy which produces hydrogen. A 'falling together of hydrogen atoms' then occurs as the next step in the recreative process.

When these hydrogen clusters combine under the influence of low conditions of temperature and density existing in interstellar space, the third progressive step in the cycle has been completed. The speculation supposes further that these heavier elements, including helium, oxygen, and nitrogen, become parts of nebulae, and that the fifth stage in the endless creative and annihilative chain occurs when these elements, condensed from nebulae, form the stars, wherein the atoms are again broken down, unleashing energy again. From energy to stars, or from stars to energy, no beginning and no

ending is the picture presented by the new theory of material change.

. . . it appears to be proved that cosmic rays are born at the point on the creative chain where the heavier elements are formed by hydrogen and that they obtain their energy from this formative process.

Well, in substance this is a return to an old theory of an English doctor, a chemical researcher, who died in 1850, Prout, whose theory was that the fundamental element of all the range of the chemical elements was hydrogen, and that idea has now become the practically orthodox theory of scientists today as regards the genesis of chemical elements.

Theosophists do not object to the names that scientists give to these things. We have not the slightest objection to calling these rays cosmic rays, and to saying that all the subsequent elements after hydrogen are born by agglomerations of hydrogen atoms, which by their union and combinations produce all the other elements of the range of the chemical scale.

So far, it is all good; but after all, this is but a picture of effects. It presents only a cosmic effect and says not a word about causes. It reminds me of a man seeing a series of automobiles rushing along the road. Are you going to be satisfied by saying, as an explanation of this phenomenon, that you saw numbers of curious-looking things chasing each other along the road, things which are neither pulled nor pushed, but all proceeding in the same direction? No. Your intelligence tells you that there is something within or behind this phenomenon. There is a purposive energy, a directing intelligence, a conscious power, behind it all, and so theosophists say when we envisage the physical universe around us that there are directing energies, intelligent powers, which produce the manifold diversity in the

physical universe that we see and which universe is so coherent, so consistent, so logical, so consequential in its orderly processes.

Everything works together like clockwork. Everything is organized, systematized, most marvelously, most wonderfully. What does it? What produces it? Whence does all this wonderful symmetry, this orderliness, this organic unity, arise? Could the cosmos exist ten consecutive seconds of time if there were not orderliness and law, which signify intelligence, guiding it? Just imagine what utter disorderliness, lawlessness, chance, would signify! In fact you cannot imagine it because it is inconceivable. In fact such a state does not exist. It is a fantasy of the mind, like a fantasy that I have in my mind when I imagine a paved concrete roadway from the earth to the moon. I can talk about that, and I can mentally see it, but I know that it cannot exist. It is what the great Greek, Plato, called a fantasy. No, what theosophists have to say about these so-called cosmic rays, and about a great many other things, is reduced to one simple principle, and it is this: that behind and within the marvelous phenomena and productions of physical nature, exist and work vast and complex hierarchies of conscious, self-conscious, and intelligent, and sentient beings.

As regards the part of the question asking whether there be a continuous state of regeneration instead of the old-fashioned idea of the universe being in a continuous state of running down, I gladly add the following observations: The universe, like everything else, like all manifested entities great or small, has its time periods — its beginning, its culmination in evolution or growth, its decay, and its end — but phoenix-like, after a long period of cosmic rest, the universe springs into life from the ashes of the former phoenix; and this new universe is in very fact both interiorly and exteriorly, spiritually, psychically, and physically, the reimpodiment of the preceding universe, of the universe that was, in other words of the former phoenix-universe. And this, I

may add in passing, is the esoteric meaning of the Greek legend of the phoenix.

The old scientific idea that the universe was running down, and was but a machine, has only this much of truth in it: that there does indeed come a time in the universe, as there does in the life of man, when it sinks into repose, or dies as the phrase runs; but this really is a liberation of the enchained cosmic-spiritual, cosmic-psychic and cosmic-physical energies. But during its entire life period of manifestation, the two processes of building up and of decay work together continuously and without break of continuity. We die daily, said the Christian Apostle Paul, and he uttered a great truth. The atoms of the physical body of man have their life periods and die, and then are renewed, and this continues as long as the physical body of man lasts.

So is it with the universe. The processes of regeneration and of degeneration are proceeding concurrently throughout the entire period of universal manifestation. One part of the universe may be sinking into repose, while another part may be rising into a new span of life.

I could say much more about this, but time is pressing. Our theosophical teaching is that a universe is an embodied entity, which proceeds along the evolutionary path through eternity, with intervals of manifestation or life succeeded by corresponding intervals of withdrawal of the inspiriting and invigorating energies within and behind the physical veil or garment; but these inspiriting and invigorating energies return again in due course of time to build up a new universe which is not only the child of the preceding universe, but is, in fact, a reimpodiment of all the constituent elements, powers, energies, faculties, of the universe that the preceding universe contained and had, and in fact was.

Splendid achievements have our modern scientists made, wonderful advances, not only in thought but in discovery; and it is especially to our ultramodern scientists that the theosophist renders due meed of grateful acknowledgment for the splendid work they do. To the theosophist the scientist is his best friend, and I mean here the great minds among them, not the mere camp followers: in very truth the great minds among the scientists are our unconscious allies. I could give you a long list of teachings of theosophy that we have enunciated during the last fifty years or so, and that have been proved true by later discoveries of our great scientific men. You will find these corroborations set forth in our theosophical books.

But here is a point to remember: whatever may be the theories or hypotheses of these great scientific researchers, many of these researchers are approaching close in their speculations and theories to the frontiers of the invisible worlds; many of these men, in the heart of the heart of each, know that intelligence is behind the veil of the outward seeming — and a few brighter and more illuminated minds among them realize that intelligences are behind the phenomena of material nature, and that this diversity of guiding agents is the cause of the diversities that we see in the physical universe — the cause of the orders, classes, grades, families, and species, among so-called animate things and likewise that these guiding agents produce the diversities that we see on the cosmic scale. I believe that in a little while, relatively speaking, the religion-philosophy-science of our greatest scientists will be the wisdom-religion of antiquity today called theosophy. I don't see how they can avoid coming to it. Each new discovery is bringing our greatest scientific minds closer and closer to us theosophists. For let me tell you that he is not a theosophist who passes his time in idle dreams. Life is earnest; life is real. He is not a theosophist who believes all things that he may be told.

He is a theosophist who lives and does theosophy — spiritually alert, intellectually awakened, psychically sensitive, physically healthy — and the last is the least important. Such a one has all the material foundation for becoming a true theosophist. A theosophist, therefore, is one who loves all things both great and small, who feels his heart beat in sympathy with all that is, who cultivates the faculties of intellect and will that he desires for the sake of devoting them on the altar of truth and of humanity, and not for his own selfish purposes. A theosophist is one who is ever ready to give up self for others; and who does it oh! so gladly! There is a joy in this which none may know who have not experienced it.

"To thine own self be true," as the great English poet-dramatist said, and "thou canst not then be false to any man." For being true to yourself does not mean true to your own interests, for that is disloyalty to your higher self, but it means to be true to the inmost of yourself, to your real self — the source, the fountain, of the best that is in you. Are you the garments that you wear, or are you yourself? You are yourself. Be true to it, true to the inner god, that bright and flaming intelligence-heart which is the root of your being and which also is your ultimate destiny.

Live, and in living learn; learn the truth, and in embodying truth, truly live. Be the god within you. Nothing then will mislead you, nothing then can mar or change what you are in your heart of hearts, for divinity will be fighting for you, divinity will carry your burdens. Where now your heart is torn and rent in pain and sorrow, so that oft ye know not whither to turn, then shall peace and love come stealing into your heart and will guide, will enlighten, because they will illuminate, your pathway unto the gods, which pathway is yourself, your divine self.

The way by which to find this path, the manner of approach to it,



is self-forgetfulness, just as when on the distant mountain peaks you see the dawn, and all things small and personal fall away from you. It is the self-forgetful man who is great; it is the self-forgetful woman who is sublime. Self-forgetfulness (marvelous paradox!) is the way to find the self divine.

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[Vol 1, No 52](#)

[Contents](#)

No. 52 (August 22, 1930)

## QUESTIONS WE ALL ASK

(Lecture delivered June 22, 1930)

CONTENTS: Sowing seeds of thought is a heavy responsibility. — Our physical sphere but a cross section of the universe. — The will-o'-the-wisps of the emotional spheres. — Psychical and religious flummery rampant in the world today. — How to recognize the true teacher. — Free the treasures of the spirit! — What is the source of theosophy? The foundations of all religions the same. Fantastic religions are easily invented. — A call to those hungering for light. — A word of sympathetic understanding to other Theosophical Societies. "We will not tolerate unbrotherliness." A clear declaration of theosophical policy. A super-society with but one officer. Not a theosophical pope! No place for politics. — Scientific views of Sir Oliver Lodge, intuitive scientist and quasi-materialist. Cosmic ether the seat of cosmic mind. — Within every atom is a spark of divinity. — What produces self-conscious individuality? — Various grades and classes of gods. — Take the kingdom of heaven by the "violence" of your indomitable will.

Many familiar faces are before me today. I like to see faces which are familiar. They make me feel that the message which I have to give to you has found a lodgment in your hearts — some seeds at least of the ancient wisdom have been sown in fertile places, where they will produce good fruit, and where neither the hot sun will dry them away nor the birds of the air, spiritual thieves, will carry them out of your consciousness.

I wonder sometimes if people realize what a thought is. Theosophists call it a thing, and it is a thing. It is a living entity. All

the vast and diversified phenomena of nature, so far as differentiations are concerned, are founded upon the one fact that at the heart of each such entity there exists a thought divine, a seed of the Divine, which is destined to grow through the aeons, until the inherent life, individuality, power, and faculty, in such a seed shall find itself flowing forth into more or less perfect manifestation. It is thus that such a god-seed or Monad becomes in its turn a divine entity, a self-conscious god, a child of the cosmic Divine, its parent.

The sowing of the seeds of thought is not an act devoid of responsibility. I told you this on last Sunday, and I repeat it today, that a teacher, a lecturer, a writer, no matter who he may be or what his particular work may be, in fact anyone who sows seeds of thought in the minds of his fellow men, is held by natural law to a strict accountability. Nature is not anarchic; it is governed by cause and effect throughout, by what theosophists call karma — the doctrine of consequences, that what ye sow ye shall reap, and none other fruitage.

While this places a serious responsibility upon anyone who teaches others, and who thus puts seeds of thought and feeling into their minds, nevertheless, on the other hand, what is the guerdon of a noble work well done? The reward, recompense, is magnificent. Think of that side of the matter also. I ask you again: What is the reward for a noble duty well accomplished?

Yes, we make ourselves to be exactly what we are; and we are, at the same time, our brothers' keepers, because each one of us, *each one of us*, EACH ONE OF US, is responsible for an aeonic chain of causation. Do you get the idea?

I sometimes have wondered, before I step onto this platform, what will be the outcome of the seeds of thought that I am going to try to put into the minds of my audience today? Good, bad,

indifferent — whatever the outcome is — I am connected, the inner part of me, the originating intelligence, the flaming fire of intellect and of spiritual will, which is the real spiritual entity, is connected with you forever.

A true theosophical teacher feels his duty, feels his responsibility, very, very keenly indeed. I marvel sometimes, and I tell you this frankly, at the obviously carefree consciousness in which I have heard lecturers speak, casting forth seeds of thought into the minds of their audiences, apparently reckless of what is going to come of it. Guard well your thoughts, and even as carefully guard what you say. Speak little, but when you do speak, speak with deliberate recollection of your responsibility. Fortunately — and here is the great consolation that every theosophical lecturer, speaker, teacher, writer, leader has, if he is true to his wonderful work, to the great opportunities which are his — in his teaching of theosophy he will give naught originating from himself — not one word, not one thought — but will deliver as his message to his fellow men that voice coming out of the far past, that message of the wisdom-religion of archaic times, that soundless voice reaching us even of our day, out of the far distant past, which even now finds an echo in the intuitive souls and hearts of men.

Some mystics have called this soundless voice out of the past, the Word lost and forgotten; but it is not a word. It is a message; it is a formulation of natural truth, setting forth the nature, structure, and operations of nature, the great mother of us all, particularly of spiritual nature, of the vast and invisible realms and spheres which are the real heart of the universe, and of which our physical sphere is but a cross section, a single plane, a section cut, as it were, through the vast body of cosmic being.

Keeping strictly to the delivery of this message, there is no danger of wandering into side issues or bypaths; and let me tell you that

he who understands but a little of the sublime message which you will remember is the formulation in human language of what the great seers and sages of the ages have seen when they sent their percipient spirits behind the veil of the outward seeming — knows that in delivering this message truly and without personal additions, he never wanders far from the truth. In doing this his imagination is never fascinated by the will-o'-the-wisps of the emotional spheres. His mind is never captured by the psychical and religious flummery which is, alas! so rampant in the world today, distracting men's attentions and thoughts from the great spiritual truths upon which the universe itself, in its infinitude, is builded.

Think! What sublimer message is there than truth? What nobler religion is there than truth? What can men understand more easily than truth, and never have a surfeit of it, for it is a part of the very structure and fabric of the inmost of the inmost of you, and your hearts leap in glad and intuitive recognition when someone tells you something that you sense to be true, and then you say: Immortal divinities, I knew it, but I could not phrase it!

Now, that is what the great founder of The Theosophical Society, H. P. Blavatsky — the first messenger in modern times to our Occidental world, of the great Masters of Wisdom and Compassion — did. She never wandered afield, she never followed any side paths or byways of thought and psychical and emotional illusion. But always she kept in that "straight and narrow path" of the spiritual life, called straight and narrow because it is difficult for men who do not understand it, but oh! how easy, how pleasant, is it when you do understand it and really follow it; and this still small path leads to the very heart of the universe.

That is the message that any true theosophical teacher will give to

you. What does it mean, reduced to simple language, so that all who run can understand it? It means *know yourself*; for as you are a child of the universe, an offspring of its divine spiritual heart, therefore have you within yourself everything — every power, every faculty, every possibility — that the Boundless has.

Are you different from the universe? Are you separate from it? Obviously not. You are inseparably a part of it; and therefore, knowing yourself, knowing what is within you, setting your feet upon this still, small path which the Hindu Upanishads speak of, and which is the pathway of your self, of your diviner self, you tread the way leading to the heart of the universe; and following this pathway means merely an ever-continuing expansion of your own consciousness, growing from human unto being cosmic.

Every true teacher says: "I can show you the way. Come unto me, ye who are heartbroken, weary, and heavy laden, and I will show you the way to peace and glory indescribable. Knock — and the knock is that of a heart which is pure and sincere — and the door will fly open of its own accord, and you will enter into your own. Ask — which means the heart-hunger which nothing will satisfy except light — and ye shall receive it in full measure, unstinted and overflowing."

If men today knew these secrets better, we should not have the platforms of our own and of other countries carrying unfortunate and mistaken individuals who in most cases tell you their own imaginings and conclusions from a more or less imperfect study of the great religions and philosophical systems of the past. Anyone who tells you: "I have the truth," is not a true teacher. Anyone who tells you: "I am a student of the truth" is worth at least listening to. Paradox! Marvelous paradox in this, for the second person will tell you if he is a true teacher: "I am the way, the life everlasting." These are the words of a true teacher and a

true teacher will explain just what he means. He means that he has found, by following that pathway within which leads him ever towards the heart of the universe, that that same pathway is in each and every entity and thing which exists, and hence such a true teacher will say to you: "Man, know thyself, for in you lie all the treasuries of the secret wisdom. I will show you the way."

The Hindu rishis, the Hindu sages, as their teachings have come down even unto our own time in the Upanishads and other parts of the grand literature of ancient Hindustan, voice the core of their teaching in the following two wonderful statements, and these combined are the "lost Word," that voiceless voice coming out of the abysmal deeps of past time, of a time so long gone by that no recollection remains among men of its existence; and these two sentences which together make the "lost Word" are these, and I give them to you in the original Sanskrit with their proper translations: *Aham asmi parabrahma*, meaning, "*I am the Boundless*," the heart of the heart of the core of my being is boundless infinitude, which I can never leave and of which I am an inseparable part. And close thereupon comes the consequent teaching in strict and orderly logical sequence: *Tat twam asi*, meaning, "*That thou art*."

Has any great sage and seer taught differently? Is not the foundation of every great religion and of every great philosophy the same? Do you see the ethical implications which these two grand statements contain: What thou art, I am. What I am, thou art. Fundamentally we are one. Brotherhood is nature's first law, because it is a part of nature's structure that I cannot live, feel, think, act, unto myself alone, but whatever I do affects ultimately all that is. Morals therefore are not a convention. Ethics are not founded upon human social convenience, but are rooted in the very fabric and nature of the Boundless.

Think over these thoughts. I should be a spiritual criminal if I should tell you one word, occupying the position of theosophical teacher as I do, that wanders one iota afield from the teaching of the message which I was sent to deliver to you. My heart impels me and compels me to keep strictly within the limits of my duty, for there I am strong; and without it I am only a man.

I know nothing so hard and adamant and stony as human hearts are. I know nothing so difficult to deal with as the crystallized and delicate fabric of men's brain-minds. The brain-mind is so rigid, and yet so crystalline and delicate, that it breaks at a touch. Therefore I do not make my appeal to your brain-minds. I go straight to the heart of you, direct to the very core of your being, to that part of you which, as I have said before, leaps into instant and glad recognition of the truth when you hear it. Therefore, because of the light that you have and remembering that your fellows are sitting in darkness, pity your fellow men, do not blame them.

Let us have peace, let us have harmony, let us have joy in life; and each one of you free all the great spiritual and intellectual treasures that every one of you possesses within, the treasures which it is customary to call of the spirit: peace and happiness, vision and brotherly love, illumination, compassion, and in fact all the great energies that arise in the mind of one whose heart is swayed by almighty impersonal love. It is impersonal love which holds all things in orderly sequence; impersonal love it is which binds all things in the Boundless into their orderly and consequential courses.

Love none has ever resisted, none will ever resist, for its appeal is to the very inmost of you, and therefore it arouses the inmost in you, and your stony hearts and crystallized brain-minds cannot bar its way or resist it. I speak of impersonal love, please, not the



selfish, personal love whose cravings are for satisfaction of material wants; it is to impersonal love that I appeal. If you have ever loved impersonally, any one of you, you know full well just what I mean. I pity those men and women whose hearts are so dead, whose lives are so blank, whose natures are so sterile, that they do not know the meaning of love, of harmony, of peace, of joy. How beautiful a thing it is for men to dwell together in peace and brotherhood!

You have often spoken of the wisdom of the archaic ages, as you express it. Is this body of doctrine existing by itself, or is it merely a composite or syncretistic system which modern theosophists have extracted from the various ancient religions and philosophies, and have put together in a more or less consistent, systematized body of teaching?

I would like to hear more from a man who thinks that some other man invented theosophy. I surely would! I think that the man who asked this question, while doubtless meaning it very kindly, has no real idea at all as to what theosophy is. I will now tell you truthfully what it is, as I have often done before: It is the formulation in human language of what the great seers and sages of the ages have seen when, during the initiatory periods through which they all passed, and indeed at other times, and during which they sent their percipient spirit-souls deep, deep, deeper still, into the very womb of being, they became acquainted then and there with the fundamental laws which control the structure, operations, origin, present nature, and future destiny of the universe. Having found out these recondite secrets and laws of being, by individual experience, generations after generations of these great sages and seers brought back and told their disciples what they had discovered in this most wonderful of adventures.

Such is the wisdom-religion of the archaic ages, and one or

another of this great brotherhood of seers and sages whom today we call the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion, or by other equivalent titles: one or another of these great men came forth into the world, sent as a willing messenger from the Lodge of these great ones, and then taught his fellow men, and, having taught, withdrew; and the message that he left behind him was and also became one of the great world religions or world philosophies. As the fundamental identic system of truth taught by all these messengers is the same, this means that the foundation of each one of these world religions and world philosophies is that same esoteric formulation of natural truth and fact. That formulation we today call theosophy.

As regards fundamentals it matters little what later ages of men did in obscuring this fundamental truth, this identic system in all the great world religions and philosophies. If you want to prove to be true what I here tell you, undertake the study of these ancient systems of thought. There is my challenge. Look for this fundamental body of doctrines in them all, and you will find it, set forth in other languages, set forth perhaps in different phrasings from those of our own, yet each was appropriate to its own time and to the people to whom such a great sage came; but the fundamental truth is the same in all of them, the fundamental system is the same in all of them.

Therefore, that is what I mean by the wisdom religion of the archaic ages. It is not a syncretistic system, put together in modern times by H. P. Blavatsky or by anybody else. Had it been so, it would be an inexplicable marvel of spiritual genius; and a genius of such cosmic power, of such titanic capacity, mankind has not yet given birth to.

Furthermore, why should such a thing be done? Nature *is*, it is orderly, logical, and consequential in its processes, therefore in

understanding it we have what is called truth. Man is an inseparable part of nature. Therefore the way to gain truth is to recognize his oneness with nature, spiritually and otherwise, and by his spiritual faculties to enter into the womb of being. This is the simple, natural way; and it is the way by which esoteric history shows that truth was formulated and systematized in human thought and language.

Do you know why this friend asked this question? He is an intelligent man. He knows something about the later religions which have been founded within the last two thousand years; and his knowledge of history has shown him how easily fantastic religious movements can be started. Do you not know that it is one of the easiest things in the world to make up a religion, to make up a religious philosophy, and to teach it and preach it and get a following? If you have a voice which is loud enough, and a convincing manner, and a ready flow of speech, you can get a following if you preach even that white is black, because many people will think that you must have some wonderful and mysterious power which you are merely hinting at by preaching foolishness.

Yes, there are such movements in the world even today, and it is my duty to state this fact. I do not state it unkindly. If people want to follow these things, that is their business, but I pity them from the bottom of my heart. Never would I voluntarily attempt to control them even if I could do so, because such a procedure would be ethically indefensible, for the reason that every man must work out his own salvation with diligence, as the great Buddha Gautama stated.

Furthermore I believe with the very soul of me in the exercise by every human being of free will and judgment even if he makes many mistakes. He will soon learn by his mistakes and be more

careful each next time. But do I accept these fantastic psychical and religious systems? Heaven save the mark! Not on my life! Why should I exchange the boundless truth of boundless nature for psychical and religious flummery? Never can I reach the frontiers, and pass over them, of the wisdom-religion of antiquity, which is the same in all ages, the same among all classes and races of men; which I have myself found out to be, and individually proved to myself to be, in as far as my own studies and opportunities have gone, to be the natural spiritual religion of mankind. It is just what I have told you it is: a formulation in systematized human thought and language of the structure, operations, character, origin, and destiny of the universe. Any one of you can follow the path that I have trodden if only you will; and the first step is to live the life proper to do it, and then you will know.

This living the life does not have anything to do with foolish asceticism, such as torturing the body, and all such vain and self-destructive methods. Not at all. I will tell you briefly how to do it: a clean heart, a pure mind, an eager intellect, the searching to obtain an unveiled spiritual perception, these are the first steps of the golden stair, ascending which you will pass into nature's Temple of Wisdom. The same teaching is found more briefly in the Christian scripture. Doesn't it say: The pure in heart shall see the Divine — "God," as the English translation runs?

Verily I say unto you, there is a way by which to have truth; there is a path, steep and thorny, as H.P.B. put it in substance, which leads to the heart of the universe. I can show to you this way, and also how you may put your feet on this steep and thorny path. In doing so you renounce nothing of intrinsic and real value. You give up nothing that is worthy and fine and noble. What you do is to throw off the shackles, the chains, that bind your interior faculties. What you do is to take the first steps into freedom and

light.

Who would willingly remain in a dungeon? Give up your personal, lower, material self, your selfish life on this gross physical plane, and then you will begin to sense the existence of the life everlasting, with all its concomitant wisdom and power, and all the increase in faculty and vision that will accrue then to you. When you succeed in doing this, then indeed, as I have so often said, you will have the vision sublime. There in the distant mystic East, on the mountain peaks of the spirit, you will see the rising sun. You yourself will enter into light and freedom. You will be subject to the dicta of none, controlled by none; you will be a free man: free in the spirit, free of intellect — because you will have become one with spiritual nature.

Do you see the logic of it? You will have entered into the Temple of the Holy One within your own heart of hearts, and there, in the adyta, you will see your own inner god. This is not poetry, these are not empty words. You can do it. Every son of man can do it. Man, know yourself! Look within: follow the pathway of your own consciousness which is rooted in the divinity at the heart of things. Follow that pathway until you enter into the life of the cosmic divine as a self-conscious god.

I mean every word of what I have said. And I will tell you frankly that the time has now come when a theosophical teacher must speak boldly. He risks a good deal in the way of inevitably being misunderstood, but accusations and foolish criticisms are as naught when duty is at stake. I tell you in all solemnity that I can show you the way; I can set your feet on that mystic path. And every true theosophical teacher would tell you the same. It remains with you: if you feel the Call from within — if your heart is breaking its encircling bonds of personality and selfishness, and you feel your inner nature growing, and you have no more

either rest or peace, but hunger for light — then come. Come!

Question Two. In your attempts to bring harmony into the Theosophical Movement by uniting the Theosophical Societies and other mystical bodies, may I not ask, without desiring to be offensive, if you yourself have not a fear of starting a super-body largely composed of — n-u-t-s?

The comment written after this question is the following:

All the people of your own society whom I have met seem to be very serious-minded, kind-hearted, and intelligent people, so I don't refer to them.

This comment is kind. My answer is as follows: No, I have not any such fear. Very definitely I have no such fear. Had I seen that in forming such a super-body it would be naught but a super-body of nuts, I am quite positive that I should not have begun my work to that end.

But now, friends, let me say a few kindly words for the officials and members of other Theosophical Societies. Many of them come to our meetings here, and I should deeply regret if any one such, generous-hearted enough to accept my invitation to come, should think for a fugitive instant that I would tolerate a discourtesy, even by answering a question such as this is, without assuring him that what I want and yearn for is mutual understanding, brotherhood, kindness, peace, and harmony.

I do not know why this questioner should except The Theosophical Society as containing the only sane theosophists, and imagine that all the theosophists of all the other Theosophical Societies are largely nuts. Now, that is not true. There are any amount of splendid, sincere, loyal, devoted theosophists in the other Theosophical Societies. I want that clearly understood. They have their own organizations, their own officials, their own work,

their own ideals. I do not want to touch those. Let them stay.

It is an amazing psychological fact in these days that it seems to be customary to make fun of the other fellow, and to point out his weak places, and to be unkind of thought and in speech, so that it is almost difficult to find words in which to express one's honest indignation at that unbrotherly attitude of mind. I have it not, and my officials have it not. We will not tolerate unbrotherliness nor the throwing of mud at others. We ourselves have been grossly misunderstood, accused of intolerable things; but what does that matter? Doesn't every true theosophist understand that he who first willfully does a wrong thing is the one who in the end will suffer the most? Let us pity the wrongdoer, let us have compassion; let our hearts be filled with forgiving love, and with the understanding which love brings. I have extended my hand in earnest and genuine goodwill and fellowship and I have not withdrawn my hand nor will I withdraw it.

Now, answering more particularly this question — and I have no doubt that it is an important one at the present time — the idea of starting a super-body is correctly stated, as regards the mere fact, but of course this questioner does not, because he cannot, understand exactly the plan that I have in my mind.

There are two things that I am trying to accomplish: First, to bring about brotherly love among the various theosophists belonging to the various Theosophical Societies of the world. It is a shame and a disgrace to the theosophical name that the very Movement which was founded to promulgate brotherhood and mutual love and kindness among men, and also to teach the doctrines of the ancient wisdom, should today be split up into a number of bodies fighting a desperate internecine warfare. It is wrong! I will have none of it! If I am attacked and attacked untruthfully and unkindly, as long as the attack is against me personally, I will hold

my peace. Let the attack be directed against my work, however — then I will act, because I have an ineluctable duty to perform. This, then, is my first wish: to work on a common theosophical platform of mutual understanding and brotherly love with all other Theosophical Societies.

Time will apply its invariable test as to in which Theosophical Society there flows the stream of illumination from the great teachers of wisdom and compassion. My first step, therefore, is kindness of feeling, brotherly love, mutual generosity among us all. My hope is ultimately to see established a Theosophical Society of the world, in which all Theosophical Societies will join, each one such retaining its own organization, if it wishes, its own officials, its own peculiar teachings if it wishes, but working for the fundamental theosophical truths in brotherly union and comradeship.

I do not care a snap of the fingers for a merely political federation of Theosophical Societies. The idea seems monstrous to me — the idea of trying to confine spiritual truths within the limits of a politically federated body of Theosophical Societies. I will have none of it; and I know the temper of the Fellows of The Theosophical Society which I have the honor and the heavy responsibility of leading. They will have none of it. What I want and what they want is a spiritual brotherhood, one based on love, mutual understanding, and with genuine sympathy each for the difficulties of the others — a desire to help each other.

Imagine trying to cramp the Theosophical Movement within the foolish bounds of a mere political federation! That is not my idea. I want no such super-society as that. Do you know what would ensue almost immediately? I will tell you: a continuation of the same intestinal troubles that have disgraced the modern Theosophical Movement already.



But let men meet with understanding hearts on the basis of love and brotherhood, genuine and sincere, and you will have no trouble.

Furthermore, as you have of course understood from what I have said, I stand irrevocably for theosophy — the original pure and unadulterated theosophy of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion. If anyone else chooses to preach different teachings, different doctrines, that is not my affair. I will never throw a brick at them; I will never cover them with mud; that is their own business and for what they do they shall be held strictly accountable by nature's ineluctable laws. They may choose. Karma and time will weave their magic solution of all such difficulties and aberrant wanderings into side-paths and byways of thought and life.

Now I will go a little farther and will tell you somewhat of what I have written in my Seventh General Letter soon to be published, to the F.T.S. throughout the world. It is in substance as follows: I am looking forward to a super-society without officers, except one — a society held together by bonds of love, understanding, brotherhood, and ethical principles; that one official to have no power to meddle in the internal affairs of any of the societies composing this spiritual brotherhood, but he will stand as a teacher and leader by the right of training and by the right of having gained the love and confidence of the component elements who and which have conjoined to form this spiritual brotherhood.

Do I hear someone say: A theosophical pope? My answer is an emphatic, No! In my plan, this official shall be without any temporal power whatsoever. He stands as spiritual teacher and leader, as guide, but with no temporal power whatsoever as regards the spiritual brotherhood. And I hope, if I can bring this

to pass, that there will become living as a vital current in the history of The Theosophical Society, the unbreakable, ineluctable tradition, that, as soon as one iota of temporal power be taken over by the one occupying this supreme position, it shall be recognized as a sign of spiritual dissolution and decay; and then it will be the probable duty of the component societies to withdraw.

The Theosophical Movement is a spiritual movement; it has a duty to perform in the world — to give forth certain sublime spiritual and intellectual teachings, and all questions of inter-organizational politics would be entirely out of place in such a spiritual brotherhood. Such politics would be wholly wrong there. Remember this: Such a supreme position did the great founder of The Theosophical Society in modern times, H. P. Blavatsky, hold. No one needs to join such a spiritual brotherhood, who fears, who doubts. To such as these I say: Stay out. But to those who have the intuition to understand and to see and to realize how this spiritual brotherhood — after the manner in which I have described it so briefly to you this afternoon — will cause dissensions to cease, will bring peace where there is now discord, and will be a unifying and cementing power such as none other in the world is, because it will be based on the moral instincts of men, on their hunger for love and peace, for union and brotherhood, I issue the call.

It would mean that any society composing, or being one of the composite elements of, this spiritual brotherhood would retain all its own officials, all its own doctrines (or lack of doctrines), all its own traditions, its own sphere of work, would be as free as the ambient air, but would nevertheless be an element equal with others in such a super-society, such a spiritual brotherhood. The fact is that the hearts and minds of the members composing most of the different Theosophical Societies are hungry — hungry for light, hungry for peace, hungry to receive the divine wisdom.

It is almost time to close for this afternoon. But I have still one question here which I promised to answer today. I crave your kindness for a few moments more. A promise with me is a sacred thing.

What have theosophists to say about the opinions of the great English scientist Sir Oliver Lodge concerning the cosmic ether as being the home or seat of cosmic, undifferentiated mind?

Sir Oliver Lodge is a spiritist, I believe. He is an intuitive man. I do not accept his religious beliefs, but I respect him for his high mental qualities and for his intuitive mind. I read his articles with deep interest, and I can always find something in them — strange enough — to bring to the attention of my audiences, as being the dicta of one of the most eminent scientific researchers and thinkers of today, in proof of one or more of our theosophical doctrines.

I am not well acquainted with what Sir Oliver has to say about the "cosmic ether being the seat or shrine of cosmic mind or consciousness," and therefore I speak perforce with a certain amount of reserve. I do not want to be unjust in anything that I may say. A friend of mine to whom I was speaking about Sir Oliver's viewpoint called my attention to an article printed in *Public Opinion*, an English magazine, issue of May 23rd of this year, in which Sir Oliver Lodge's views are commented upon by Professor Andrade, evidently an English scientist with a Portuguese name, and I find the following paragraph which seems to set forth quite clearly Sir Oliver's views. It is Sir Oliver himself speaking:

I wish to emphasize the importance of the universal connecting medium, the ether of space. I believe that this substance or substantial entity will ultimately be found to be

of the first importance both in science and in philosophy; I believe that it will act as an instrument of unification between mechanism, on the one hand, and spiritual guidance, on the other.

If the ether is a substance of universal prevalence — as in physics it appears to be — then it may be the real vehicle of mind and spirit. If so [please listen carefully to this], then it must be by or through the process of what we call incarnation — a connection between ether and matter which has still to be understood — that the undifferentiated mind develops into separate personality. It proceeds by utilizing the essential discontinuity of matter to partition itself off into free and independent units, so that in association with matter they may acquire an individuality of their own, and thus by free and personal development enhance the value and complexity of the whole.

Most intuitive is this on the whole, and yet most extraordinarily divergent in some most important points from our own majestic theosophical doctrines. This intuitive scientist, a quasi-materialist, nevertheless seems to conceive of cosmic mind as being, so to speak, a universal ocean of mind-stuff, as Professor Eddington, another eminent English scientist, has called it, or consciousness-stuff, which has no individualized consciousness, no individual self-consciousness, but is abstract or diffused cosmic consciousness, and that according to Sir Oliver's theory this cosmic consciousness needs the differentiations of matter in order that this undifferentiated consciousness may become individualized.

Such a conception, I submit, is neither logical nor reasonable. What is this wonderful matter which is so subdivided into individual parts or portions that it is it which gives conscious

individuality and the feeling of continued spiritual egoic existence? Don't you see the faulty logic there? Theosophists say that it is consciousness which is the fundamental of the universe, and the very fact that matter is so diversified and differentiated into atoms, and those tinier bodies called electrons, is a proof that it is in the realms of consciousness and spirit that the diversifying causes lie. Matter is but an effect, a result, because it is nothing but a congeries of atoms springing forth from the spiritual base which is the cosmic consciousness. In this spiritual base are the infinite hosts of self-conscious causes, and matter simply reflects them in the material sphere as differentiations, as in the atoms for instance.

What brings the atom into being? What differentiates it from some other atom? The ancient wisdom-religion says that at the core of the core of any such atom there is this inner spark of divinity, which manifests in the human being as the inner god, and it is the working of these individualities, these god-sparks, through the material realms which produces the vast and complex diversities that we see in the physical sphere around us. Differentiation has its roots in consciousness; it is not matter which produces self-conscious individuality, self-consciousness. The spiritual realms are filled with gods, differentiated centers of the one consciousness-substance-light, and the universe is brought forth by and through the vital powers, faculties, energies, in other words the life, working in and through these divine beings which fill the Boundless and which indeed make it what it is.

These gods with which the universe is filled are of all-various classes and kinds, and they are existent in all-various evolutionary grades — highest, least, and all intermediate grades of development; and the working and interworking, the actions and interactions, the minglings and interminglings, of these

multitudes, hierarchies, hosts, armies, of gods, produce the vast and bewilderingly complex diversities and differentiations of the universe which our human mind gives us some feeble cognizance of.

Where is the life of anything? At its heart, at its core. What is it that produces anything? That which flows out from within itself. What produces the blade? The seed — the life in the seed.

Whence comes the six-foot man? From a microscopic germ: from the mystic and wonderful elements and powers lying in that germ and manifesting themselves, when circumstances are appropriate, as a human being. All things that are come from within, and in flowing out manifest their native and latent powers. This is evolution. It means a rolling out, an unfolding, an unpacking, of what is within, enfolded, involved.

In leaving you this afternoon, I want to call your attention again to something that I tell my audiences of on every Sunday. I want to remind you that each one of you, in the inmost of his inmost, is a divine being: each normal man, every normal woman, is, at the core of the core of his or her being, a bright and flaming intelligence, a god; an entity not built up by the body, not the product of your mind, but contrariwise your soul and your mind and your body are its last and least expressions. Each one of you is a divinity at the heart of the heart of you. Each one of you has within him a living and immanent Christ, an inner Buddha.

You do not know what is locked up within your inner being; you don't know what inner powers and faculties you have latent within you. You don't know these inner powers and faculties because you never call upon them, because you don't know of their existence, except by vague rumor, or perhaps except by your intuitive cognition of the fact sometimes in your better moments, which cognition is the whispering of that voiceless

voice coming out of the far-distant past, that voice of which I spoke to you, whose echoes even today are heard in the hearts and minds of men, the spiritual Word which is no word, and which in its human formulation is the ancient wisdom-religion of antiquity.

Men have sensed it; men have felt its existence; and all the essential teaching which any theosophical leader can possibly give unto you reduces itself to this fundamental rule: Look within your own developing consciousness; seize the vision that is there; enter into your spiritual rights; take the kingdom of heaven — not of the earth — by the "violence" of your indomitable will and clean heart and eager intellect and unveiled spiritual perception. Each one of you is an incarnate, or rather embodied divinity in your higher parts. Why, O children of men, why not be it!

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[Vol 2, No 1](#)  
[Contents](#)

## Second Series: No. 1 (September 1, 1930)

### WHO ARE YOU?

(Lecture delivered June 29, 1930)

CONTENTS: Who are you? — The body a mere physical event. — The foundations of ethics laid in nature's heart itself. — The key thought of the ancient Mystery schools. The "Lost Word." — Peace, light, consolation: all are within you. — Pain and suffering the fruit of ignorance. — "Behold, the feast is laid!" — The soulless materialism of our grandfathers merely a superstition. — Scientific fads exist today. — Materialism is soul-devastating. — H. P. Blavatsky and the mental ghosts of her day. — The origin of cosmic law and order. — Why do we sometimes apparently suffer unjustly? — Why is every phase of life characterized by fierce conflict? — Claim your birthright of the spirit! — The noblest path in life.

Who are you? As you must know, this is an old question that men for ages have asked each other, Who are you? "What a stupid question!" some people may say. And they will probably answer: "I am so-and-so; I have such a name; I occupy such a position in society; I was born in such a place; in brief, I am so-and-so." But the wise man, the true thinker, repeats his question: "Who are you? Who indeed are you? Explain your answer to me. Any other person might have had your name, been born where you were born, worn the clothes that you have worn, followed more or less the same intricate pathways of destiny that you followed, and yet have been different."

Are you a mere body and nothing more? Do you reckon, in other words, your spiritual paternity by the flesh-house in which you live? What is it that distinguishes you from others; and outside of



this distinction, what is it, not that which *makes* you what you are, but which causes you to *be* what you are? Here is the answer: You are essentially a *character*, each one of you. You express it in all you do: in your thoughts, in your actions, in your consequent character, built up as that character is by thoughts and emotions and consequent actions. Therefore also do you express that character in the destiny which you make for yourself.

A mere body cannot do that. A body is a mere physical "event," to use the language of modern scientific philosophers, for it appears and disappears; and yet you retain your individuality even in the short span between the first conscious strivings of the individuality of your soul in any lifetime until you pass into what men call the great mystery of death.

Therefore do I repeat my question: Who are you? You have not answered the question; and just this is the question that I want you to think about this afternoon, friends, and to take in thought away with you, because it is the most important question with which human beings can concern themselves. It involves everything that you are and do. If you know truly who you are, you will know your origin; you will also know why you are here, and why you are doing such-and-such things, and not doing other things. You will also know whither the course of your thoughts is leading you — in other words you will have some vision of what the destiny is which your present character is already shaping for you. Do you see the ethical, the moral, implications in all this?

Now let me tell you as a theosophical teacher just what you are, albeit my explanation be brief. You are, each one of you, a visible expression of an inner divine and flaming intelligence, poorly expressing itself through the human vehicle; but the root of you is divine, a child of the spiritual universe, even as your physical body is an offspring of the physical universe. You are a child of

the spiritual-divine universe in the inmost of the inmost of your being. You are, therefore, inseparable from that spiritual-divine universe, for you cannot leave that universe, a fact that I have so often told you before. You are an essential, intrinsic part of it. Think what that fact means. It means among other things that within you, somewhere, either active or latent, there is everything that is in the Boundless; somewhere locked up within you there is this fiery spirit, a god-spark, of which you, in your intelligence and in the feelings of your heart, are a still feeble expression; but you are destined in the far-distant aeons of the future much more completely to manifest forth the divine flame within you.

What hope there is in this doctrine! You may see now from what has been said where the foundations of ethics are laid — in nature's heart itself. You see now from this brief sketch that right is right, and wrong is wrong, and that nature is built on fundamental lines of equity, on eternal and infinite justice, and that what causes the so-called disharmony and disorder in various parts of the universe, even as in the hierarchy of men, is the varying and conflicting wills and emotions and thoughts of hosts of individuals striving one against all, or a few against all, and *vice versa*; and this conflict produces friction, which is disharmony, which is lack of peace, and which in individuals is a violation of the fundamental love and harmony which are the very roots, which are the very heart, of the universe.

The inmost of the inmost of the inmost of the core of each one of you is a god, a divine being. "Man, know thyself," said the old Greek Oracle of the god Apollo at Delphi — *Gnothi seauton*. Do you think that this knowledge of yourself means the little knowledge that is comprised within your brains and in your human heart and derived from your personal and petty affairs of life? O friends, friends, friends! It means that if you know what is

within you, all the powers and faculties and energies locked up in you, which you derive from the very heart of being, you have all wisdom and truth, for these are in the core of the core of your being, where they are waiting for your recognition; it also means that the very essential light of you is almighty love, the heart of things.

Do you begin to see now the reason of the question: "Who are you?" Do you see the implications of this question? Do you see the hope that lies in this very brief and altogether incomplete explanation that I have tried merely to sketch in outline for you?

There is a road, a pathway, leading to the heart of the universe, and each one of you is that pathway — *each one of you is that pathway*; and by following this still small pathway, as the Hindu Upanishads so nobly put it, which is the pathway of consciousness leading to the divinity within you, to your own inner spiritual self, you can ascend out of the spheres of matter, through the expansion of your growing consciousness, until that human consciousness becomes universal in its sweep.

This is the key thought of all the ancient schools of initiation, of all the ancient Mystery schools. They taught this one fact openly; and what was hid from the ordinary mankind was how to tread this pathway. For there are dangers along this road — steep and thorny, but sublime — which slowly ascends out of the valleys of material existence in constant rise over the mountain peaks of the spirit, until finally, when you reach the highest pinnacle of what any one sphere of life can give to you, the wings, to use a figure of speech, of your soul have grown so that you can launch yourself into the blue ether and ascend along the solar rays of the spirit to a union, a self-conscious union, with divinity. Sons of the sun you are — each one of you is a son of the sun, the spiritual sun.

This teaching of the inner god, of the inner divinity, of the limitless powers and possibilities in the evolutionary growth of every human being, is the "Lost Word" of which faint whisperings are still heard in your spiritually deaf Occidental world. For this Lost Word is no mere word, because strictly speaking it is an interior illumination. It is a system of thought and a manner of living. It is the ancient wisdom-religion of mankind, the wisdom of the gods. Any sincere son of man who will not be balked by obstacles, whose spirit rises high above the attractions of the material world, and who wills to know and who dares to follow that pathway can become in its divine fullness the god within, first, and then afterwards there will open before him other pathways leading to the heart of the cosmic divine.

You will doubtless remember what the great Christian teacher said: "I am the Way, I am the Life"; and his first disciples knew well the meaning of his teaching; but alas! alas! how quickly did it die out from the memory of men, when ecclesiasticism and the lust for temporal power blinded men's eyes. Do you not know intuitively that each one of you is in the inmost of his inmost just such a Christos-spirit — just such an immanent Christ, of which the modern mystical Christians are beginning to talk, just such an inner Buddha, as the Orientals say? And alas! because men know this sublime truth no longer, because they have forgotten it, they turn to things of the exterior world, and attempt to find consolation and peace where there is neither consolation nor peace, seeking help where help will never be found; searching for light where light is not. All — peace, light, consolation, help — are within you. Your understanding is within. Your heart-force is within. All your percipient faculties are within. Where then, logically, should you seek for light? Outside of you? No, within.

Do I then mean by this appeal to the spiritual individual that there is no need for teachers, that there is no need for

organization? Do I then imply by voicing these unquestionably true and sublime facts that every man is a sufficient law unto himself? I do not. Just examine yourselves and you yourselves will then understand. Are you consciously expressing the divine powers within you? Do you even know of their existence otherwise than intuitively perhaps? Do you know how so to live that the divine within you may show forth its transcendent powers? Herein therefore is seen the need of a true teacher. Every great sage and seer of the past has taught among many other things one fundamental, identic, truth, which is what I have briefly set forth to you this afternoon. Every one of them can say, and many of them have said, just as Jesus did: "I am the Truth; I am the Way; I am the Life." So also is each one of you, if only you live unto the god within you.

No, I believe in teachers; I believe in true teaching; I believe in helping others. Teachers, true teachings, mutual help, are things that are needed. But when the teaching has been given, when the light has been received, then is the chance for your own inner faculties to show what power and resiliency of will you are able to manifest in your own life, and thereafter to tread the sublime path as a free spiritual entity. Furthermore, you will meet teachers always along the path, no matter how high you may go. The universe is a composite entity, builded of worlds within worlds, worlds invisible within the physical and astral encasements; and each one of these inner and invisible worlds of hierarchies, has its own heads, its own teachers, leaders, guides — spiritual beings who have attained that high state through self-directed evolution as my great predecessor Katherine Tingley loved to phrase it.

Do you see the logic of it all? Organization is needed because organization is the same thing as law and order. Imagine what would happen if every human being on earth were to be a law

unto himself in every detail, thoughtless of the rights of others, following his own whims and wishes at whatever cost to others. A blessed peace, a sublime harmony, should we have on earth, should we not! Men who teach such an anarchy of organization are not great. They lack wisdom. They lack first of all the inner vision, the vision sublime of the spirit; and do you know what is written all over this Vision in characters so beautiful that they are indescribable in language ordinarily human? It is this: Give up thy lower personal life if thou would'st find the life everlasting. Do you see? Exchange the limited, the personal, the small, the petty, the incomplete, the unevolved, for all the contraries of these. For within you are all things and all possibilities of growth.

But in order to find the way, to put your feet on this path, which you must tread inwards, leading to divinity, you must have guides; you must be taught. Where are these guides? Where will you be taught? I can show you the way; I can show you how to put your feet on this still, small path leading ever more and more and more inwards. But the initiating motion must come from you. I have no right to sway your will; I have no right to force the slightest situation in your mind, nor do I desire to do this. It would not only be futile but downright foolish, because no one can see until he opens his eyes. All I can say to you is a repeating of the teaching of the great seers and sages: Behold, the feast is laid, the wine of the spirit and the bread of life are on the table. Come and partake freely.

Unhappiness, sorrow, pain, suffering, and disease are the fruits of ignorance. Has that thought sunken into your hearts? The way to freedom and to peace which passeth all understanding, and to light and to harmony and to love, can be found. Knock; knock with a clean heart and an eager mind and an unveiled spiritual perception, and then your knock will be the right one, and the portals will open before you. Ask, and ask with the same qualities

of heart and mind, and you will receive. I tell you in all sincerity that these are not empty words. There is truth to be had, there is wisdom in the world; there is light. I will show you. That is my duty; that is in part what I was sent to do. Love, almighty love, will crack the stoniest of human hearts, for it works from within, and nothing can withstand its all-penetrating power.

The first question that I will briefly answer this afternoon along the line of thought upon which I have already tried to speak to you, is this:

Are life and its phenomena the resultants of a soulless mechanism called nature, or are they the results of law and order moving in mysterious ways?

Isn't that a typical example of a brain-mind question! I don't believe that the man has ever lived who has used his brain so slightly that he really looks upon nature as a soulless mechanism. Does a machine run itself as Nature does? Does a machine reproduce itself as nature does? Is a machine inspired, as nature is, producing its marvelous phenomena? Furthermore, a machine proves a mechanician — not one who has made the machine out of nothing at all, which is absurd, but one who is the controller and guide of mechanical appliances so to speak which already exist. The gods guiding and in a sense controlling nature do not "make" nature, but they produce it out of already preexisting material and seeds of individuality resident in the heart of each atom: in other words they are the guides, the teachers, the watchers, the leaders, after whose pattern of thought and following whose urgent will nature moves into manifested being.

Do you know that the cause of questions like this is the old materialism of our fathers and grandfathers, a materialism which was a fad, a scientific doctrine in which no one believed but which everyone talked about because it was the fashion? I

remember in my boyhood that I used to have the fun of my life in asking questions of those people who talked to me so persistently about "fortuity," and the "machine of nature," and "natural mechanisms," and all that kind of thing; and I never received a satisfactory or strictly logical answer.

When pushed to the limit, they always said the same things that the parsons did, but of course in other words and from another viewpoint: "I really don't know. I cannot answer that question. It is just so." And I always asked: "Is that an answer?" And the response reluctantly came: "No, I realize that it is not an answer, but it is the best response that I can give." "All right," I said, "if your answer is an acknowledged lack of a logical, formal, definite proof of what you have staked your life and reputation upon, then what kind of a belief is it?" To me it is just a blind belief, taking somebody else's opinions as nature's truth. And do you know, furthermore, that that soulless materialism of our fathers and grandfathers was just a superstition, a plain unvarnished superstition, without an atom of truth in it, a mere scientific fad, a mere scientific theory — and there are scientific fads and superstitions even today, and we might as well know it and talk about it because it will help the great men of science to have the ceaseless chattering of the camp followers of science stopped.

The most interesting thing about this whole matter is that the people who have pulled down these former scientific bigwigs from their thrones of infallibility are the other scientists. The attacks which destroyed the old soulless materialism of our fathers came from within the ranks of scientists themselves, and such attacks are always the most disintegrative of all, the most fatal. You may perhaps think that my words are a little severe upon science. I am not speaking of science *per se*; science is grand, is holy, for it is, as far as we have carried it, ordered knowledge of the Universe; and you would find all theosophists



rallying like a massed army against any attack upon honest investigation of nature's secrets. Theosophists will tolerate no attacks of that kind; but scientists, individual men, no matter what their sincerity may be, are a different matter entirely from science itself. Get that idea!

I tell you plainly that these old materialists, these materialists of the days of our fathers and grandfathers, taught a superstition which was not founded on nature, but founded upon the results of their own lucubrations, their own thoughts — honest, devoted, sincere, doubtless, and comprising an attempt to find explanations of things, but nevertheless wholly mistaken. Even as a boy I would have none of it.

The great scientists of today are beginning to recognize this fact that the old materialism of our fathers was an unvarnished, crude superstition. Some of the greatest minds in science today are openly proclaiming the same thing that I am saying. From this platform I have often called the old materialism soulless, uninspired, in fact worse, soul-devastating, because it is wholly untrue and is a mere scientific superstition; and it worked such evil on men's minds because it cut off men's cognition and intuition of an inner and spiritual universe and the knowledge that there is light to be had from this interior universe.

This morning a friend handed in to me an extract from a lecture or writing, I don't know which, by one of the most eminent English scientific men, and I will read this extract to you. It is from Professor J. S. Haldane, one of the most eminent men of Great Britain in his line. He says:

Materialism, once a scientific theory, is now the fatalistic creed of thousands; but materialism is nothing better than a superstition on the same level as belief in witches and devils.

I have never used language as strong as that, nor as uncomplimentary. And yet this language is true. So you have this corroboration of my words from one of the most eminent scientific men of today.

The fruits of the old materialism of our fathers and grandfathers are working evil even today in the minds and hearts of men. The fatalistic materialism existing today in such multitudes, a fatalistic materialism which the scientists have already repudiated, and yet which vast multitudes of men and women today unconsciously believe in because they have read it in the books found in the libraries, and are still taught it in the schools, is naught but a crude superstition, as this eminent scientific thinker says, and is to be classed in the same category with the old beliefs in witches and devils.

I tell you that our scientists today are beginning to be mystics. They are beginning to dream dreams and to see visions of truth. They are receiving a greater light, and I know of no cause which has worked more strongly to bring this about than the work of The Theosophical Society, and of that wonderful woman, H. P. Blavatsky, who founded The Theosophical Society. In her day, when she came, the world was in its mental attitude and outlook sunken in a materialistic mental swamp, a mental morass. She challenged the truth of these old materialistic theories. She ran full tilt, not like Don Quixote at windmills, but at mental ghosts — the thoughts and beliefs, false, unnatural, untrue — which were taught in all the universities of the Occidental world.

H. P. Blavatsky deserves the heartfelt gratitude of every thinking man and woman, and The Theosophical Society which she was the founder of, has for the last fifty years and more brought forth and taught the teachings which in her time were at first considered to be most unaccountably weird and queer, and yet

which later have become in many cases the accepted doctrines of our ultramodern scientific luminaries. I have made this statement before and I have proved it by quoting item and instance time and time again.

So there in brief is your answer to the question that was asked of me. Life and its phenomena are not the resultants of a soulless machine called nature. They are the evidences of what men in their ignorance call law and order, moving in mysterious ways; and what is this law and what is this order? I will tell you briefly what they are. What men call law and order in the universe are the wills and conscious movements — the movements of the consciousness — of the gods with which the universe is filled full, and of all the smaller entities in the divine hierarchies through which or whom these sublime cosmic spirits work. I call them gods, because such in truth they are; but if you like the word not, then call them cosmic spirits — call them what you like, but get the idea.

These gods exist in all-various grades, degrees, steps, stages, of evolutionary advancement, so that we have the greatest that human imagination in its loftiest flights can think of, can picture, can figurate, down through all intermediate stages to our own material sphere, yea, and below — what we humans call below. Now you see where so-called cosmic law and cosmic order come from, or rather originate. Take a man's body as an instance of my thought. In it dwell his intelligence and will. His body is permeated with his will and intelligence, and when he raises his arm he does so with will and with movement of his consciousness; and all the countless hosts, unnumbered decillions, of atoms composing the physical substance of that arm, obey his will. Those atoms are a part of the man's own being — bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh, life of his life — and just so are all inferior things in nature herself, so to speak, bone of the bone,

life of the life, blood of the blood, of the gods who infill the universe.

Such is the explanation of what men, not knowing the truth, abstractly call law and order — the movements of the consciousnesses, that is to say of the wills and of the intelligences, of the divine beings who infill the universe and who indeed are it in its nobler parts. For even gross physical matter itself is not different from the universe of which it is a part. Obviously. At the core of the core of the core of every atom, above it, surrounding it, manifesting through it, so feebly but yet manifesting through it, there dwells, there sits, there is, the life of an inner god; and as evolution — which means unfolding what is within, bringing out what is locked up — pursues its work on all these hosts of less things, they grow steadily greater, because ever more and more do they bring out the divine powers within; and finally man appears, imperfect, very imperfect, but still a man; beginning very feebly, but nevertheless beginning, to show the divine powers within.

And beyond man there are hosts of other entities along the rising ladder of life, expressing in still nobler degree and in fuller measure, the powers of the inner god, the immanent Christ if you like the term, the inner Buddha, if you like the term, the inner god as I call it.

So matter itself is rooted in divinity. See the beauty, see the hope, see the peace, in this thought. Imagine what men shall become in the future; imagine the time to come when men will walk the earth like gods. And why? Because then they will be men-gods, god-men, from having evolved forth more and more of the bright and flaming fire in the core of the core of their being. "Ye are gods," said the Christian New Testament, and the statement is true. Why do we suffer?

Here comes in orderly logical sequence my next question:

What can you say to those who suffer and seem to suffer unjustly?

Friends, the world is indeed full of pain. Hard must be the human heart which cannot see it; stony must it be which cannot feel it. Is any human being exempt from suffering and pain? From sorrow and grief? Have you never looked into the eyes of those whose souls are wrung with torture? I have. And the first time in this life when that revelation came to me, when I saw the cause, I said: Forevermore I am a servant of Those who bring peace and light and love into the world.

As the great Buddha-Gautama said: "Ye suffer from yourselves, none outside brings it upon you." You choose wrongly what you think and therefore wrongly do you act. You choose the difficult path instead — marvelous paradox! — that path steep and thorny, but only to the low, mean, ignoble, human passionate man: you choose the difficult path instead of that road (steep and thorny it may be) which leads upwards into light and peace indescribable. Men bring down suffering, sorrow, disharmony, disease upon themselves.

Instead of uniting in fraternal action, instead of each man feeling the woes of the world and attempting to do what he can, however small, to help, men alas! choose the path of satisfaction of the personal desires of the lower self; and since all men do this, the world is filled with pain and sorrow. That is why ye suffer, ye sons of men. That is why your hearts are wrung. That is why ye are diseased both in mind and body. Nature will not tolerate such action contrary to her own heart of hearts. The very heart of nature is love and harmony and peace, which mean cooperation, mutual helpfulness, brotherliness, kindness.

But men act contrariwise and then they say: "My God, what has brought this upon me?" Yourself! Why not live the god within you? Why not have peace? Why not have union? Why not think brotherly? Live brotherly? Don't you know — have you not yet found out — how painful selfishness is, how devastating both in heart and mind? Haven't you discovered that the man who thinks of naught but himself always loses in the end?

Give up your personal life, if ye would find the life everlasting, because such is the law, the nature, of the god within you. There is the road to peace; there is the road to happiness; there is the road to joy; there is the road to health; for that road leads to harmony and almighty love.

Do you get the idea? If so then you see why we suffer. We suffer from ourselves; and the sooner the lesson is learned, the sooner shall we taste of the life everlasting.

You say that love is the cement of the universe and that the heart of things is harmony and peace. How then do you account for human weakness, misery, wretchedness, sin, and pain?

I think that I have already answered that question, but in further elaboration of the thought, I may remark that I received the other day, along the same line of thinking, two questions. I believe they were written by the same kind friend. I will read them to you. They contain almost the same thought as that which is imbodyed in the question that I have just read to you, and have answered somewhat but have not yet answered fully. The first of them is this:

Every phase of life is largely a matter of combat — bloodthirsty, ruthless, merciless, devastating combat. The whetted sword, mammoth guns, deadly gases, sharp claws,

and saber teeth, to say nothing of the more subtle whispering conflict among many humans. Beneath the placid surface of ethereal blue seas move two great schools, the hunters and the hunted, the latter the prey of sharp teeth, voracious jaws, and powerful tentacles. The keynote of our sports and games is combat.

Flowers and trees seem to be exempt therefrom. Perhaps if we could pierce the veil and see all the invisible processes of growth and blossoming one might find combat there also. A collection of flowers is often described as "a riot of color."

Why all this conflict? Is it the law of life?

The second question is this, preceded by a quotation from the great English biologist, Thomas Huxley:

"Not only does every animal live at the expense of some other animal or plant, but the very plants are at war."

Was Huxley right in saying this?

As a bald statement Huxley's observation is true. It is true. And is not that just what I also have said? The causes of all this war is the conflict of wills and emotions and intensified low personal desires in these imperfect and ungrown creatures and things. Yet the heart of the Boundless is harmony and peace. It is only in manifested material worlds where every entity is for itself, because it is imperfect, ignorant, unwise, unknowing of the law of nature's heart, that you will find this horrible situation. Our earth is not a high sphere in the mansions of space. It is a low one, it is very material indeed. We humans are passing through it now, we, the host of men, simply as one phase of our long evolutionary journey backwards to the divine; and does not your heart move when you see this picture, realizing the all-powerful god within you on the one hand, and the misery and wretchedness around

you on the other hand? Does not your heart whisper its sublime admonitions to help?

O men of death, why not claim your birthright of the spirit? Unlock the transcendent powers of the divinity within you. Ye know not what is locked up within you. Every son of man, every daughter of woman, is in the heart of the core of himself or herself, not only an inner god, a divinity, but a poet, a sage, a seer, an artist, a fountain of every quality and faculty that the noblest of men have ever expressed in their professions. Every one of you is such.

Having this vision sublime, we theosophists do not shut our eyes to the misery of others, but devote our lives like the buddhas of Compassion to help all things, first by raising ourselves — impersonally, not personally — so that we may help others to see the light divine. You cannot merely carry others always. That is not the right and profitable way. They must learn to walk each one for himself or itself. They themselves, each one of them, must learn to walk, to think, to feel, to grow.

But you can always bring light, help, show the path, be a teacher unto your fellow men. Ye will be doing Masters' work in this way. It is nobler than any other path in life, and such a work needs men. No weakling can do it. It needs men of iron will first, for self-conquest; it needs men — and women of course — of high intellectual capacity; and ye can attain it. It needs men and women of spiritual vision, having the conscious reception of the light divine. That is the vision sublime. That is what ye may see on the mystic mountains of the spirit. And oh! the blessing, the peace, the consolation, and the spiritual balm for broken hearts that ye can give to others when once ye have seen that vision sublime! O friends, think, feel, be — at least in part — the god within you!

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Vol 2, No 2  
Contents

## Second Series: No. 2 (September 8, 1930)

### HAVE YOU FOUND YOURSELF?

(Lecture delivered July 6, 1930)

CONTENTS: Have you found yourself: the real you? — The modern schools of the Mysteries. — Without self-knowledge the outer world is a phantasm. — To him who would become one with the "changeless." What do we mean by the word *changeless* — Camp-followers in the cosmic evolutionary journey. — The physical world a mere cross section of time-space. — Man's journey through the universe. Our destiny is to become collaborators with the gods. — People don't like to think. — The doctrine of hierarchies as taught in theosophy. — Are teachers necessary? — Is the god within a sleeping giant? — Truth is discerned with the inner vision. — Ever-changing standards are no criterion. — Judge causes rather than results. — Why do deep afflictions come into blameless lives? — Suffering is the gateway of purification. — Give forth the treasures of the spirit!

A speaker can say more sometimes in the silence and through the voice of the silence than he can say by using the most rapid and ready speech of human tongue. I sometimes think that an audience, through the impressions that it receives from watching a speaker, from getting his atmosphere, in other words receiving the mental impress rather than the verbal stamp of his thought, takes in more of what that speaker is trying to say than such an audience does by merely listening to the words. And having this thought in my mind, I was looking at you, friends, in order to see if I could find any ones who had *found themselves*.

Have you found yourself? On last Sunday I asked you the

question: Who are you? And today I ask you a question of equivalent profundity and meaning: Have you found yourselves? Yes, yourself, the real you: that which brought you into the world as you really are — not the foolish things that you do or the idle and frivolous thoughts that you may think, or again the profound and worthy thoughts that you may think. These are all effects of you; but you yourself — are you found? Do you know yourself? If so, do you know who you are? If so, do you know why you are here?

That one interrogation, in these two forms — *Who are you?* and *Have you found yourself?*— is the very heart of the ancient wisdom's teachings. These two questions briefly set forth the meaning of the great schools of the Mysteries of the ancient world — and of the modern world also, if you know whither to go to find these modern schools of the Mysteries.

How can you know anything if you do not know yourself? All that you are is in you. What men call understanding, intellect, heart, mind, all your capacities, the originating impulses of all that you do, are parts of you. Now, how can you understand anything outside of you if you don't know yourself?

The whole of the essential teaching of the ancient wisdom-religion of mankind is to show men the path to knowledge of the real self; for when he attains this sublime vision, then he knows all that is without the Self, for he shall have entered into causal things, into causal worlds, where originating impulses arise; and his attention is no longer distracted by the phenomena of the exterior world, which is all, for the individual perceiver, a phantasm unless he knows himself.

Each one of you, as I tell you on every Sunday afternoon when I speak to you, is an imbodyed god — a spark of the heart of the universe — of the Central Fire — and therefore when you know

yourself, you know the heart of the universe, for essentially you are it, each one of you, in the core of the core of your being. All things become understandable to you when you know who you are. There is not a religion, there is not a philosophy, there is not a science, which has ever endured, which has not taught this fundamental truth: *i. e.*, the way to knowledge and unity with the universe lies primarily in knowledge of yourself.

A man's mind must be plunged into Cimmerian darkness, he must be incapable of logical thinking, if he does not appreciate this fact instantly; and to many minds it comes like a flash of light, and is the beginning of a new life. You cannot know yourself by following the lives outside of you, for before you know your self, that outside or exterior world is just one perplexing and bewildering whirl of phantasmagoric phenomena. The way to wisdom, to the knowledge within, and to unity with the spiritual universe is within each one of you. This is the simplest proposition that the human mind can understand, and yet it is the most difficult for those who simply won't open their eyes to the obvious.

What is yourself? I have told you: a divine being, a spark of the inner fire. Immovable? Unchanging? No. Moving steadily forwards, always evolving, growing, changing. How can a thing improve which is immovable, changeless? Some people with an intuitive recognition of certain abstract philosophical ideas, but without the wisdom that the majestic philosophy of mankind today called theosophy brings, use such expressions as: "Oh! I want to become one with the eternal; I want to become changeless; I want to become immovable in perfection." Heaven help them! This means that they don't want to grow. They don't want to become better; they don't want to know more than now they know!

The magnificent philosophies of India, for instance the Upanishads of the sacred writings of that ancient motherland of religions and philosophies, in speaking of the changeless and of the 'undecaying,' use these words in a purely relative sense, meaning that those sublime spiritual realities, by contrast with our present passing river of phenomena, stand majestic and sublime, and follow a sweep of evolving life on a scale so grand that to us humans it seems, but only seems, to be motionless. Thus seems it also to the unreflective human when he considers the earth on which he lives: he does not realize that it is in incessant, continuous movement around the sun and that its position in space is changing daily, hourly, instantly. His senses apprise him not of this, and if he judge by his sense observations he must believe that the earth is standing still and is the center of the universe.

Change is growth, growth is change; and evolution is but another word for growth. That is what theosophists mean by evolution; we use the word in the strictly etymological Latin sense, as meaning the unfolding — as I have so often already explained to you — the pouring forth, the unwrapping, of what is within. How can a seed bring forth what is not within it? How can any growing, evolving, changing, entity become something the seeds of which were not previously latent within it? Evolution is growth, and growth is evolution; and these are but two words for change. Kindly get understanding of this thought. It is enormously important.

Therefore be not afraid of change, but be sure that ye change for the better — *that ye change for the better*. Grow, expand! You have will; you have intelligence; you can therefore choose your path. Be careful, then, that your path be upwards; for as you grow, that is to say as you evolve, you will be bringing out more and more what is within you.

I have been asked many, many times by friends who have heard me speak: "Do I understand, then, that theosophy teaches that we shall be going on forever and forever and forever, just growing and growing and growing? Isn't there any rest? Isn't there any peace? Don't we ever stop growing?" Regarding these questions my thought reverts to a little poem by an American author which I read once and which I believe I have quoted before from this platform:

I wish I were a little rock  
A-settin' on a hill,  
A-doin' nothing all the day  
But jest a-settin' still.  
I wouldn't eat,  
I wouldn't sleep,  
I wouldn't even wash —  
I'd jest set still a thousand years  
And rest myself, by gosh!

Isn't that a sublime ambition! But nature's laws are all against it. You *must* grow, whether you will or whether you nill, and how noble, how much better is it not, to grow with your will, to be a man with your will, to ascend the stairways of life towards something ever better and more sublime with your will, and with your intelligence manifesting the divine powers within you, than to be like the little rock "a-settin' on the hill." Is not self-directed growth far better than trailing along behind in the rear, a camp follower of humanity on the cosmic evolutionary journey? Because go ye must, whether ye will or whether ye nill. Go ye must!

What a sublime picture this brings to the eye of our mind, a vision of endless growth, endless improvement! We began our evolutionary journey as an unself-conscious god-spark in this our

home-universe, in this our home hierarchy, passing through all the phases and realms and stages of universal nature, especially of invisible nature, and we find ourselves at the present time on this our physical plane or sphere, in this physical world — a mere cross section of time-space; and we shall some day leave it, journeying out of it upwards, ever more upwards, and thus passing from humanity into quasi-divinity, and when we shall have attained quasi-divinity, we shall leave it for destinies still more sublime.

Yes, it is our destiny to become collaborators with the gods with which the universe is filled, is full, is filled full. It is our destiny to become gods ourselves; for each one of you, in the core of his being, is such a god. Each one of you is a god-spark, a spark, to use ordinary language, of the Central Fire of the Cosmos. Therefore, becoming a god is simply evolving, bringing forth, what is within you. It means simply expanding in consciousness and power, so that your consciousness from human becomes universal, which means comprising within its sweep all the realms and spheres visible and invisible of our home-universe.

When this universal stage shall have been reached, is that the end of our growth? No, there are no ends. You will then go still higher. Try to imagine what these two words mean: *infinity* — no beginning, no end; *eternity* — no beginning, no end. Nothing stands still, not even for a fraction of a human second; all is in motion — gods, universes, solar systems, worlds, and all the atoms which compose them; and we humans, human atoms so to speak, we human life-atoms, having reached this present stage of evolution, shall march steadily forwards as units of the same cosmic procession of which I have just spoken.

Some people don't like to think: I really am inclined to think that all people don't like to think. That includes you — and me! They

much prefer to believe what they are told. But we in theosophy don't like to believe merely what we are told. We are taught differently: we are taught to believe what our conscience tells us is true, and we are taught to believe naught else.

Is your conscience, therefore, an infallible guide? No. For conscience itself is an evolving portion of your constitution, an evolving faculty, growing ever stronger, more clairvoyant of truth, of right. But it is your light; it is the light from your spiritual soul, and ye have none other; and that light will grow ever and steadily greater and grander, purer and more divine, as ye faithfully follow it.

Every part of you is evolving. The very divine being, which is the core of the core of the heart of the heart of you, is an evolving entity. You, as a human mentality, as a human soul, are an evolving entity, a feeble shadow and manifestation of the god within you, a vehicle of that god's powers and energies, framed by evolution to manifest those powers and energies on this plane, in this human world. And all the atoms of your various bodies — spiritual, psychical, astral, and physical — are likewise, each one of them, an evolving entity.

Do you see the picture? Do you understand what this picture implies? Nothing lives unto itself alone. We all live unto each other. As the atoms of my body are held in the dominating grip of my individuality, so are we human beings, considered as a body, as a hierarchy, held in the life and guided by the intelligence of some entity still more sublime. Why give to this sublime entity a name? Why not do as the Christian Apostle Paul did, and simply say: "In it we live, and move, and have our being"?

God? What is God? Why limit the fact by giving it a name in our thought? Boundless infinitude, which is but the other aspect of boundless eternity, is filled full with gods in all stages of



evolutionary development: low, higher, and for us the highest; but beyond there are other hierarchies of them endlessly. Everything is evolving. Everything is moving, progressing. In the case of each entity no matter how high or how low it may be this progressive evolution is accomplished by self-originated impulses, from within. Nature is merely the field in which you live and work out your destiny; and that field is the life-essence of this grander entity of which I have just spoken, just as the molecules and the atoms composing my body live in me, move in me, have their being in me, their greater container. So is it likewise with us: we live and move and have our being in this greater entity. In these few words lies the gist of the sublime doctrine of hierarchies as taught in theosophy. Take this thought into your consciousness. It is a wonderful key to nobler and still loftier thoughts.

There are some people who are like the little boy of whom I was reading in a funny story the other day. This is a story about a little boy who wanted to know something about heaven and also about what happened to naughty little boys who tell lies:

"Mother, do liars ever go to Heaven?"

"Why no, dear! Certainly not."

After a long pause — "Well, it must be awful lonesome up there with only God and George Washington." — *The Hardware Age*

Now, this humorous little story well illustrates the type of mind that some people — you would be surprised to know how numerous they are — love to cultivate. They like to dwell in familiar thoughts; they like to be told things which they love to follow. But tell them that they are following someone else's thoughts, and notice the offended dignity with which they will greet your remark. You will be the recipient of that Gorgon's

stony stare which will freeze you stiffer than an icicle.

Have you found yourself? Are you beginning to get the idea of what I mean by asking you this question? I want you to wake up to what is within you. I mean every word of this. I want you to awaken spiritually and intellectually. Don't accept offhand merely what I say to you. Don't be like the little boy who asked his mother where liars went after death and then accepted what she said; but think for yourselves, and that will be the first sign of your awakening, of your finding yourself. *Gnothi seauton* said the ancient Greeks, voicing the declaration of the Greek Oracle: — *Man, know thyself!* You will know all things in the universe if you know yourself fully, for then you will have become a god with consciousness of universal field.

A question came to me the other day for answering this afternoon, and I will read it to you now.

Why are teachers necessary when every human being is a potential god? Is the god within inadequate, or is it another case of a sleeping giant?

This question is beautifully phrased; and I would like to answer offhand: It is a case of a sleeping giant. The god is adequate. But I cannot give such an offhand and easy answer, for this divine being within you is not "asleep." It is a titan, a divine titan, but it sleepeth not at all. Fell it to sleep for one fleeting instant of time, and all that you are would vanish away like a mist before the morning sun — and incomparably more quickly. All that you are, all that you express, all that you manifest, consists in streams of energy — spiritual, intellectual, psychical, astral, and physical — which ultimately originate in the god within you, your own inner divinity, which is the heart, the core of you. Withdraw it if possible from your constitution, and all the rest of you would vanish like a fleeting shadow on a white wall. In such a

supposititious case a watcher could say: You were and now you are not.

No, it sleepeth not at all, nor ever. Its very essence is vibrant spiritual energy. Get that thought please. It is the outflowing of this energy within you which expresses itself in and through the imperfect vehicles which you are: your imperfect human soul, your imperfect mind, your imperfect intelligence, your vagrant and imperfect emotional nature. These energies expressing themselves through these different parts of your constitution, produce you.

You see, here again I come back to the same thing which I said before: Evolution is the fuller and fuller and progressively more perfect manifestation of these powers of the inner god. As a seed brings forth what is locked up within it as potency, finally manifesting some of these powers as a full-grown plant, as the human microscopic seed brings forth that which grows into the full-sized human adult, manifesting, bringing forth, unwrapping, unrolling, what it contains as latent capacity, faculty, potency, within itself, similarly through the ages does the ever-evolving, growing, changing entity bring forth ever more fully what is locked up within — and this is evolution.

No, I cannot say that the god within is merely a sleeping giant. It is a giant in power indeed, a titan, a cosmic titan, but it is fully awake. And we poor humans, each one of us, a reflection of the latent powers and faculties flowing forth from this divine being within each of us, as the ages pass march ever upwards towards a union with our divine self. We shall lose finally our present human self because it will expand, grow, into becoming our divine self. Do you understand that thought? Let me ask you: Does the child lose itself when it becomes a man? Does the young oak, springing from the acorn, lose itself when it in its turn becomes a

full-grown oak? Evolution is change, but change in the sense of growth of what is within.

Now, here I must enter a caveat lest you misunderstand this idea. Theosophists are not Darwinists, we are not Transformists; we do not teach that one thing merely changes into something else without a connecting thread of vitality and consciousness between one change and the succeeding change. Our theosophical teaching is that evolution is an unfolding in ever greater degree of what remains the same individuality. Theosophists are therefore not Darwinists; we are not Lamarckians; we are not Transformists. We are evolutionists.

As I have said before: will a pile of strings and pieces of wood and a pot of varnish and bits of metal and ivory and other things, through evolution transform themselves into a piano? Is a heap of stones a house? No, theosophists don't teach Transformism; we don't teach that the stone becomes a plant by the stone "transforming" itself into a plant. That would be magic of a kind that the ancient wisdom knows nothing of and such magic does not exist. Theosophists certainly don't teach that.

In the core of the core of every life-atom there is the overshadowing — or over-lightening to use a better word — influence of the god within that life-atom, within it but also above it because superior to it, the life-atom being merely its vehicle. As ages pass the energies streaming from the god within and working through this life-atom pass from new body to new body, rising along the scale of life from body of stone to body of beast, through the plants, to body of man, and from man entering bodies of gods. I might add also that the various vehicles or bodies through which this stream of life-consciousness passes are of course improved by the working of this stream within them, so that the bodies themselves, as the ages bring forth generation

after generation, slowly improve both in texture and capacity, to manifest more perfectly this stream of vitality and consciousness. Hence it is that the bodies themselves evolve through growth to perfection.

I have heard it asked: "Where are these gods of which you speak?" We think that we do not see them, and therefore we say they are non-existent. We blind our eyes to the vast and bewildering complex diversities of growing things around us, offsprings of the life-atoms of these gods. Nature herself proves that the gods are within her and working through her. Is it logical to say that a thing is non-existent because we do not see it? You don't see energy and by the same line of argument energy does not exist. You have never seen an atom, and by the same line of argument atoms do not exist, because you don't see them. The entities inhabiting some of the electrons forming the atoms of your body do not see you, and therefore, from the same line of argument, you do not exist. Do you understand me now? No thinking man, therefore, would argue merely that because his senses do not apprise him of the existence of something, therefore it is non-existent. The argument is childish. I need but to allude to it to show you how futile such offhand arguments are.

What is proof? The preponderance of evidence presented to the mind. Is proof, therefore, absolute truth? It is not. You may prove a thing to the hilt, and yet be wrong. But there is that within you, your intuitive cognising faculty, which will tell you what truth is. And were all the universities of our own globe to combine against a man who knew a fact from the powers within him, they would not change his cognition of the truth that he sees; and when a man can stand like that and face the world because his instinct, his conscience, his intuition, his intellect, tell him that such and such a thing is true, he indeed is a man, and he is infinitely farther along the path than are the dogmatists, whether in

religion or science or philosophy, who have not his faculty of developed inner vision.

Yes, every one of you has within him an infallible guide, which is the full conscious power of the god within you and of which your consciousness and conscience are as yet an undeveloped expression. Your duty, therefore, is to look within to find this guide.

Do you need teachers? Yes, you do need teachers. What does a teacher do? He shows you the path; his teaching is a help. He evokes from within you your own latent and dormant faculties. That is what a true teacher does — *he educates* — instructs also, perhaps, but EDUCATES — brings out what is within you, leads forth your native powers. Instruction is merely filling your mind full of facts — good enough in its way and in its place, but it is not the true work of a teacher.

A teacher shows you how to think, how to become; shows you how to use what is within yourself. He shows you the way. He does more. A true spiritual teacher will take your hand and bring you, if you trust him, to the portals of the Temple of Divine Wisdom; and there, not he but you will give the knock. For this knock is not a knock of the hand; it is a manifestation issuing from soul, from mind and heart, that you have arrived at the point where you want more light, and your teacher recognizes that knock, as Jesus said.

Certainly teachers are needed; and the man who thinks that he knows so much that he can learn no more — you know where to place him on the ladder of life. Pity him, for he has not found himself; he does not know who he is; the god within him is not manifest. The more you really know, the more you are aware that you don't know much. Strange paradox! It is the ignorant, it is the foolish, the self-satisfied, who say: "We have truth; we are the

ones." But the one who has even a little of the divine illumination of truth will tell you: "I am a learner. I am a student. I have seen the vision sublime and I know that beyond that vision (I now know it for I have seen it) there are visions still more grand."

You know what the ancient Greek, Socrates, said of teachers. He was accused, by those who brought him before the judges, of corrupting the youth of his land by instilling into their minds teachings contrary to the established law; and he said: "Men of Athens, I am the midwife of the souls of men. I bring to birth what otherwise would cause heavy labor to those who are learning." He spoke truth.

A teacher occupies a position of enormous responsibility indeed. But he gives — gives all that is in him, all that he is and has. He is entitled to the perfect trust and loyal friendship and devotion of those whom he teaches. I tell you, you men of the Occident, that you have lost one of the noblest instinctual feelings of the human heart, and that is, devotion, self-dedication, one of the manliest and noblest not only of human emotions but instincts; and with this loss ye have likewise lost much of the sense of gratitude. These are the things which make men great.

Mere accomplishments count for but little. You hear the statement constantly made: "I do not care what a man says; show me results." Yes, this is perfectly logical, perfectly true. I would not attempt to deny it. But after all, what does it mean? Such a speaker is looking for results, he is not looking for causes; and if the standard is wrong, if what men happen to prize in any age is on a level low and ignoble, the man who produces results of that low and ignoble stage will be considered a great one.

No, it is the treasures that are in the heart of man, in his spirit, in his intellect, which make him man. Not what he produces alone, not what his results are alone. Pray learn that well. The statement

made as a statement is true enough. Nobody would attempt to deny that if you are something of worth, you will produce fruits in accordance with what you are. But do not judge, that is my point; do not judge a man merely by what he produces, by what the results are. Judge him by what he is. Judge not that ye be not judged, because in judging ye judge yourselves: your judgment places you where you belong, as showing what your intuition, your faculty of visioning truth, is.

Consequently, when we see people suffer, when we see people misfortunate and unfortunate, when we see people in sorrow and pain, judge them not, for none of you knows the hid causes of what has produced this. Judge not the ragged beggar on the street. In his last life he may have been a prince clad in purple, and for some former fault he is now passing through this stage, a new stage, on this earth — a stage of moral and intellectual cleansing and purgation.

Be charitable in your thoughts. Be pitiful. It is great so to be. Judging our fellows quickly and without adequate thinking is unkind to say the least. It is also foolish, because your judgments are inevitably based on the standards of the day, and the veriest tyro, the child in an intermediate school, knows that standards change. Shall ye have the standards of Rome, or the standards of Greece, or the standards of our day, or the standards of the European Middle Ages, or the standards of India? Why not take the standard that your own spirit-soul whispers constantly to you: forgive, love. Be at peace. Cultivate harmonious relations with your fellow men. Do not judge; be helpful. Be kind. These show true manhood. The weakling does not understand.

I here turn to a question which was sent in to me within the last day or two, asking that it might be answered this afternoon. It is this:



Why is it that a fine and blameless soul with an exceptional capacity for deep feeling is, not infrequently, subjected to the most intense suffering that the human heart can know? Can you explain why such deep afflictions come into blameless lives?

Yes indeed, I can explain it, and know that my explanation will be easily understood of you, for not one of you is freed from sorrow and pain. It is something that all sons of men know of, have experienced, and those who have passed through the cleansing fire, through the pure fine flame of suffering, are the ones who are pitiful towards those who themselves are passing through the stages of purification. It is through knowledge that we grow. It is through experience that we evolve. And those experiences which make the greatest call upon our energies and ethical stamina are the ones which help us the most, and they awaken our dormant spiritual and intellectual powers the most quickly.

We can live like drones, droning away a valuable incarnation on earth; or we can live like true men, vibrating with life in every atom of our being, spiritual, mental, psychical, astral — even the body then vibrating with kindly feeling. Nothing makes us feel with others so deeply as passing through the gateways of purification which sorrow and suffering and pain are, for sorrow and suffering and pain are ennobling and refining influences.

When the human heart is wrung, has been wrung, then it becomes tender to the woes of others. Do not pity yourselves when passing through these gateways of purification, O friends! look upon it all as a sublime opportunity, painful as it is, for all quick growth is painful, and sorrow quickens the evolution of the soul, for it stirs up everything within you.

"What causes pain and suffering to come into blameless lives?"  
The laws of infinitely merciful nature, whose whole effort is to

awaken the man to the realization of the existence of the god within, in other words and to speak more accurately, to awaken you as humans to recognize your own inner god. Also the immediate causes of suffering and pain coming into blameless lives are the things wrongly done, in former incarnations, the things left undone, the lessons in life deliberately ignored and turned from.

We are always quick to see and to wonder at the suffering and pain that we undergo, but do we ask ourselves with equal readiness: whence come upon us the things of good fortune and the things of success and the talents and the good lucks so called that we meet with? It is all our karma, as theosophists say, in other words the results or consequences whether good or bad of noble acts or ignoble acts which we had done or left undone or wrongly done in this or in previous lives on earth.

Nature is a close and absolutely accurate marker of everything that you think or do. Nature being infinitely just, everything that you think or do is written on the page of your character — on the credit or the debit side; and sooner or later ye must meet the bill and pay it if the account is running against you. But here also lies the mercy of the divine Law, that our payment results in a quickened evolution of our own inner spiritual self. Sorrow, suffering, pain, bring forth more quickly than joys and happiness the powers and faculties that we have within us. Do you understand me now? The heart of nature is love unbounded and peace which passeth all comprehension, even of the very gods. When a man acts aright, he acts according to nature's laws, to use popular language; and therefore that is the way to peace and harmony, because he acts with nature and runs not contrary to her own irresistible currents of evolution. When a man acts for himself alone, placing his puny, his feeble, his imperfect will against the strong current of nature's flooding river of

evolutionary progress, he is swept aside on to some sandbank of destiny, and must recover by his own efforts his former place in nature's majestically advancing river of evolution.

That is why we suffer. We suffer from ourselves, and, alas! we make others suffer with us, because we are all knitted together in inseparable bonds of origin and destiny. Therefore be merciful, be pitiful, when power is in your hands; for as ye mete, said Jesus the avatara, it shall be meted unto you. Ye shall receive back what ye give. Give, therefore, the treasures of your spirit; and act like a god even now, because even now ye have godlike thoughts. Be men, expressing the divine powers of the divinity within you!

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[Vol 2, No 3](#)  
[Contents](#)

## Second Series: No. 3 (September 15, 1930)

### WHAT ARE YOU?

(Lecture delivered July 13, 1930)

CONTENTS: Light for the materialism-ridden Occident. — Why be satisfied with spiritual and mental husks? — No oracle is needed to answer your questions. — Occidentals have lost the key to self-knowledge. — Evolve by self-directed evolution. — *The Psychic Powers*: they die with the body. They are not the source of spiritual powers. How they are used by the great ones. Their danger when used by the ignorant. — The average man of the Occident intellectually lazy. — Beware of him who says: "Lo, here is the Christ!" — Wisdom the treasury of experience. — It is the blows of destiny that awaken. — Membership in The Theosophical Society. — The Inner Body of the T.S. — What is empty space? — Was the Pyramid of Cheops merely a tomb? — The higher initiation of the Mystery schools.

I am looking for gods among you. I mean it! I am looking to see how many of you manifest — however feebly — the divinity within you, for this divinity you cannot hide. It will shine forth from you as an emanation that any thoughtful and percipient mind can sense. It will stream forth from your eyes, shine from your face, and your very manner of holding yourself will show to a looker-on who knows how to read the signs just how far you have climbed the evolutionary ladder of life.

I am looking for gods among you. Do I find them? Yes! Yes! I see in you the fire of intelligence; I see the flame of understanding; I see the rein of self-control, however inadequately and imperfectly it may be held, governing the lower man in you; and in so much I sense that I stand here before an audience of gods, and am

speaking to an audience of gods. Do you know how I can interpret this? Because I myself am an embodied god. Having understanding within me, I can interpret it when I see it in you. Having intelligence in me, I recognize it in you. Feeling the urge of brotherly love in my heart, I see how my words evoke it forth from your own heart. I see it in your faces; for the very core of the core of each one of you is a divinity.

I tell you this on every Sunday when I talk to you, because it is so important, especially in the materialism-ridden Occident of the last hundred years or so, during which time men lost their grip on all things that are worthwhile, on all things that stand forever — the great realities of existence. I want to recall to your minds what you really are, so that you yourselves may choose your own path, marching steadily ever upwards towards that divinity which is not only within you, within the core of the core of you, but which also shines over you and deluges you with its divine radiance and which permeates you with its celestial fire.

Why not ally yourselves more fully with this inner divinity within you? Why be satisfied with spiritual and mental husks that the swine do eat, to use the language of the Christian New Testament, impolite as that language is? Why choose bran, the husks, the rejecta, when you can have the full kernel furnishing the divine bread of wisdom? You can have it. You can indeed have it. You have it, but you won't take it, because you have forgotten that you have it within you. You know that what I tell you is true.

Two Sundays ago I asked you, when standing here before you — before an audience like you at any rate — I asked you: *Who are you?* and I wonder how many of you offhand could have given me a quick, a ready, an accurate answer. And on last Sunday I asked you: *Have you found yourself?* If you have, nothing that I could say to you will be strange to you. The teachings of the

ancient wisdom would then simply come to you as familiar thoughts, as dear and precious meditations springing from the deeps of your own heart. And today I ask you again *if you know who you are*, and *if you have found yourself, what are you? and whither are you going?* Can any one of you answer these questions? It is true that you are filled with intuitions, and therefore also intuitively do you know that what I tell you is true. But if I were to ask you for an intellectual exposition in answering these questions that I put before you, what could you answer me?

Is it any wonder that the god Apollo, at his Oracle in Delphi, Greece, in ancient times had written over the portico of the Temple raised in his honor, two words: *Gnothi seauton*, "Know Thyself!"? And you need not come to an oracle in order to have your questions answered. You have it all within. You can answer all your own questions, every one of you, once that you come into a self-conscious realization of who you are, and what you are when you have found yourself. You will then know what your place in the universe is, what your origin was, and what your future will be. I can tell you, further, if you have the answers to these questions, which you can have if you *know yourself*, then this world would be a heaven, because disputes would stop, quarrels would cease, understanding and brotherly love would take the places of strife and discord.

These are the truths that The Theosophical Society, above everything else, was founded to bring back to the cognition of the men of the West. To the men of the East also does this apply, but particularly so to Occidentals, because the Occidentals have lost the key to self-knowledge. You have verily lost that key. The words that our announcer read to you this afternoon are no vain words. They are not mere poetry, they were not uttered merely in an attempt to produce an impression. I repeat the words of all the great seers and sages of the ages: Knock, and if you give the right

knock, it will be opened unto you. Ask, and if you ask aright, in self-forgetfulness and in sheer hunger for light, for truth, ye shall receive.

There is truth in the universe, truth which has been tested throughout innumerable ages by the greatest men, by the great sages and seers of all time, by the greatest men, I say, that the human race has ever given birth to — the greatest thinkers, the greatest psychologists, the greatest philosophers, the founders of the greatest world religions. I have uttered a few of their names time and time and time again: Jesus the Syrian sage, and the great Gautama the Buddha, are two whom it will suffice to mention now.

The roots of their teachings are the same in each and all of the great religions and philosophical systems for they tell you what you are, whence you came, whither you go, and what the universe is of which you are, each one of you, an inseparable part, therefore containing within you all that the universe contains. One drop of the water of the sea will tell you the mysteries of the ocean. You are such drops of the infinite ocean of life; and if you know yourself, ye shall know all the secrets of that infinite ocean of life.

You have everything within you — spiritual powers, intellectual powers, psychical powers so called, astral powers, vital powers, and even physical powers; and you don't use one thousandth part of what you have within you, because you don't know that you have these powers. You prefer, you have preferred, your fathers have preferred, to take either the dead-letter teachings of a moribund church or the equally dogmatic and unsatisfactory teachings of an unknowing science — a science whose weakness (and equivalently whose strength) is that it changes from year to year because it learns more.

But do you think I am going to base the beliefs of all my being on a changing theory which passes from phase to phase? No! I am going to follow that still small pathway within me, which will lead me, if faithfully followed, to the heart of the universe — my parent, my divine source, and yours. That is where I shall find wisdom and peace and vision, because I shall drink of the waters of life eternal. These waters are within me, within you.

Men have learned something of the powers of the physical universe, something of the feeble because undeveloped powers of their own inner constitution; and these powers have blinded them, imperfectly developed as they are, and oh! so imperfectly understood — have blinded them I say, to the sublimer powers of the spirit still more within.

When a theosophical lecturer speaks after this fashion, he does not mean that ye should abandon what we have that is worthy, that is of value, that is useful. He means only that ye should seek for something higher and nobler; that ye should grow; that ye should evolve by self-directed evolution, as Katherine Tingley so often told you from this platform — by self-directed evolution, meaning by rapid growth instead of merely flowing along on this steadily advancing but oh! so slow river of time.

Use your will; use your intelligence; use your intellect; use the faculties for self-development that you have; and thus *be*, because ye shall become, and thus be ever more fully the god within you. Every one of you, in the core of his being, is a Christ, is a Buddha, is a great sage and seer, is a spiritual clairvoyant, is a mystic, is a sublime poet, is a lofty-minded scientist, is a genius, is a supremely great artist. Think!

The human race has produced all these manifestations of the human spirit. Shall we say that certain ones of the sons of men have been particularly favored, and that the other children of



men have not the same chance? How can that be? These great ones came from the same human stock that we are; the same blood flowed in their veins as flows in ours; all the faculties that they had and developed, are human. You also have them all.

Show me out of these great men, first, a single one that ever harmed his fellow; second, who ever limited the use of the faculties that he had to the so-called psychical powers. I know not one. All of them were teachers of men. All of them were guided by the divine flame within, by the spiritual light which is bounded by neither space nor time, and which appealed as strongly to the human heart in the ages of the past as it will appeal in a billion years from now, if men then still exist on earth.

But the psychical powers so called, such as thought-transference and clairaudience and clairvoyance — useful if guided by high moral power — die when the body dies; pass when the body is dissolved, and that is the end of them. But what remain not only in the individual who has lived and taught, but also in the hearts of his fellows, are the things of great and outstanding value: the teaching of men to love each other; the teaching to men that they are sons of the gods, children of the spiritual universe, having everything within them that the universe has — every energy, every faculty, every power — that they can become divine if they will. The teaching of love, of almighty love, which is all-permeant, which penetrates everywhere, and which the stoniest of human hearts never has been able to resist; the teaching of compassion, of pity, of mercy, of kindness, of universal brotherhood — one of the sublimest of our theosophical doctrines, that fundamentally we are all one, keepers of each other, wholly responsible for what we do to each other, responsible for the sufferings that we cause, for the aching hearts that we shall be called to account by nature's spiritual law in making ache — all these qualities and powers flow forth from the spirit, because they all originate in

spiritual faculties; and when you have come to use and enjoy these spiritual faculties self-consciously, then you live in the eternal life, because your consciousness becomes cosmic in its sweep. It is no longer limited to the fleshly body, or to the mere interests of one incarnation on earth. Think it over.

These manifestations of spiritual power are the marks of a spiritual genius; but I can tell you also that these great ones of the ages didn't neglect the psychical powers that were theirs. Nevertheless remember that the spiritual powers do not spring from the psychical powers. The psychical powers come into birth within men naturally, and in these great ones were used properly and usefully, because such psychic powers were guided by high moral instinct, and because in addition to being guided they were enlightened by the divine flame of spiritual intelligence.

People usually do not know these things in the West. They can know them, but as a rule they won't know them. You can find these teachings and doctrines in the ancient religious and philosophical literatures of the world; but if you ask a man to make this search, as a rule he says: "Hm, too high-brow!" He evidently wants to be a low-brow. Do you want to be low-brows? The beast is a low-brow. The truth of the matter is that the men of the Occident as a rule — not all of course, because there are splendid men everywhere, but the average man in the Occident — is intellectually lazy, and wants someone else to think for him. He wants to be led; he wants to be guided. And the proof of this statement is here: that upon the first discovery of the truth of his spiritual independence and of his inner spiritual power, the discovery runs away with him, and thereafter for a while he won't be guided by anybody, not even by his higher self.

"I am supreme," is his thought. "I am the supreme individual" — thus running to the other extreme — "nothing that I do not think

of and cannot think of can possibly exist in the Universe, because I have not thought of it." Previous to that time he took everything that he thought and felt from books that he had read, or from someone who had acquired a certain position in the intellectual world.

Now, theosophists have something to lay before you, to set before you. It is at once an inspirer towards a nobler life and a corrective of our faults. The ancient wisdom-religion of mankind, belonging to no age, because it belongs to every age, was evolved forth by no one individual because every spiritually great man has taught it — and when I say spiritually great man, I mean the greatest of the great, the loftiest intellects, the titanic spiritual giants of the human race. This ancient wisdom-religion was their teaching, is their teaching, and will be their teaching. No one has invented theosophy. Theosophy will tell you what your spiritual nature is, what these psychical powers, so called, are, how you are builded, whence you came, what your present nature and usefulness in the universe is, what your destiny will be.

No theosophist ever presents his sublime philosophy to you and says: You must believe this or you cannot join us. We say: These are the teachings of the wisdom-religion of mankind; they are what I have told you they are. Undertake the study of these doctrines yourself. Prove them yourself. Follow them, if you are man enough to follow them, if you find them good. If you don't like them, don't take them.

We have no dogmas at all in The Theosophical Society. We are searchers for truth, learners of truth; and I tell you: be suspicious if anyone should ever stand before you and say: "Behold, I am the Christ." The great ones are always modest. The more that a man knows, the more indeed he may speak with decision and power, and he has the right to do so, but the less does he lay down what

he knows as a law for others to follow. You know what is said in the Christian New Testament about those who were spoken of as coming in after times: Lo, someone will say, here is the Christ. Believe him not. And others will say: Lo, there is the Christ. Also believe him not.

But every man who knows something, who has truth even in minor degree, is entitled to say and has a right to say: I am the way, I am the life, because I can show you the way and give you the light. What does any university professor say? He says the same thing, but in your Occidental phrases. "Yes, sir, I am a teacher of psychology; I am a teacher of Greek; I am a teacher of astronomy; I stand before you teaching this subject or that." All this is simply saying: "I am the way to learn psychology; I am the way to learn Greek; I will show you the way to learn astronomy. Come to me, and I will give you light on these subjects."

Human hearts are stony. People talk about "tender" human hearts. My friends, human hearts are the most adamant, stony things that I have ever known. Nothing will break this stoniness except that which lacks all violence, all force, which is modest, utterly kind, peaceful, brotherly. Do you know what it is? It is almighty love, the very cement of the universe, permeating everything, holding even the atoms together. None can resist it. Do you catch the thought?

What powers shall ye cultivate in order to grow, to be, to succeed? Those which nothing can withstand, which nothing and none can resist, which work day and night, in the silence and in the storm, always zealously, the very heart-energy of the universe, of which you are children — these are the powers which ye should cultivate: love, intelligence, compassion, pity, forgiveness, and such fruits of these as are gentleness, kindheartedness, mildness of spirit, and similar things. These are

spiritual powers.

Next let me tell you a few of the fruits, of the rewards, that ye shall have, first from knowing that ye have these, then from cultivating them. Ye shall have spiritual clairvoyance, vision of universal sweep, limited only so far as you as an individual can interpret, can receive, can contain. The spiritual faculties are within you and can be cultivated to an infinite extent.

Understanding, for instance, for understanding is also of the very nature of the heart of the universe. You have it within you. Ye can understand all things if ye cultivate it. Ye can understand why the grass grows, why the bloom is on the peach, why your fellow human beings live, why you are here, what the stars in their courses are constantly singing to you, why hate and love, night and day, summer and winter, heat and cold, and all the other pairs of opposites, exist in the universe.

Ye shall have clairaudience and clairvoyance of a spiritual kind — not the psychic counterparts of these, but the spiritual powers derived from the spiritual faculties within you. I tell you in all seriousness, that when ye possess these powers which ye can, by cultivating the inner divine faculties, the spiritual faculties, within you, ye shall hear the music of the spheres and know what it is that ye hear; ye shall hear and see the grass grow and understand why it grows; ye shall hear the atoms sing and see their movements, and the melodies that any physical body produces — the unison of the songs of all individual atoms. Psychic powers, so called, will give you none of these things; but the spirit within you will do so — son of the sun in very truth, your own inner god. It is your interpreter!

And material success? Shall I drop to the physical plane for a moment and tell you how to succeed in the material world? Perhaps for a moment only, because it will enable me to illustrate

a point. The man who possesses spiritual faculties and powers and knows how to use them for good, never for evil — because he will then be destroyed, if he does, by the reaction, by the snap-back — the man who so uses them will have all that the physical world, the world of men, possesses for him — fortune, power, influence, human affection, human love; in fact all good things will be his.

And just here is the test: Do I take these unto me only, for me only, or wholly for the service of my fellow men? If the latter is the case, he is like a god who walks among men. If the former is the motive, he will never fully receive. Did you ever hear of a man who could get a corner on love? Is it possible for a human being to get a corner on understanding and intellect? Do you now get the idea?

Awake, I tell you! Be the best that you are. For, verily, ye are gods and the sons of gods — immortal divinities in your innermost essence! Ye don't know what ye have within you. And these psychic powers, the pursuit of which is now popular all over the Occident, leading people astray — are the psychic powers in themselves evil? No. But first, men don't know what they are; and, in the second place, when they do have a little of this, or of that, or of some other psychic power, ninety-nine times out of a hundred it is misused for selfish and ignoble purposes.

Therefore, the psychic powers themselves are not wrong, but they should be guided by the moral instinct and by the sublime vision springing from the god within you. Then their use is proper; and no matter what use be made of them, it is a safe and holy use.

What are these psychical powers so called? Here is a question on this topic that was sent in to me for answer:

Does the possession of psychic powers indicate a superior

state of evolution? My observation has been that people possessing such so-called psychic powers generally feel that they have something to be proud of.

It would be something to be proud of in a certain way if only people knew how to use them and control them, instead of being used by them and controlled by them. Do you admire a man who cannot control himself, cannot control his faculties, but is a mere slave, a tool, an instrument, jumping-jacking around as it were, and not even able to control the spasmodic movements of his physical body? Is it an admirable sight? No. Lack of self-control is always an ugly thing to see, because it is an imperfect thing. But a man who controls himself, because he knows who he is, who retains command of his own faculties and powers, who is not afraid to let the heart of him out and to let the soul of him speak is a true man, and such a man ye need never have fear of.

It is the most difficult thing to do to keep yourself in perfect self-control. Self-control is always kindly; it is always beautiful; it is always respected. Think of the opposite picture. Did you ever know what is popularly called a psychic? I have met, I believe, but one in my life who had relatively perfect self-control. Now what is the reason that this is usually the case? The human race has attained, at the present stage of its evolution, a period in its evolutionary journey, friends, when psychical powers are beginning naturally to manifest themselves, and their further growth and further evolution should proceed along perfectly normal, proper, and legitimate lines. They should not be abused, any more than the faculties and powers of the physical body should be abused. And when anything is abused, is it good? Does it mean self-control? Is it beautiful? Is it lovely? Is it of good report? The silence contains the answer.

But if these people in whom the psychical powers are beginning

to show themselves, very feebly as yet, had undertaken an equivalent training in morals — for morals indeed are not conventions, but based upon the very fabric of the universe, therefore founded in universal law — and if this moral instinct and training were guided by the divine flame of the god within each one, then development of these psychical powers and faculties would proceed perfectly naturally, normally, and the result would be a spectacle both beautiful and useful, and also highly instructive.

There is danger in the situation in the world today as it stands with regard to this matter of psychical faculties and powers. Theosophists have not been understood on this question of psychic faculties and powers. Many so-called psychics seem to think that theosophists oppose a natural, normal growth of human faculty and power; and that is untrue, and I have no hesitation in calling it plain poppycock. Theosophists do oppose any abuse of things. We oppose misuse of things. We say, for instance, that any man who will deliberately harm some other by misusing, let us say, some branch of science that he has mastered, should be restrained, should be taught, should be educated.

Theosophists do not say that knowledge is wrong. On the contrary, we say exactly the opposite: that knowledge *per se* is noble, and we cannot have too much of it. But knowledge misused is devilish. There must be the moral sense, the moral instinct, guiding the knowledge, and that moral instinct is a child of the divine flame within you. It is your conscience. Your conscience is not infinitely perfect. It is not, therefore, utterly sure and infallible. Your conscience therefore is a growing, expanding, evolving, thing, growing more sensitive as the ages pass, more sensitive to truth.

Therefore I cannot tell you: trust to your conscience utterly. I can



only say that it is the only light you have, and you should cultivate your conscience more. Exercise it. Give to it its own sweep of power, and above everything else, find the road of the spirit within you; seek for that supernal light which is within your soul and guiding it. Go inwards. I will show you the way. Any true theosophical teacher can show you the way. If you want a voiceless teacher, then study the great books of the ancients. Teachers are needed in the world, as I have often told you.

*Who are you? Have you found yourself?* If so, give me the answers. *What are you? Whither are you going?* Give me the answering passwords.

Yes, these psychics do indeed seem to think that they are a superior people. It is a natural thing to think, because these psychical faculties and powers are still greatly undeveloped in them; they are but the first faint flutterings, as it were, of what in future will be wings, but the strength moving those wings in their flight to the stars will be that of the god within you.

No; no theosophists will ever tell you that psychical powers *per se* are wrong and evil. On the contrary, we have taught that they exist, that they are misunderstood, that people with psychical powers are in danger not only for themselves, but often are a danger to their fellows. Just pause a moment. Had any modern psychic lived four hundred, three hundred, years ago, what would have become of the poor wretch? The stake, the torture chamber, imprisonment, would likely have been his fate. Oh! "Man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn," as Burns so truly said. Knowledge is freedom; knowledge is the pathway to wisdom; and wisdom is the treasury of experience gained in past infinitudes of evolutionary growth.

You have will; you have intelligence; you have a heart. Make it an understanding heart. You have the power of discrimination; you

can have decision of purpose; you have unsuspected faculties and powers locked up within you, and it is precisely these faculties that theosophists hope to awaken in the human race as future centuries fall by into the ocean of the past.

Psychics can greatly help if they have the moral instinct guiding them, and provided also that this moral instinct or conscience in its turn is guided by the god overshadowing you and whose ray is within you. Then all things will move harmoniously and smoothly, progressively, towards a spiritual and intellectual culmination which in future ages shall be more sublime than ye wit of today. For the time is coming when this earth shall be the home, the homeland, the home-sphere, of human gods walking over its surface, because the inner god in each human individual shall have been evolved forth, shall have unrolled, unwrapped, expressed itself; and then indeed men shall walk the earth like gods, because they will think like gods, and feel like gods.

Psychics and psychical powers: I know what they are. I know what they all mean. I too am one of them. But thanks be to the immortal gods, there was a spark burning in my heart, a light, which as a boy I discovered, and followed. I came to know my conscience, to recognize the inner light, this spark within. And by tending it faithfully, by watching it night and day, it grew, no longer remaining a spark-light, but becoming a warm and tender flame, suffusing my whole being with its soft radiance; and I know, friends, I know that if I tend that divine flame within my soul to the end of my days, without fail and faithfully, if my karma, my destiny, be favorable, perhaps, and kind to me, in my next incarnation on earth I shall manifest still more fully than the feeble flame I have so far evolved, the divine sun within my heart. This is not poetry. I am telling you sublime facts. Think! Think!

How many of you really think? You don't want even to be told, many of you — you men in the West — what you really are. You prefer to go along in a rut, following always what you have done before and what your fathers have done and your grandfathers, and their great-grandfathers. Children — forgive me! — children in intellect, of undeveloped mind, of undeveloped heart, whose intuition burns indeed, but oh, so feebly! The men of the West won't learn until the hard knocks and blows of destiny awaken them. Then they will turn to better things. Then they will learn something; and oh! how blessed this thought is: that none is rejected of the sons of men, that all, no matter how imperfectly developed, have a chance, another chance, a chance anew, in this or in some future incarnation on earth.

Most human beings today are like the little girl in the story that a friend sent in to me. Let me read it to you. I will read it in the exact words which were sent to me.

I cannot resist telling you of a little incident which occurred in a neighbor's family. The little girl of eight had formed the undesirable habit of using swear-words. Naturally the mother was shocked, but her method of punishment was unfortunate, as events proved. Whenever the bad words came, the mother would vigorously wash out the child's mouth with soap. But in spite of this the bad words continued.

One day the aunt, happening to pass the bathroom, was surprised to see the child vigorously applying this process of soapwashing to herself. "Poor child," thought the aunt, "she is trying." So, with her gentlest and most forgiving manner she said to the child, "More bad words?"

"No!" was the prompt and astonishing reply, "*I'm just getting used to it!!*"

Now, isn't this little girl's action just like the action of most grownups? We grownups can learn a great deal from the little ones, if we have the clairvoyant eye, I mean the seeing eye, and the understanding heart. We can learn a great deal from the clever sayings of little children. I love to hear them talk; I have learned more, really, from hearing little children talk, than I have from — from other people!

Now, friends, the time is very near to our closing hour. But I want to answer very briefly two or three other questions that were sent in to me with the request that I answer them today.

Does one, in joining your Society, have to give up membership in some other Theosophical Society with which he may be affiliated?

He does not. No indeed. We are not so narrow-minded as that. Any human being who sincerely accepts the principle of universal brotherhood can be a member of The Theosophical Society. It does not matter to what other society he may belong, or to what other religion he may belong, or whether he belongs to any other religion at all. The Theosophical Society is not a body of saints — whether ancients or latter-day. We are just human beings, trying to do good in the world as best we can.

But perhaps in sheer honesty I ought here to enter a caveat: that we have an inner body for esoteric training, for a study of the deeper teachings of theosophy, and to this inner body, simply on account of the necessities of the case — that is to say the necessity of having people in it who have been more or less prepared by training and study — to this inner body only students of theosophy who are members of The Theosophical Society can come. It would be fatal in such an Inner School to have a student following two diverse or antagonistic trainings, if you understand what I mean. This rule is not one which is due to any selfishness

at all, but it exists simply because experience has shown that we cannot do otherwise.

The next question contains a clipping from *The San Diego Union* of June 15th, being a part of Arthur Brisbane's column. I will read a few words from Mr. Brisbane's remarks, and then read the querent's questions, and then answer it briefly. Mr. Brisbane is talking of the Venus of Milo, the famous statue at present in the Louvre in Paris, and he says:

According to Einstein, the empty space around the statue would seem to be the important thing. A common place man says the statue, the creation of human genius, is forty-seven trillion times more important than the space around it.

And the querent asks:

Which is the more vital: the dull cold exquisite marble statue perfect in every detail but lacking the breath of life — or space vibrant with pulsating eternal energy?

I say that the latter is the more important because the latter is full of spirit — even as the statue itself is — but, I ask you, which is the nobler: the creation of human genius, no matter how noble that creation is, or the surrounding space filled with potentialities for growth of all kinds and vibrant with life and cosmic thought? Decidedly the latter, and Einstein is right. I would say that the empty space — so-called empty because you don't see the life, the lives with which it is full — is forty-seven trillions of times fuller of mystery and beauty and the power and the genius of the gods than the carven statue made by human hand.

My last question:

For what purpose was the great Pyramid of Cheops built? Was it merely a tomb?

If so, merely a tomb, why is it that no dead bodies have ever been found in it — no mummified remnants of human mortality? No, it was a majestic fane, a majestic temple, wherein those who had been duly prepared to receive a vast and sublime light, received it, under wise guidance; and yet indeed it was a tomb: it was a tomb, but not of a dead body. It was a tomb of human personality, where the lower, passionate, weak, vacillating, unsteady-minded, man became, for the time being at least, an imbodyed god.

By the ancient magic of the Mystery schools of the archaic ages, at the times of the higher initiation the god came forth from within the spiritual nature and shone directly through the physical vehicle, so that the body of the neophyte, as it lay in trance, was resplendent with light. And on the third day, when the neophyte was "raised," remaining conscious of his sublimer experiences in the inner worlds for a short or a longer period, depending indeed upon his own spiritual power, he taught even his teachers what he had learned behind the veil. And while he was in this state, his very face shone with glory, the glory of Father Sun!

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[Vol 2, No 4](#)  
[Contents](#)

**Second Series: No. 4 (September 22, 1930)**

**THE DESTINY OF A SOUL**

(Lecture delivered July 20, 1930)

CONTENTS: Intelligence or blind chance in the universe? — The central fire of cosmic being. — No consciousness-tight compartments in the universe. — The portals to the mysteries of the universe. — Two ways to achieve your destiny. — Self-directed evolution. — Do nature's evolutionary courses bring satiety? — Better try another planet! — Does nature do things just for fun? — Lessons in the schoolhouse of earth-life. — Cosmic spirits or gods: the name matters not. — Knock, and the door shall be opened unto you. — Universal brotherhood: but what about the outcasts of India? — Repulsive individualism vs. the radiant beauty of impersonality. — Selfishness is unwise. — Is there danger in automatic writing? — The two kinds of automatic writing. — The wonderful untapped resources of the spiritual nature. Bring them forth!

I usually conclude my public lectures with telling my audiences that, collectively and individually, they are gods, imbodyed divinities, divine sparks arising out of the heart of the universe which is its Central Fire — that bright and flaming fire of life and intelligence which holds all things harmonious, and keeps them running in courses symmetrical and orderly. It is the source, the fountainhead, of everything that is — of you, of me, of gods, of monads, of atoms, of worlds, of suns, of nebulae, of universes — all of them existing in the vast spaces of limitless space; and all rooted in the vastly large spacial universe which we may call the invisible.

Or, in your viewing of the universe, do you prefer the old-

fashioned hypothesis now dead, which was nothing but a scientific superstition, to wit, the old hypothesis of materialism, which a great British scientist has recently said is as much a superstition as was the medieval belief in devils and witches, to the effect that the entire body of the cosmos is nothing but a fortuitous dance of atoms, blindly driven hither and yon, unguided, undirected, unimpulsed, dead. What a nightmare, actually inconceivable and not to be formulated in any strictly logical categories!

No human mind can successfully put such ideas together into a coherent system of thought: that out of non-intelligence springs the bright and flaming fire of intellect, and that out of cosmic disorderliness comes the fine flower of the universe — order, cause and effect. Therefore the roots of all things are divine; the origin of all things is sublime intelligence which flows through all that is, and which theosophists sometimes call by the phrase, the Central Fire of cosmic being.

Each one of you is a spark of it. Each one of you essentially therefore is a divinity. Each one of you is an evolving and learning entity. You are not perfect. You are not wholly imperfect. You have powers; you have faculties; you have capacity for growth; and evolution is nought but the welling forth of what is within, the self-expression of the faculties and powers and energies lying latent in every evolving entity and thing anywhere. Therefore this means that the future destiny of mankind, considered as a host, is to be a host of gods.

You cannot bring forth what is not within you. What is not within you, therefore obviously will not express itself, because it is non-existent; and the very root of you is this divine flame of intelligence, of willpower, of consciousness, of love — of the cosmic love which is all-permeant, penetrates everywhere, and



which nothing can resist because it is nature's fundamental essence, nature's fundamental energy, nature's fundamental law. Ally yourself with this, and in proportion as you succeed in so doing, you become irresistible, and irresistible for good alone.

"A soul's destiny!" You already have the picture. A soul's destiny must include, likewise, its origin. Anything that will explain what any soul — not necessarily a human soul — any conscious entity came from and will ultimately attain through evolution, must explain likewise what it is at the present time. The three go together; indeed, when we add the future destiny of a soul to the preceding three we realize that the past, the present, and the future must also hang together inseparably. The Occidental world for too long, for altogether too long, has been under the psychological cloud of an idea that things in nature exist in consciousness-tight compartments: that matter is one thing, and that spirit is something else; or matter is one thing and that energy is something else; and that by some mysterious magic which no one has ever been able to explain, these two run along concurrently in nature's evolutionary courses, and yet have no radical, root-relation with each other.

That idea was just a full-fledged superstition. Our majestic theosophical philosophy teaches strictly to the contrary of this, to wit, that everything is interconnected, interblended, interbound, interlinked, with everything else. Nothing, no entity, exists unto itself alone. It cannot. Each is an offspring of the universe, the child of that universe. Everything that is in the universe, therefore, is in each child of the Universe.

Do you get the meaning and reach of this obviously necessary conclusion? It means that you have the possibility of infinite growth before you. You spring forth from the universe, of which you are, each one of you, an inseparable part. You cannot leave it.

There is nowhither whither you may go. Everything that the whole contains is contained latently or actively in every infinitesimal portion of that whole. *Ex uno disce omnia*, as the Latins said, which I may paraphrase by saying: out of every single drop of the ocean of the sea, ye may learn the whole ocean.

Your consciousness is the great portal to all the mysteries of the universe, because your innermost consciousness is that universe. You are its child, and therefore the pathway to all things is within you. This pathway is not without. Everything that the universe contains is your spiritual and natural heritage. All things are already within you, in seed. Therefore see and understand what you have locked up within you. Dream of it, figurate it to yourselves, make the picture, imagine it — as the first step to becoming greater.

Out of manhood ye shall grow into godhood — I mean to say, into individual gods. I do not use the word godhood in the meaningless sense of a mere abstraction as it is so often used. Out of you, by developing what is within you, in time, as the ages pass, ye shall develop what is locked up within you, which is Divinity. The whole universe is your field of action. Out of it you came. You are in it passing through one phase of your long, long, indeed endless and beginningless, evolutionary journey. And you will grow greater as the ages pass, as your consciousness expands to become universal from being limitedly human.

What is man? He is an aggregate, he is a composite entity. He is himself a little universe. Everything is in him in seed, or more or less active. Your very bodies are formed of the cosmic elements; and through these cosmic elements, as builded into the human frame, you express yourself feebly, an effort at self-expression which makes you what you are at present, human beings. Just like a little child which, as it grows, succeeds in expressing ever

more perfectly up to maturity the locked-up powers, but not yet succeeding in doing so in childhood, so we, as men — shame upon us, incarnate gods as we are! — express ourselves, our inner faculties and powers, alas! only too often with naught but an inarticulate cry. How much better could we do if we only would! Every one of us, every normal human being, is a Christ in his inner parts, is a Buddha. Yes, and more — the universal heart is within us.

Do you know what the ancient philosophers of Hindustan said in their magnificent philosophical teachings? I will tell you a little of it. They asked a question: *Kas twam asi? Who art thou?* And the answer came: *Tat twam asi.* That (the Boundless) *thou art.* A child of the universe you are, sprung from its own substance, therefore filled with the very fire which governs and lightens every articulation of the universal worlds — all is in you.

It is to bring back some of the ancient knowledge of the archaic wisdom-religion of antiquity, that the Theosophical Movement was founded, to give men hope, to give them vision — the vision sublime — to give them peace, to give them consolation. And last, but not least, to make them feel for others, to instill the sublime precepts of universal brotherhood into human hearts which had grown stony and unfeeling, and to bring light and illumination to minds which had become darkened through miseducation; because with light and compassion working within them, men become truly men, because then indeed they are already passing out of manhood, trembling, as it were, on the verge of touching divinity.

"The destiny of a soul:" Out of boundless time in the past ye came, ye children of men; out of the womb of infinity and eternity ye have been journeying hither. Hither and forwards into boundless duration shall ye follow the path of growth. What a picture for

your quiet hours of meditative thought!

There are two ways for a man to achieve his destiny, for a human soul to reach its own inner powers, the full expansion of its own godlike genius. Two ways: and the first is that followed by the majority, the great and voiceless majority, drifting along like flotsam on the ever-running, ceaselessly moving river of time; and this is the path of natural evolution, of natural growth. But oh! how slow, how slow, how slow it is! Ages will pass before the inner expansion of your faculties and powers reaches even a modicum of a larger greatness.

The other pathway, that all the great sages and seers of the ages have shown to their fellow men, that which means a quicker growth, a more rapid evolution, a more speedy emergence from the chrysalis of humanhood into possessing the wings of the spirit — the bird of eternity, to change the metaphor somewhat — is initiation, which is a reality on earth even today. There is a path — as H. P. Blavatsky, the main founder of The Theosophical Society, so nobly wrote — there is a pathway, steep and thorny though it be for the average man, yet it leads to the very heart of the universe. The one traveling this path passes through the portals of growth quickly, relatively speaking; and I can show you how to put your feet upon this pathway, so that instead of spending ages and ages and ages and ages in slowly evolving, in slowly expanding, in slowly bringing forth the powers and faculties within you, you can grip yourself, guide your own evolution, and thus much more quickly grow.

This is self-directed evolution, as my great predecessor Katherine Tingley called it. This is initiation. It exists today. But there are preparations even for initiation. None can follow a pathway, is it not obvious, which he has not the strength to walk upon. Therefore he must gather strength unto himself. He must prepare

himself. To use the language of the Christian New Testament, he must "gird up his loins and take his staff in his hand, have no thought for the morrow, and carry nothing with him." Lightfooted must he speed along, without encumbering and hampering weights.

How do you do it? How do you make these preparations? All the great seers and sages of the ages have told you. I will tell you it again. It is also the message of the wisdom-religion of antiquity today called theosophy. It is as follows: Become self-forgetful, for then you throw off your burdens: you hate not, and you love all things, both small and great. Forget yourself, and you are then no longer enchained with the bonds of desire and acquisition tying you to things of evanescent and impermanent value. Your soul, your spirit, your mind, your heart, become infilled with impersonally great and noble thoughts, desires, and aspirations, which even one thought of merely personal profit and personal acquisition and gain will kill at least for the time being.

Love, forgive, be merciful, be compassionate, be pitiful; in other words, expand your consciousness, and if you can do these things successfully, ye need never fear temptation. It will never really touch you, nor bind you, because it will have no hold upon you. This is so because you will then have become selfless. Think it over. It is really so easy to do all this. And yet men will not follow this pathway.

Out of eternity have we come, journeying through realm after realm of Nature's mystic and invisible constitution— through the worlds both invisible and visible — gathering experience in each, perfecting our faculties in each. And when grown great in any such world, or on any such plane, or in any such sphere, having learned all the lessons that these worlds and planes and spheres can give us, we then pass to still nobler things.

Why are we here? Some people seem to think that nature's evolutionary courses bring satiety, bring surfeit. How vain and thoughtless an idea is this! Their idea of the universe seems to be a limited and restricted field in which one set of faculties only is exercised; and these people remind me of the individual who must have been in the mind of the poet who wrote some verses which a friend kindly sent in to me, and which I brought with me in order to read to you if I had a chance to do so this afternoon. My chance has come, and I will now read them. They were originally printed in the *Washington Evening Star*. They were headed: "*Better Try Another Planet.*"

Same old topics — same old news.  
Same old pictures — same old clues.  
Same contentions bring surprise;  
Same old wets and same old dries.  
Motors spin and make a dash,  
For a triumph or a smash.  
Pictures gay delight the eye;  
Same old things you'd like to buy.  
Science shows the same old terms;  
Same old atoms; same old germs.  
Same discoveries we view,  
Each with names both long and new.  
Same old struggles for release,  
Threats of war and plans for peace.  
Same old market on the jump —  
Same old profit; same old slump.  
Though confusion we may find  
In a changeful state of mind,  
With new themes of grief or mirth,  
It is still the Same Old Earth.

I would have headed this poem just exactly as the editor of the

*Washington Evening Star* did, I suppose, unless indeed it was so entitled by the author of it. "Better Try Another Planet" — which is exactly what you will all do some day. Nature is not so builded as to bring satiety and surfeit to her children. She never repeats herself. Each new experience is in a new field; each new experience is a new life with new opportunities and new environments. There is endless change because change is growth, and growth is evolution; therefore change is evolution, philosophically speaking, of course. Do you think that one life on earth brings out all your powers, brings into full flower all your faculties and energies? Alas! most men and women die with a feeling of having lived almost in vain. Not a billionth part of what is within them have they discovered or brought into action. And it is their own fault. Human beings are lazy, intellectually and otherwise. Talk to a man about self-directed evolution, self-directed growth, and look at him carefully. In some you will see a quick lighting of the eyes; the bright flame of intelligence has been touched, evoked. You have given such as these a new and a holy thought, and they will guard it and profit by it. But in the eyes of others you see no more response than if you looked into the eyes of a dead fish!

Do you think that nature does things just for fun? I don't see any sign of that. On the contrary, the very sufferings and pains that human beings have, and that wring their hearts, show that they are growing. Don't be afraid of pain. Don't be afraid of sorrow. They both are friendly. Don't think that you are unfortunate because you have done something which brings nature's reaction upon you in the shape of suffering or pain. You are learning a much-needed lesson. You are growing; and the pains and sorrows are growing pains. That is why human beings return to earth again and again. They haven't learned their lessons in the schoolhouse of earth-life.

When a human being has learned all that earth can teach him, he is then godlike and returns to earth no more — except (hear the glad tidings!) except those whose hearts are so filled with the holy flame of compassion that they remain in the schoolroom of earth that they have long since advanced beyond and where they themselves can learn nothing more, in order to help their younger, less evolved brothers.

These exceptions theosophists call the buddhas of compassion, the Christs; and such a spirit is the Christ-spirit. Each one of you some day will be given the choice. Which path, my brothers, will ye then take? Either is noble; both lead to heights of spiritual sublimity. But one, the road of compassion, is divine. Some day ye must make that choice. But the results of making that choice, of choosing the road of self-forgetfulness and pity and impersonal love for all others, for all things, while temporarily holding you in the realms of illusion, of matter, will ultimately lead you by a road, straighter than any other, to the very core of the core of the universal heart; for ye shall have obeyed the impersonal commands of cosmic love, and that means allying yourselves consciously with divinity.

Think of the philosophy of it and you will see how consistent and logical it all is. Therefore have all the great sages and seers of the past taught their fellow men: If ye wish happiness and peace and faculty and power and knowledge and wisdom and growth, give yourselves utterly. It is the little personal things which cramp your powers. It is the personal "I" which limits your receiving of the impersonal divine flame, of the impersonal divine light, trying to enter your human consciousness from your spiritual being — the clouds of your selfish, aggressive, and acquisitive personality hindering the entrance of this flaming light. Abandon these faults of the personality and stand forth in your own inner godhood — this is the destiny of a soul. It remains within your own choice



which ye shall do, and it lies on the lap of the gods. Therefore choose! And abide by your choice. Such is nature's law. Choose divinity and become a god and with its concomitant powers become a master of life. Or choose the opposite, and remain indefinitely in the realms of illusion.

I have said that ye are gods. Ye are so; and if there be any Christians here in the audience this afternoon, I say to them to look at the identic words as found in your own Christian New Testament. The heart of the heart of the core of the core of you is a divine being, and you, as men, are merely expressing feebly these divine powers within you. There is a pathway steep and thorny which leads to the heart of the universe — to your own heart of hearts.

Knock — and this is not a knock of physical hand — and it shall be opened unto you. Ask, and ye shall receive in full measure, overflowing. And the invitation is to become — that is what it means — what you are yourselves within.

H. P. Blavatsky in her *The Secret Doctrine*, volume I, page 224, wrote very briefly but admirably upon this point. She says: "Collectively, men are the handiwork of hosts of various [cosmic] spirits; [which are gods, and you may call them gods if you like, as I do] distributively, the tabernacles of those hosts, and occasionally and singly, the vehicles of some of them." Do you understand? Men are the handiwork of these cosmic gods and spiritual beings; and each such god or spiritual entity expresses itself through the human tabernacle which it has built up. Each one of you therefore is a conglomerate constitution builded by the faculties and powers flowing forth from the heart of the heart of you which is this inner god, your cosmic spirit.

It is thus that men are builded up into humanity, into possessing the human constitution including of course human physical

bodies; each such constitution more or less — and usually less — expressing at least a little of these sublime, these divine, powers and faculties. But occasionally — and here listen well, friends — occasionally and singly a human being becomes the vehicle, the self-conscious temple, of the divine entity within, and then such a man walks the earth an incarnate god. Such was the Christ, such was the Buddha. Such were many if not most of the great sages and seers of the past.

Initiation will bring to you this guerdon of self-forgetfulness, this recompense of a heart which has become a temple of wisdom and love. Try to understand my thought. It is in its element so simple. It promises so much; and I say again unto you: Knock, and it shall be opened. Ask — and the asking must come from you — and then ye shall be taught, ye shall receive the light. There is truth in the universe. That truth can be had, and the way to have it is by willpower and by perseverance in following the path, and by self-forgetfulness, so that ye will not have your feet clogged by the mire of selfish desire, holding you fast on the pathway. Come and partake of the Master's feast.

Here is one of two or three questions that I have been asked to answer this afternoon. It is the following:

Are the sixty million "untouchables" of India within the fraternal circle of universal brotherhood, notwithstanding that their "elder brothers" have pronounced them outcasts — lower than the beasts? Is there a possibility that Occidentals may descend into the "I am holier than thou" abyss and develop a legion of untouchables in the Western world?

The answer is, Yes, in either case. Even the untouchables are sons of God as the Christian said, and sons of the gods as theosophists say, because the heart of the heart of each one of them is a divinity. Religious bigotry, unwise attempts to keep those who are

unfit for it out of the magic circle of wisdom and the ancient teaching of knowledge, brought about the existence of the caste system and the legion of untouchables, because they were supposed to be unfit and therefore technically unclean.

Nevertheless I say: Certainly do they come within the circle of universal brotherhood, which has no frontiers and no barriers against any. Even the beasts, even the plants, we reckon as elements in nature's law of universal brotherhood and to this brotherhood belong the souls also of all other things.

All, in the theosophic conception of universal brotherhood: all, all are entities having one common source, following the same identical evolutionary pathway of growth, and all marching steadily forward into the future towards better things.

And your proud Occident, priding itself on its brotherhood, how about your untouchables? Walk the streets of your great cities before ye cast stones, even at those who live in glass houses. Examine your own household, O friends!

One of our noblest and greatest doctrines is the teaching of universal brotherhood, as I have attempted briefly to set it forth to you in other words this afternoon, the feeling of comradely kinship with all that lives, because in very truth ye are more than mere kin: the same consciousness flows through all things, all are derived from the same source. Your very bodies are builded of the same chemical atoms that are in the bodies of all other things; and ye are all marching forwards to the same destiny.

In one life a man may be born a prince in his palace, and in another life, for deeds wrongly done and deeds left undone, he may be born a peasant in his hut, or as some poor untouchable; but the lessons of life even here can be learned and learned well. Let us who know these things teach our fellow men their high responsibility, and the duty that devolves upon them to act aright,

to think aright, to feel aright. Let us teach them that all men are brothers, not as an emotional precept, not as a thought passing forth from an emotion, but as a fact under the sanctions of nature's never-ending and irrevocable laws. Each one of us is our brother's keeper. A man fails in his duty if he does not help his fellows; and I tell you, lest I be misunderstood, that sometimes the noblest help is correction, but correction given kindly, with true impersonal love, and with no thought of personal advantage; and the best correction is teaching him to see aright the laws of life. Win the hearts of your fellows, and ye shall have peace among you.

Yes, the untouchables of your Occident, they are many and of many kinds. Walk the streets of your great cities any night. Go into the market-places. Enter palaces or enter huts, and ye shall find the same that ye shall find in India, and with as little excuse here as there.

Men must protect themselves against evil — that is true. No man should permit a wrong, whether done to himself or to others. The true man should never become *particeps criminis*, a participator in a crime, by weakly allowing some criminal act to happen, if he can prevent it. But be tactful, be kindly, and forgive. Try to understand and to help by means of education the weak and the stumbling, for ye, my brothers, have yourselves stumbled time and time again.

Why do persons who have developed the impersonal outlook possess a beautiful radiant personality, with voices as soft and melodious as the rustle of the corn, or the soothing murmur of brooks — while he who concentrates upon the personal, rejoices in a more or less repulsive individualism?

How easily explainable! When a man becomes self-forgetful, he becomes a very sun of light, radiating spiritual energy, radiating

energy of a spiritual and intellectual kind, which permeates the love flowing forth from him into the very hearts of others, and takes these others by storm. Whereas a man who thinks of naught but self — *my, my wishes, my thoughts, my plans, my property* — makes a perfect cocoon of imperfect and ugly selfhood around himself, through which nothing can shine, and which is like an adamant wall around him more hard and durable than steel; and when he stands before you, or you see him walking the street, he produces no other effect upon you than, just as this questioner has said, your instinctive sense of a more or less repulsive individualism.

Let the love within you shine forth. Love will break even stony human hearts. Nothing, not even hate, can withstand its passage. Therefore how wise were the philosophic ancients: "Hate not. Conquer hatred by love, for this is the ancient law." It is nature's law. The strong man is he who loves, not he who hates. The weak man hates because he is limited and small. He can neither see nor feel the other's pain and sorrow, nor even sense so easy a thing as the other's viewpoint.

But the man who loves recognizes his kinship with all things. His whole nature shines with the beauty within him, expands with the inner fire which flames itself forth in beautiful and symmetrical thoughts, and therefore in beautiful and kindly acts. The self-forgetful man or woman likewise in time will gain a sympathetic voice which will make its own appeal, even if his words be not fully understood. His very features will soften and become kindly, therefore attractive. He will not be feared. He will not be hated.

Selfishness is ignoble. It is also very unwise, because there is nothing like selfishness that cripples you and that mires your feet in the slough of the lower selfhood.

Here is an unusual question:

Is there any danger in automatic writing?

It depends upon what you mean by automatic writing. There is more than one kind of it. If you refer to certain things of a psychical character, then I can only state that automatic writing of this kind is accompanied with more than one danger, but perhaps the main is that the will becomes somnolent, and the grip of the spiritual nature over the lower man is by so much the more decreased.

As a matter of fact, there is a great deal talked today in the Occident about psychical powers, and under this word psychical are classed a great many things that do not belong in that category at all. The human being has spiritual powers, grand and sublime faculties and energies, which the average man will not know of because he won't look within. He is too lazy intellectually and otherwise. But the psychical powers *per se* are on a much lower plane and belong merely to the astral part of the human being, a part of his inner constitution which is but very little more ethereal than the gross physical world.

It is possible for a human being to write automatically due to an energy emanating from this lower part of his constitution, and he can do this by throwing himself into a negative state of mind. This can indeed be done by practice, but it is a very baleful practice which will in time bring untold suffering in its train. It is, furthermore, unwise because it places one's energies, one's attention, the concentration of one's intellectual faculties, on the lowest — almost the lowest at any rate — part of the human constitution.

Those who do not understand these things frequently ascribe the origin of this automatic writing to the influence of "spirits" from

the other world. In certain parts of the globe, not in the Occident, but in India for instance, automatic writing which is beyond the control of the writer is ascribed to the *bhutas*, which we may briefly call spooks, ghosts, simulacra, the reliquiae, of dead men, in other words the astral dregs and remnants of human beings. That influence, according to what the Orientals say, produces this kind of automatic writing; and almost all the automatic writing of the Occident is of that type.

The brain is an exceedingly delicate instrument, sensitive to etheric waves, to astral waves, to waves of consciousness. Thought-transference proves it — of which the average human being is scarcely conscious at all, although these waves, I say, are passing through the brain tissue all the time.

But having said this much and now leaving it aside, let me call your attention to the fact that there is another automatic writing of a wholly different type. This kind is wholesome, good, and proper to cultivate *if you have a wise and reliable teacher*. Otherwise you will almost invariably slip on the path. This other kind of automatic writing can occur when the higher part of the human constitution becomes the controlling factor for an hour or two or three mayhap. The human being then is no longer conscious of his physical personality at all; he has transcended that. He has raised himself, has become for the time being almost at one with the god within, and in these circumstances his hand writes what may actually be a very message from his own spiritual nature.

But alas, in the present state of human evolution none can do this without initiation, without training, without a teacher. H. P. Blavatsky did much automatic writing of this latter kind; and what she wrote was sublime, not merely in the thoughts, but in the very diction; it was grammatical, perfect, fascinating.

This latter kind of automatic writing is on a par with the melodies which the musician hears inwardly, such as was the case with the deaf Beethoven. It is such harmonies as the poet hears, feels, senses, so that he is utterly oblivious of the physical world, utterly oblivious of his surroundings; for the poet then lives in this higher world, this world of abstract thought and harmony; and then, if his brain is alert enough, is sensitized enough, he writes down the thoughts of beauty which he receives inwardly. It is thus that the great poets, the great musicians, the great artists, receive their inspirations. It is the inner voice, the inner vision, the inner wisdom.

Raise yourself into union, even if it be only temporary, into communion, with the god within you, and ye shall be all things — statesman and poet, philosopher, scientist, inventor, everything; for it is all in the spiritual part of you, and this spiritual part contains wonderful untapped resources. Know yourselves and follow the path to wisdom, to knowledge illimitable, and to unspeakable peace.

Even material success will be yours; for none would even wish to prevent your feet, to hinder your passage; for love would flow forth from you. All men would be with you, none against; and this is the reward, the guerdon, of becoming a true man, a man-god. And in the future, ye children of earth as now ye are, ye shall be gods walking this our mother planet, because ye shall have unrolled, unwrapped, unpacked, brought forth from within yourselves your latent faculties and powers and energies.

Children of the heart of the universe, ye shall be men-gods on earth; ye shall walk this earth in the distant aeons of the future — because evolution will bring it about — as gods, because ye shall think like gods and therefore ye will feel like gods and act like gods. Such is the destiny of a soul.

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Vol 2, No 5

Contents

**Second Series: No. 5 (October 12, 1930)**

**SOULS THAT DRIFT**

(Lecture delivered July 27, 1930)

CONTENTS: Drifting spiritually, psychologically and mentally. A spiritual polar star really exists. — Physicians of human souls needed. — Are you like Thomas the Doubter? — The countless false self-proclaimed teachers. — The fine flowers of the human race. — The wellspring of wisdom within. — No reliable public information in regard to the psychical faculties. — Recognize the teacher by the light of intuition. — Victor Hugo on the subject of teachers. — Follow the steep and thorny road: the noblest adventure in life. — A few of the real inner powers. — Mental moonlight or the sunlight of the spirit? — Materialism is but a superstition, says a famous scientist. — Why must I rest for so long a time between lives on earth? The devachan a time of assimilation. What about the assimilation of food? A perfect analogy. — Break your chains and embark upon the sublime spiritual adventure!

The general subject of my talk to you this afternoon is, "Souls That Drift." As I look at my audiences on each Sunday, among other thoughts that occur to me, I often wonder how many of you are drifting souls. I am sure that you will not be offended at my speaking of the possibility of some of you being drifting souls, because as a matter of fact most human beings are drifting through the lifetime of the present incarnation, and this is so for the following reasons: men do not know who they are. Men have not yet found themselves. Men have no spiritual polar star, so to speak, towards which they can self-consciously turn — and nevertheless that spiritual polar star actually exists. But men as a

rule in the Occident do not know that it exists. The consequence is that the majority of human beings in the Occident are souls that are drifting, spiritually, psychologically, and mentally. Leaders, true leaders of men, are lacking, for in our days most Occidentals will have naught to do with the Occidental religion in which they no longer believe. And on the other hand they are doubtful of the ordinary standards of political and social morality. What is more needed than anything else in the Occident, I think, is physicians of human souls.

Where will you find physicians for your souls? I am inclined to think that if you found one, you would at least at first be somewhat afraid of him. You would like to test him, and in a sense that would be a proper and prudent precaution. You would doubtless look for signs, perhaps for wonders, at any rate for marks of ability. You would as individuals be like Thomas the Doubter. You would want to probe with your mind into the spiritual and psychological apparatus of such a physician just as Thomas wanted to probe with his finger into the places where the nails had been in the body of his teacher, according to the legend. And you would doubtless flatter yourselves because of your caution and prudence, saying to yourselves: "How wise I am in my generation!"

On the other hand, what are you to do? You don't know how to judge a true spiritual leader from one who is a mere faker, and this is so because you have not been educated to understand and to apply the means of judging the true from the false. If a true physician of your souls were to appear amongst you, I doubt if you would accept him. You might, perhaps, if he had a charming smile or an agreeable personality, or if he had soulful eyes that appealed to your artistic instincts, or dark or perhaps golden yellow hair!

But are your souls going to be cured of the pain and sorrow which wrack you, because some human individual with a glib tongue has golden yellow hair, or dark hair, or a pair of soulful eyes? Of course not. You see, therefore, that it is just as I have said: you cannot readily discern because you do not know yourselves, because you have not found yourselves.

I asked you these same questions recently from this platform. If you knew yourself, you, each one of you as an individual, then you would have found yourself, and knowing yourself, nothing could thereafter mislead you nor bias your judgment nor sway your will, because the spiritual faculties in you would be wakened and you would recognize truth when it knocked at your minds and hearts. But men in our modern times, in the Occident more particularly, have lost all knowledge of the ancient wisdom-religion of mankind, except perhaps some faint echoes of it which are to you little more than a faint, far-flung rumor out of the distant past of human history.

As it is, you are afraid of following spiritual teachers lest you be misled; and I am obliged to tell you that perhaps your fear is your spiritual safety, because the world is replete with incompetent and often false self-proclaimed teachers. Do you then understand this situation? It is perfectly true that you must have guides to show you the way. You must have healers for your souls, which is infinitely more important than healers for your body; and yet you don't know where to look for them; and if a true healer, a true physician of the soul, were to appear among you, the chances are nine out of ten you would reject him because his physical body, perhaps, or his manner of speech, or some mannerism or idiosyncrasy or peculiarity of his personality, would be unpleasant to you. You have not the wisdom and penetrating intellectual power to look beneath the flesh of the appearance, and thus to see the fire of the flaming intelligence within,

derivative from the spirit, from the god within. But once you have learned to recognize this flaming spiritual fire in yourself, it becomes unmistakable ever afterwards, and it is easy to recognize it in others.

It was precisely to show men, as far as possible, how to know themselves, how to find themselves — to show them the pathway to wisdom and light — that the ancient religion of mankind, today called theosophy, was brought anew to the western world by the founder of The Theosophical Society, H. P. Blavatsky.

The world, I tell you truly, is today in a precarious situation. Men are afraid to accept leaders, and oh, how my heart sympathizes, from one point of view, with that fear! How has man been deceived in the past by false leaders, and led astray by false gods! Nevertheless, despite this fear of accepting leaders, men's hunger for truth leads them oft to rise above this fear, and alas! to accept as leaders, men who are as blind as themselves and who know as little often of nature's holy secrets as the average man himself does.

And yet, on the other hand, men must have guides — teachers of truth, they who know; and indeed there are such great men alive in the world today. There are such great souls living even today in the world, forming a brotherhood, which men theosophists call the Elder Brothers of mankind, or by equivalent terms, such as the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace. They are the fine flowers of the human race, the products of a spiritual, intellectual, and psychical evolution. They are linked consciously — not unconsciously as the vast bulk of mankind is — but self-consciously, with the inner god, with that spark of the divine within them which is the core of the core of the heart of the heart of every son of man; and being in this self-conscious communion with their own inner divinity, they truly know, because they have

experienced, they have seen, the vision sublime; and therefore they can communicate this vision, this knowledge, that they have interiorly, which they have seen, to their fellow men.

When a man thus knows himself, and has found himself, no longer is he a drifting soul. Do you know who you are? Have you found yourself? Now answer my question in the silences of your own heart. Have you solved the enigmas of life and death? If you have not, then you don't know who you are, nor have you found yourself. Yet these enigmas can be solved. They are by no means unsolvable. Man is a composite entity, rooted in the very divine fire which is the heart of the universe, and man's constitution manifests on earth in a body of gross flesh. His inner constitution is in touch, is in relation, with every plane and with every world and with every sphere of the boundless universe, and with all the vast and illimitable spaces of space, and especially of invisible space, and because he is thus linked with all the articulations and members of the universe, he has the faculties within him which will enable him to know all things. The key to all is becoming at one with the spiritual nature within. This done, all doors fly open at the mystic knock given, and truth, unveiled, pure, can be seen and understood.

Has it ever struck you that you are a child of the universe? What else can you be? You cannot be apart from the universe in which you "live and move and have your being," as Paul of the Christians truly said. The universe surrounds you. Its spiritual energies and powers permeate you because they are ubiquitous, infinite, everywhere existent. Each one of you is an inseparable part of the boundless universe. Therefore the core of the core of you, the heart of the heart of you, is the core of the universe, the heart of the universe. If you do not see and accept this obvious fact, then you will have this problem to solve: "I am a child of the universe, I am of it, I am in it. And yet I do not partake of what

that universe contains and is."

Do you therefore see that this problem is unsolvable because it is not a true problem at all, and is merely a figment of human imagination based on ignorance? Consequently, all that is in the universe is in you. Everything that is in the universe is in you, mostly latent of course, because man is still a very imperfectly evolved being in all the parts of his constitution, very imperfect indeed, because not yet far evolved along the pathway of evolutionary progress; but nevertheless he is a man. He is endowed by union with the universe with the same divine flame of intelligence within that universe. He has spiritual faculties and powers within him, derivatives of and from the universe, which form a reservoir which only the great sages and seers of whom I have spoken have opened, and from which they can draw at will, because this Spiritual Divine reservoir is the self — the spiritual self, not the gross physical self, or mental self, or psychical self, but the spiritual-divine self of each one of them.

Think of the beauty of this grand picture of truth! See the hope in it! Your pathway of evolution is literally beginningless and endless. You never began. You always were. You never will end. You will be going on growing forever and forever. For since you are in your essence the universe itself, since the very heart of the universe is your heart, how can you disappear out of it?

Hence I have said: not knowing who ye are, not having found yourselves, ye are truly drifting souls; and now ask yourselves if this my statement is not true. Listen: there is a pathway to wisdom sublime and to knowledge illimitable. This pathway follows the line of your own selfhood, spiritually speaking, and if you follow it faithfully, this pathway will lead you to the very heart of you, your spiritual center which is the universe divine, the fountain of your spiritual being.

Not having found this pathway in the Occident, look what men in the West today do. Turning away from the light shining in its radiant splendor, the spiritual light within, they look outwards and run after every psychical and mental will-o'-the-wisp that their attention is called to, searching here, searching there, looking thither, turning yon — and always deceived. Yet ye need not be deceived. Men today think that they may find in the psychical faculties and powers so called, what the instinct of a man tells him is light, true life, in ever greater measure and fulness; but they are looking in the wrong direction. They look outwards instead of inwards, or rather do not penetrate into the wellspring of life and wisdom within their spiritual self.

How can you find truth, my brothers, in that which dies when you die, in other words in the material and component parts of you? Turn rather to the god within, to your inner self, deathless, relatively changeless, the spiritual sun of your being, and the fountainhead of all that you are. All your faculties, all your powers, all your energies, come from this divine sun manifesting within you; and the so-called psychic faculties and powers are but as it were the reflected inner moonlight, and like all reflected light, such faculties and powers — which undoubtedly exist — distort, deceive, mislead, as the moonlight so often does.

It has been said to me: From what you say, theosophists do not believe in these psychical faculties and powers. My answer was: You are entirely wrong. We do know of their existence, and knowing of their existence we know their danger. There is real danger, great danger, because the reflected glimmer of light from these psychical faculties is very misleading. Do we as theosophists then say that we should not employ these psychical faculties and powers which undoubtedly exist within us, although undiscovered by most men? We do not. We say: cultivate them, use them — but only after training in knowledge and wisdom



showing you how to use them.

When a man has allied himself consciously with the god within him, with the real source of everything that he is, then these psychical powers and faculties so called develop and unfold as naturally as the unfolding of the petals of a flower; and the use of these psychical faculties and powers then becomes not only legitimate and proper, but necessary. But to cultivate these psychical things before you have mastered the merest elements of self-knowledge, of selfhood, before you know who you are or before you have found yourself, makes you to be as much without guides as is a bit of drifting flotsam on the ocean of life; or, to change the metaphor a bit, you are only a bit of drifting flotsam on the swiftly moving river of time, and then you are really in danger, because you do not know what these psychical faculties and powers are and what their proper use is and how to control them. There is absolutely no information about them given out publicly, no information that can be trusted. Absolutely none!

I tell you now with all the earnestness of my soul: Beware! Let me use the words of Jesus the avatara, who said in substance: "Seek ye first the kingdom of Heaven, and all these other things will then be added unto you." Hence I tell you: Go first to the heart of things; take the greatest thing, the all-encompassing thing, which is yourself, and understand yourself and know yourself; and then all the smaller things within you like these psychical powers and faculties will be forthwith mastered and taken captive by you, and you can use them safely.

Your questioning minds ask: How? Uninstructed, ignorant as I am, how am I to do this? This shows that what I have told you is true: you don't know yourselves. Which shows that you have not found yourselves. I can tell you how to know yourself and how to find yourself, for this is a part of my duty as a theosophical

teacher. Every true student of the wisdom-religion of mankind today called theosophy can tell you how. Then your doubtful and suspicious minds, so oft deceived, so often wrung with the agony and pain of frequent disappointment, say: "Can I trust you? Are you also a false prophet?" So deeply ingrained, O my brothers, is mistrust of other men in the Occident today, due to past centuries of religious and philosophical miseducation, that men have lost the sense of trust in their fellows, and also have almost lost the ability to recognize truth when they hear it.

As I have said, usually they will not accept a true teacher when they see him, because they understand him not and know him not. They have no standard of judgment, no rule of proof — excepting of course the chosen few, choice spirits whose intuition is like a burning flame in their hearts, giving them light to see and enabling them to choose aright, and showing them how to recognize. Verily this burning flame of intuition, the sister of almighty love, burns in the hearts of these chosen few.

But the average man is suspicious, rendered so from disappointment after disappointment. He thinks that it is a wise thing to refuse to look anywhere except in those directions where leather-lungs on the one hand, and big advertisements in the newspapers on the other hand, promise quick rewards. Then he says: Ah! here is something practical! Vain thought, arising out of the hunger of a broken and disappointed heart!

Men today are so suspicious, not only of themselves but of their fellows, that they have no standard to go by and therefore they follow anything and everything that seems to promise reality. Is not this a strange paradox? Having no standard to judge by, hunting for truth, avid for truth, they will accept anything if at the moment it seems to appeal to them. Whereas, on the other hand, if this appeal is not made in a manner which captivates

them, they seem to think that they show intellectual power in refusing to receive light, in refusing to accept real leaders and guides. How can it be otherwise when their minds are filled with mental pictures that they have seen in the books of history about the deceptions practiced through the ages on mankind by designing men and crafty priesthoods?

Yet your intuition and your instinct whisper to you that not all men are unworthy of trust. There are men who are courageous enough to proclaim that searching for light and receiving it when found are signs of greatness of heart and of an expanded intellect. Let me read to you what a great Frenchman, Victor Hugo, once wrote:

The very law which requires that mankind should have NO OWNERS requires that it should have GUIDES. To be ENLIGHTENED is the reverse of being SUBJECTED. The march forwards requires a directing hand; to rebel against the pilot scarcely advances the ship; one does not see what would be gained by throwing Columbus overboard. The words "This way" never humiliated the man who was seeking the road. At night I accept the authority of the torches.

Admirable! And so do ye who drift. Ye are hungry for guides; your hearts are aching to find someone whom you can trust and who will lead you; and you know it well. The proof is seen in our theaters and lecture halls. Hundreds and thousands attend the lectures of every itinerant speaker, psychic, would-be teacher. And what do these audiences hear? Esoteric truths regarding the nature of the universe, its origin, and its destiny? Truths regarding the composition of the human being, which can be tested by your own examination and proved by the words of the greatest intellects and spiritual seers that the human race has produced? No!

Would you like to find the pathway to your own inner god — your spiritual self? There is a preliminary preparation, however, required of all — a preparation for this sublimest of adventures in the journey of the human soul. Do you know what it is? It will sound so familiar to you: Learn to forgive your fellows, for this means developing strength, the exercise of the spiritual part of you, and it is bringing into manifestation your higher manhood. Learn to love, for this is the voice of divinity within you; and when you can learn to love, the sun within is already beginning to break through the clouds of your lower surrounding selfhood. To love is divine, because it is a universal energy in your heart. The very sun which shines in the heavens is compact of that divinest of energies.

Be self-forgetful, because when you are self-forgetful the veils of personality and selfishness fall from your eyes. You are then no longer blinded by selfishness. You then see. Become impersonal; for then you are no longer gripped by personal desires, held in bondage as serfs and slaves by your own lower being.

There is the truth — the beginning of truth; and if ye follow faithfully this pathway, ancient, familiar to your hearts, ye will have put your feet on that Road which leads to the heart of the universe.

Pause a moment in thought. Which will ye be: drifting souls, or men and women who have taken command of their own faculties and powers and have begun to grow? It is all a matter of self-directed evolution, as our beloved Katherine Tingley so often told you from this platform! In following this pathway you become a true man; and from a true man you become a god-man, because all the interior powers and faculties within you will become more and more manifest. You will develop more and more all the powers within you, and you will be enabled to show these powers

to others and thus you can prove their existence.

But no one can pass the frontiers of the lower selfhood who clings to the lower self. Therefore, strive to become selfless, become impersonal, become kindly, become brotherly, learn to forgive, learn to love, learn to be self-forgetful. All this means unselfishness; and selfishness is the root of all evil, and therefore is the fertile cause of all misfortune and pain.

On last Sunday you spoke of two pathways that man can follow in his evolution: first, drifting along slowly through the ages, on the slowly moving river of time and racial growth, as the majority of mankind does; and second, pursuing the steep and thorny road which brings a quicker return to the gods.

Later, in the same lecture, you said: "and in another life, *for deeds wrongly done and deeds left undone*, ye may be born a peasant in his hut or some poor untouchable," etc.

Question: When a man's lot in life seems to be particularly hard, may it not be that he has, perhaps unconsciously, chosen the "steep and thorny road" in order to hasten his growth, and not necessarily that he is reaping the fruits of a former evil existence?

Yes, it is true. Many a man who has now reached masterhood of life, one of the great sages and seers, began to follow the steep and thorny road which leads to the very heart of the sun — began to follow it unconsciously; and do you know what it means to follow this steep and thorny road? It means gaining powers, it means opening faculties within you, it means becoming a Master directing his own course on the ocean of life, instead of being merely a drifting piece of human flotsam, a drifting soul? Many a one has done this in the past and began it unconsciously; yet it means hard work.

Do you know anything more stonily hard than human hearts? Do you know anything more fragile and yet more crystallized than human minds? Human hearts are so crystallized that they won't bend even to proof sometimes, and yet are so fragile that the whole mental framework may crack and break under some accident.

The steep and thorny road, my brothers, is a difficult one. But the rewards! Is there a man here to whom this adventure does not appeal? It is the noblest adventure in life: becoming a man, taking command of yourself, living like a man, evolving forth the godlike powers and faculties within, consciously, so that at your will you can direct them; becoming a brother to all, loved of all because there is no hatefulness in you, trusted of all, hated only by the hateful.

What are these powers? I will enumerate a few only: transferring your thoughts without a word, voiceless speech. This is no psychical power. Its psychical aspect, commonly called thought-transference, is but a bagatelle and is illusory because it is but a reflected light of the real spiritual power within. I am talking about the spiritual faculty, the root of the vastly feebler power called thought-transference. If you have this truly spiritual power, then you can transfer your thought and your consciousness and your will to any part of the earth and actually be there, see what goes on, know what is happening there. No merely psychical power will ever enable you to do that. In Tibet this is called the *hpho-wa*. Having this power ye can pass through stone walls as easily as the electric current runs along or through the copper wire.

Another spiritual faculty is genuine clairvoyance and the spiritual ability to see and to see aright; and in seeing to know that your seeing is truth. This is no psychical faculty. The clairvoyance

commonly called the psychical clairvoyance is very deceptive because nothing is really known about it, in spite of the much talk that you may hear about it. The so-called psychical clairvoyance is very deceptive because it is a mere moonlight reflection, and this moonlight reflection is uncertain, deceiving, and illusory.

Genuine spiritual clairvoyance, of which the psychical clairvoyance so called is but a feeble ray, will enable you to see what passes at immense distances! You can sit in your armchair and see, with eyes closed, all that you care to see at great distances. This can be done not only in this exterior world but ye can penetrate into the interior and invisible worlds with this spiritual vision, and thus know what is going on in the worlds spiritual and ethereal; and remember also that these inner and invisible worlds are the basis or root of this mere cross section which we humans call the physical universe. This physical universe is just one phase or plane of the great universe of boundless life.

Another spiritual power is true and genuine clairaudience, real clairaudience, the ability to hear with the spiritual auditory power or faculty, even to hear what the gods are saying and doing. These words are not mere poetry. I here mean the actual inner spiritual ear. Having this power ye can hear the music of the spheres; for I tell you in solemn truth, my brothers, that every sphere that runs its course in the abysmal depths of space sings a song as it passes along. Having this spiritual power ye can hear the grass grow. Every little atom is attuned to a musical note. It is in constant movement, in constant vibration at speeds which are incomprehensible to the ordinary brain-mind of man, and each such speed has its own numerical quantity, in other words its own numerical note, and therefore sings that note; so that had ye this spiritual clairaudience the life surrounding you would be one grand sweet song and you yourself would sing a song, your very

body would be as it were a symphonic orchestra, singing some magnificent, incomprehensible, musical symphonic composition. The growth of a flower for instance would be like a changing melody running along from day to day. I mean every word of this, literally.

These are instances of some of the powers and the faculties of the spirit, but not of the immensely less powerful and tertiary psychical faculties. These last are but reflected mental moonlight so to speak. Therefore I say to you: go to the sun within you, take the kingdom of heaven by violence, for it is yours, it is your spiritual heritage. Why bother with paste and false gems when ye may have all the jewels of the Golconda of the spirit?

But the greatest faculty, the greatest power, of all is that, when ye have found yourself, when ye have begun to know yourself, ye will discover within you incomprehensible mysteries, beautiful, sublime, indescribable, grand; and I think that the most wonderful of them all is the power of almighty love, for this is the very cement of the universe, which holds all things in steady, orderly, sequential courses. Becoming one with it, in other words, becoming one with what you are within your own inner being, ye become a god, a very god, for such a god ye are in your inmost.

Now then, which will ye have? The powers of the spirit that all the great sages and seers have been telling you about for untold ages — ethics, right, justice, growth, true manhood, forgiveness, love, pity, compassion, spiritual clairvoyance, spiritual clairaudience, spiritual faculties and powers — or will ye be running after the will-o'-the-wisps, the reflected moonlight and verbal moonshine, of itinerant teachers who know but little or nothing more about it all than you yourself do?

I have used the words sunlight and moonlight. I use them advisedly, and I will tell you why. The ancient wisdom-religion



today called theosophy teaches that the god within you is a child of the spiritual sun; the spirit within you, therefore, is a luminous radiance, and is your inner god; while the psychical part of you, the intermediate part between the spiritual solar ray and your physical body, reflects the powers, such as they are elementally, derivable from the moon. Hence the instinct of mankind speaks of lunatics — the moon-stricken.

Yes, I say the moon advisedly and I mean it. I know what I am talking about, and I care naught for the superstitions of our fathers — scientific superstitions or religious superstitions, it matters naught to me. Men of the Occident, you have been so trained in materialistic thought that the average belief today, or rather lack of belief, is that there is naught in a human being except his physical body, and that when he dies the dissolution of the physical corpse is the end of him. None of the human race of any outstanding spiritual and intellectual distinction has ever believed that, except the superstitious scientists and their camp followers of the days of our immediate fathers. Even the superstitious religionists were a little wiser than the former because, however mistaken their views were, and they certainly were grossly wrong on so many points, they had the brains to realize that consciousness cannot arise out of unconsciousness nor life out of lifelessness, death. If there is naught in the universe but blindly driven matter, how could such things be or ever exist as consciousness and beauty, compassion and mercy and pity and clairaudience and clairvoyance and all the other faculties active or latent that the human being possesses, and which, in the case of the great ones of the earth, can be used at will?

How could matter even move, if it has not life, and matter is full of incomprehensibly rapid vibrations; and now today when our really great scientific men are becoming mystics, becoming mystical thinkers, they talk to us about the fundamental of the

cosmos being mind-stuff and consciousness-stuff; while the materialism of our immediate scientific fathers of forty, fifty, sixty, seventy, eighty years ago, is dead. *Dead* indeed, but the evil effects of that old materialistic teaching are still visible everywhere in the Occident.

One of the greatest of ultramodern British scientists, J. S. Haldane, only a short time ago made the remark that materialism is a superstition — and he referred to the scientific materialism of our immediate fathers — as much a superstition as was the belief in devils and witches. There is a grand declaration for a scientist of today! And he is absolutely right. Remember that you have been brought up in the popular materialism of the West, which still is taught in your textbooks, still exists as authoritative articles in your encyclopedias, and in many cases is still taught from the lecture platforms of your universities. Remember therefore that in these cases you are taught something which is untrue, which is a scientific superstition, which does not exist, and that those who tell you to look within yourselves for truth because you have consciousness, intelligence, love, within you, are truly safe guides.

Question: I am not satisfied with some aspects of the doctrine of reincarnation as taught in theosophy. I think that the time which it is said may elapse between lives on earth, digesting our experiences, is unreasonably long. For instance: if I was a person of more or less importance in Egypt some two thousand years ago, and only now am living another earth-life here in America, and if I lived a life of about sixty years in Egypt, then it has taken me thirty times as long to get the meat out of my experiences as it did to go through them. Now, from what I know of an average human life, a fellow could sum up any one of them completely with a box of cigars and night's hard thinking. So why all that period of two thousand years? I know you're not to blame for this, but it's up to you to do some

explaining.

I wish I had that chap on this platform before me. I would ask him a few questions in order more fully to draw out his mind.

In the first place, the statement has often been made in the textbooks of the theosophical philosophy that the average length of time in the devachan or so-called heaven-world passed between one reincarnation on earth and the next reincarnation on earth is about 1500 or 2000 years, and the statement, considered as an average, is correct — but it is only an average. The average span of human life, taking the world as a whole today is — do you know how long? Some fifteen years or thereabouts. That is the probably correct average. This average is secured by counting all deaths that occur in childhood, in wars, in accidents, what

not; and yet many individual men live to be seventy, eighty, ninety, and some perhaps a hundred or even more years.

There is a rule in occultism — which please do not confuse with psychism — which states that the excarnate soul or human being passes one hundred times as much time in the devachan or heaven-world as he did in the last preceding life on earth as an embodied man. Therefore, since the average span of human life today is 1500 years, the average devachanic or between-lives time is one hundred times that, or fifteen hundred years. But some men live to be forty years old, fifty years old, sixty years old, seventy years old, and even more, and each one such will pass a period of time in devachan or the heaven-world one hundred times the number of human years that he previously had lived on earth. There are certain esoteric exceptions to this law upon which I cannot touch this afternoon.

Now comes the question of this querent why the length of

devachanic time should be so long. The sense of this question therefore is that life on earth, at least in the mind of this questioner, is a fairly happy event. Men seem to think that life on earth is more or less of a heaven. They evidently don't like to leave it and want to come back to it quickly. Yes, they will come back to earth all right. There is no doubt about that. But don't you know that nature has its own way of working, and its own way of moving, and its own laws, and remembering these things we cannot be like that old dear lady I heard of once who said: "Well, I know that reincarnation isn't true." Why? "Because I don't like it! I have had one life on earth, and I don't want to have another life like that again. I have had all I want of it."

But this questioner, whose question I am trying now to answer, seems to think that life on earth is so supernally beautiful, so heavenly, that to pass his three or four or five or six or seven thousand years in devachan is going to be awfully tedious. He won't find any tedium there nor will he recognize any passage of time. The devachan is a state of unspeakable bliss, peace, and expansion of consciousness, just exactly like the most lovely rosy dream; and it is like a dream in a way because it is just like the man who wakes in the morning and who does not realize that he has been asleep, nor the length of time that he has slept.

This length of time is indeed required in the devachan for the same reason that the physical body requires the rest and recuperation of quiet sleep in order to build up the body again. The body more easily assimilates during sleep the food that it has taken. In sleep nature's building and repairing processes work quietly and rapidly. They are not interfered with by active movement either of mind or body. This assimilation requires a long time.

How long do you sleep? I have heard some people say they cannot

do with less than eight hours. Eight hours are already a third of a day. And here this poor man is complaining that it takes him thirty times as long to digest the spiritual and intellectual experiences in the devachan as it takes him to live the preceding life on earth.

When you take food into your body, do you think that you digest that food and have it assimilated immediately? No indeed. It takes you a long time to digest that food. It takes you hours to digest your physical food. When the food is passed out of the stomach it is not then assimilated at all. It will take you almost a day, ten, twelve, fifteen, twenty-four hours, perhaps, for the body to take into itself, as building bricks, the molecules and atoms of the food that you have put into your stomach, and you may have occupied a quarter of an hour at your meal; and as I have just said, it takes you all the rest of the day, and probably all the time when you are sleeping that night, and some part of the morning after your sleep, before the entire cycle of digestion and assimilation is completed.

Exactly the same rule prevails in the devachan which, as I have just told you, is the digestion and assimilation of the experiences — experiences spiritual, intellectual, psychical, even physical in a sense — that you had in the last preceding life on earth. Your consciousness has to work over and build into itself recollections and memories of the nobler and spiritual part of the preceding life before that consciousness can understand them and digest them all; and understanding of what you have been through depends on the digestive and assimilative processes of the consciousness.

Consider how long a time it takes in order to train a little child from birth until the end of childhood, and some people are more or less children even when they are grown up. Furthermore —

and please remember this point carefully — the nobler a man is, the more spiritual his being is, the longer is his devachan, the heaven-world period that he goes through after death. This is nature's law. This devachan is a period of rest, of intellectual recuperation of digestion and assimilation of the spiritual experiences of all kinds that were passed through in the preceding life.

On the other hand, the more material a man is in character, in other words the fewer the noble and beautiful thoughts that he had in his last life on earth, the shorter is his heaven-world period. The reason for this is that there is very little of a spiritual character to digest and assimilate in the post-mortem period.

Before I leave you this afternoon, I desire to remind you of a few facts that I have spoken of before. There is truth in the universe. What men call truth is a formulation in human language of nature's structure, operations, and processes. This truth in the universe can be had by men. Any sincere and earnest human soul can learn something at least, and often a great deal, of this truth.

This truth as a formulated philosophy is in the guardianship of the titanic spiritual intellects of the human race, many such great beings existing even today and living together as a Brotherhood — and these great ones are they whom theosophists call the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace. You can become allied with them if you live the life, if you like a sublime spiritual adventure, if you are ready to undertake the responsibility of using the faculties and powers that are latent within you, and which will be opened in you, if you are trained to use them.

Nature is immutably just and will hold you exactly accountable for everything that you think and do. And her rewards are equally sure and just. Are you ready to come to the door and knock? If you give the right knock it shall be opened. This is a

promise. Every great seer and sage has told his fellow men the same. And consequently every true theosophical teacher, who is an agent of this great brotherhood, has the same promise to make. They tell you that this coming to the door of the Temple of Wisdom must be done with an absolutely clean heart. You cannot enter if you do not so come — and this is not because anybody prevents you, but because your own imperfect being prevents you from taking this step.

How can a chained dog, unless he breaks the chain, go farther than the length of the chain? Therefore I say to you: Break your chains! Be no longer drifting souls! Be true men! Break the bonds of personality that cripple you! Become the god within you! This you can do. And if you need a teacher, then come where you heard the first words that fired your heart and stimulated your imagination!

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[Vol 2, No 6](#)  
[Contents](#)

**Second Series: No. 6 (October 20, 1930)**

**OCCULTISM AND PSYCHISM**

(Lecture delivered August 3, 1930)

CONTENTS: The fairyland of truth. — A sublime philosophy taught in past ages: the brahma-vidya and the gupta-vidya. — Why is the secret science hidden from the majority of men? — The travelers in search of light and what they have to tell us. — The difference between occultism and psychism. — Psychic powers a mere reflection, distorted and illusory. — An enumeration of some of our latent spiritual faculties. — Every occultist is a scientist. — Professor J. E. Boodin of Los Angeles voicing old theosophical truths. — What is beauty? "We are upheld by Beauty" says the poet. — Nature's law is to give as one has received. — Christian Science and psychical practices. Watch the aftereffects! — Esoteric hints on the cause and cure of disease. — The physicians of the future. — The Theosophical World-Congress at Point Loma in August, 1931: an explanation of its objects. — Why not be yourself, your spiritual self?

I am going to try to lead you into a fairyland this afternoon — a fairyland of truth not of imagination — taking you deep, deep, deep into the very real things of the cosmic life, that cosmic life which is enshrouded with veils hemming in the imprisoned splendor. Deep, deep, deep into the very heart of this splendor, for it is the heart of the universe; and these encircling veils, these imprisoning garments, these enshrouding encasements, are they which blind, which deceive, which produce illusion, not only in human hearts but in human minds, so that those deluded mistake the illusion for the real, so that they follow bypaths and side issues of life, both human and cosmic.



I have called this realm of the inner worlds a fairyland, but do so only to use a term that will be easily understood of you. Actually it is reality — the heart of the universe. It is the fountain of truth, and the source whence flow forth into the cosmic spaces what we human beings in our ignorance call the "laws" of universal nature. In times far, far past — so long bygone that men have lost, at least in the Occident, all recollection of it — there was taught on earth a sublime philosophy, a formulation in human tongue of the very structure, operations, and nature of the universal mother herself. Faint memories of this archaic wisdom-religion of mankind have come down to men of modern times; and these faint echoes you will find in what is called the heart-doctrine — to use the technical term — of all the great world religions and world philosophies.

Hence, when men read these archaic thoughts imbodyed in these ancient world religions and world philosophies, if the readers be of intuitive mind, suddenly light comes to the beclouded intellects, the heart is moved, and the man says: Immortal gods, I have known that before! This is recognition by the god within of something akin to itself, the imprisoned splendor, reality and truth, that I have just spoken of.

This ancient philosophy, this ancient wisdom-religion of mankind, bore various names in different ages and among different peoples. In our time we call it theosophy, "the wisdom of the gods," which in very truth it is. Among the ancient inhabitants of Hindustan they called it brahma-vidya, the "knowledge of the universe;" and the esoteric part of it, the secret part of it, that part of this wondrous philosophy especially followed by the most illuminated minds, the titanic intellects, in other words by the great seers and sages of mankind, and their disciples, was called the gupta-vidya, "the secret science," "the hid wisdom" — not kept secret from motives of selfishness, not hid away for the sole

pursuit and delectation of selfish philosophers, but secret and hid only because the majority of mankind could not follow it, because that majority of mankind has never believed that it exists. Men in all ages have not easily given up the personal self and its delusions and illusions, so that the god within which is in all men might shine forth through the encircling veils down into the brain-mind and give that mind light.

Isn't it even so today? What did Jesus the avatara, the Master of the Christians, mean, according to his reported words "Give up thy life if thou wouldst find the life universal," if not what I have just said? That was the substance of his teaching. And in fact it is absolutely true. You cannot become universal until you surmount the personal, the limited, the restricted, the self with frontiers.

It is exactly like the man living within the confines of some great town, who says: "I will not abroad, I will not travel. What my fathers had is good enough for me." But another man, with a hunger for knowledge in his heart, passes out of the city gates, pursues the highways of the kingdom, and travels, and learns, and returns unto his fellow citizens and tells them what he has found, and tries to open their eyes; and they say: "Man, whence camest thou? Prove to us that thou hast seen what thou relatest." And what can the messenger of knowledge say except: "I have seen, I know. Come with me: I will show you the way. Follow the pathway that I will designate, and thus I will bring you to the places of light that I have seen." Some follow him because their minds are more enlightened and their hearts are stirred, and these men of illuminated understanding say to themselves: "Verily, I will look into this. This man is a changed man from the time when he went forth from amongst us. He has seen something; he has learned something; he has become grander and greater." But others will have naught of it.

Such ones as I have spoken of, who left the restricted city of the human personality and wandered forth in search of light, are they whom theosophists call the great seers and sages of mankind, the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace; and the knowledge that they have brought back from the most wondrous and soul-stirring adventure that it is possible for a human being to have, they formulated into human language and gave it to their fellow men. And this wisdom was the brahma-vidya, the theosophy that is even now taught; and each one of such great Seers and Sages founded a school for those who trusted him more fully than others did; and he taught in this school the deeper things, the hid wisdom, the secret wisdom; and this was the gupta-vidya. It is taught even today. Do you long for it? Are you ready for it? Do you desire it? Then come. Knock, and if your knock is the right one, the doors will fly open, as if by magic. Ask, and if your asking is not based on selfish desire for personal preferment, but based on a passionate love of holy truth and in a desire to help your fellow men when once you have gained that truth, then in asking you will ask aright, and ye shall receive because it is your right to receive.

Such men as those who went forth in the quest for wisdom were the true occultists of the past; they were the great seers and sages, and such great seers and sages were true occultists, students of the gupta-vidya, the *secret* wisdom of the universe, the wisdom of the gods; for the universe is filled full with gods, with divine beings; and ye children of men are such gods essentially, in your innermost nature, even in your present phase of evolutionary growth, although enshrouded with veils of the lower selfhood — so that in very truth ye know not who ye are. Ye know not what ye have within you; and many of you, alas! will not even see nor will ye listen. Is there anyone blinder than he who will not open his eyes, nor deafer than he who will not unstop the channels of

his ears?

Occultism, my brothers, is that aspect of natural philosophy which deals with the hid, secret wisdom of nature's own heart as that wisdom is formulated in the archaic Wisdom-Religion of mankind; and theosophy, even as it is taught today, includes this gupta-vidya or occultism in what the ancient inhabitants of Hindustan called the brahma-vidya.

On the other hand, what is psychism? If occultism be, as I have just told you it is, the treading of the path which will lead you to the very heart of the universe and the gaining of the knowledge which that heart contains — which path you have a right to tread because you are essentially a god, and in treading this path you go simply to your own divine home — if one then who follows this path is an occultist, what is a psychist? He is one who follows the deceptive lights, the illusory gleams, of his intermediate human nature, the intermediate part of his constitution, of the *psyche*, which James of the Christians — I am not going to be as impolite as he was — called, material, sensuous, illusory.

This description of the psychical faculties and powers is accurate and true. This human part of you is one of those enshrouding veils, of which I have spoken, which blind you to the greater light of the cosmic truths; and those who concentrate their attention on the faculties and the powers pertaining to this intermediate nature of man, are psychists. They mistake the ghostly, illusory, moonlight of the intermediate nature of man for the splendor of the spiritual sun within.

Just as this human part of us is a reflection of the spiritual sun within, of the god within, so is the moonlight a reflection of the sunlight, of the splendor of our day-star. Psychism is a study of the energies and powers and forces belonging to the various realms of the astral world, a realm of nature only one degree or

step higher than the physical; and there is today in the Occident no reliable information about it at all, because those who really know the truth about it don't advertise that truth ever, because this would be misleading their less evolved brothers.

There are many people who talk about psychism, who will stand on platforms and tell you all about it; but I can tell you this — and this is the message of all the great seers and sages of the ages — that those who follow the things of the intermediate personal nature, the personal things, those who follow moonlight rather than the splendor of the spiritual sun, cast around themselves veils of personality still more thick than before, still more impervious to the inner divine splendor striving to come forth. These enshrouding veils are the ordinary mental and emotional veils of the lower selfhood.

What we must do is to rise above the personality, above all things that pertain to the merely personal human nature, and strive to become more universal, selfless, gradually more impersonal. Then we rise above this intermediate or psychical nature towards the spiritual day-star of our own inner being, which inner day-star is a spark of the central heart of the universe.

Do theosophists then deny that there are psychic forces and powers in man? We most certainly do not! It is because we know of their existence, it is because we know of the danger of cultivating these psychical powers, that we call your attention, thus faithfully re-echoing the warnings of the archaic wisdom-religion of mankind, to the things of the spirit, to the things of real value. Theosophists want our fellow men to have wisdom, to have light, indeed to have spiritual powers, and to use the spiritual faculties usually lying latent within them.

But so utterly are these matters misunderstood in the Occidental world today that the average man seems to confuse the psychical

powers and faculties with the spiritual ones, and no greater mistake could possibly be made. The psychical faculties and powers and energies are a mere reflection, a secondary, indeed a tertiary, reflection of the divine sun within; and, like all reflected light, the effect that it produces on the consciousness is a distortion of reality, is deceitful, producing mental and emotional illusion.

As I told you on last Sunday from this platform, the real faculties and powers that remain with a man when he passes on from this life, are the spiritual ones, and all personal faculties and powers die when the end of any one reincarnation is reached. Why then, again to speak according to the language of the Christians, why not lay up for yourselves treasures in the realm divine, where thieves do not break through and steal, nor doth rust corrupt? This is a figure of speech, but our language is full of striking figures of speech. The truth behind it is what I call your attention to.

What are some of these spiritual powers, some of these spiritual faculties? First, what is the love in your heart? Is that a psychical power? No, it is the very root of your being, the very life of your essence; and impersonal, unselfish love is the very cement of the universe, nature's supremest, grandest power, and nothing in the heavens above, or in the earth beneath, or in the regions under the earth, can stay its passage or forbid its penetrating power. It is all-permeant, it penetrates everywhere, and when you radiate love you produce love in others, because you yourself become lovely, because of its irradiating influences arising in your own heart.

Again, what is understanding? Is this a psychical power? No, it is a spiritual faculty. Do not confuse understanding with the mere psychical-physical brain-mind. Understanding is the faculty

which enables you to discriminate between thoughts and thoughts, things and things, to know one from the other. It is a sister of almighty love.

Again, what is vision? Not physical vision, nor that which on the astral plane manifests itself as psychical clairvoyance; but true vision is spiritual clairvoyance, the root of the astral power which, because it is so imperfect — not only imperfect in its development in the psychic practitioner but imperfect in itself — is deceitful. But the spiritual power, when you have allied yourself with the god within you, will show you how to see things at whatever distance. You immediately see things at enormous distances through the inner spiritual eye. Your consciousness is there, whither you have cast it.

In Tibet, they call this power the hpho-wa, which means the power to project your consciousness (which means also your will) to any distance that ye may please: on earth, to the moon, to any other planet, to the sun. This is the true power, the true faculty, of spiritual clairvoyance, and this it is which every true theosophical teacher, that is to say every true occultist, will call your attention to, and plead with you to use it, "to take the kingdom of heaven by violence," which means to enter into the realm of the divine, for it is your heritage. It is your heritage as a man, as a human being.

Have ye the ability inwardly to hear? Not merely with the physical ear, so imperfect and undeveloped a sensory organ as it is, but to hear things at a great distance? Can ye hear the atoms sing? Can ye hear the growth of a flower and the growing of the grass? For I tell you that each atom sings its own song. This spiritual ability is true clairaudience, spiritual clairaudience, the faculty of the inner spiritual ear, of which the psychical clairaudience is but a distorted and therefore deceptive reflection. There is this faculty in man, my brothers, which, if

cultivated under wise training, will enable you to hear the songs of the spheres as they pass along; and this is no merely poetical statement. Everything that moves is in motion, obviously. It vibrates, and in vibrating it produces a musical note which sings, and in this manner does every atom sing. The stars, the planets, as they move in their orbits, sing likewise, as Shakespeare said, choring "to the young-eyed cherubims."

Now think over what I have told you. "Are ye spiritually dead," as the great Pythagoras said, so dead that ye cannot understand: or is there something within you that answers with quick and ready response, It is so! Some people you simply cannot teach. This is because they are not spiritually awake. They simply don't understand what you are talking about. But for that reason, because there are those who cannot understand, should we remain silent? It is a duty to tell your fellow men the truth that you have found, as far as it is wise and proper so to do.

Every occultist is a scientist, but not every scientist is an occultist, even today, although the advances that our ultramodern scientists are making are marvelous, simply amazing. Our scientists today are becoming mystics, thinking along mystical lines, and thinking things, teaching things, discovering things, which if even announced fifty or sixty or seventy or eighty years ago would have banned them, ostracized them, from the company of their respectable fellow scientific researchers.

Let me read to you something along this line that a friend sent in to me, taken from an article published in the *Hibbert Journal* of July, 1930, by Professor J. E. Boodin of Los Angeles, entitled "The Universe a Living Whole." How often have you heard me use this very phrase! How ancient, how familiar it is! It means that everything is alive, that nothing is dead. Death — were such a thing possible — would mean utter immobility, changelessness,



inability to move. Show me where any such thing is. Everything is in motion. Everything is alive, and one of the physical manifestations of life is vibration, a very popular word today, because a very expressive one. Here then is what Professor Boodin has to say in the extracts that I have made. Listen:

When one considers the almost infinitely complex conditions which are necessary for intelligence, it is madness to suppose that it could be the work of chance. The spark of creative intelligence itself must be lit by the creative intelligence of the cosmos which furnishes the perennial inspiration for creative activity.

How many times have you not heard these same thoughts enunciated from this platform during the course of the last twenty years or more!

The spirit of the whole dominates the course of the cosmos. It dominates not by despotic power, but by constructive love. It gives tone to the whole. It persuades the finite so far as the finite permits — to use the language of Plato. It selects and encourages all finite initiative which is in the direction of health and beauty. But it suppresses and excludes from the divine life whatever there is of falsehood and perversion in the finite. Nothing can persist in the divine economy which is contrary to the health of the whole. The good, as Plato would say, legislates to the whole and determines survival within the whole. The individual soul which is induced to take on the divine pattern, which falls into step with the choral dance of the whole (to use a figure by Plotinus), becomes integrated into the eternal movement of value. The soul which refuses to do so puts itself outside the divine order. It shuts itself up by its own choice in the outer darkness of its own selfishness and eliminates itself from the whole. This is hell now or hereafter .

. . the sordid influences cannot be admitted into the enveloping cosmic spirit. The wicked impulses and thoughts are immured in their local habitation. They are bound by the gravitation of their own lust to their earthly abode.

How true all this is! Here we have a prominent thinker speaking of the cosmic love, the love which is the cement of the universe as I have so often called it, which not only "gives tone to the whole" but actually is the cohesive energy in boundless space. Professor Boodin speaks like a true mystic and like a philosopher of the archaic wisdom-religion of mankind, in other words like a theosophical philosopher today, when he uses the figure of Plotinus that every entity which is in the universe, when it "falls into step with the choral dance of the whole, becomes integrated into the eternal movement." This is a typical idea of the ancient Platonists and Neoplatonists as well as of other philosophers of the ancient world, and it is truth itself; and Professor Boodin is to be warmly congratulated on his most admirable exposition of the root-idea of the archaic philosophy, which he has seized in these respects with the intuition of the true mystic.

On the other hand, what this Los Angeles writer says to the effect that the only hell now or hereafter is that which each entity living in the boundless spaces makes for itself by shutting itself up "by its own choice in the outer darkness of its own selfishness and thus eliminates itself" from the greater streams of life of the whole, is merely voicing another secret teaching of the esoteric wisdom of the archaic ages, and is good theosophy.

And again how true it is according to our theosophical wisdom that "the wicked impulses and thoughts are immured in their local habitation! They are bound by the gravitation of their own lust to their earthly abode"! These citations that I have made are truly admirable; and I have been wondering, since reading them,

whether this courageous and mystical gentleman of Los Angeles could have been reading a recent book of mine entitled *Theosophy and Modern Science*, or perhaps whether he has read and studied H. P. Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine* published in 1888.

You see, therefore, why the enshrouding veils of personality shut out the inner splendor which strives always to express itself in and upon the wider fields of the spiritual consciousness innate in every human being. It is these imprisoning and enshrouding and constricting veils of personality which produce the only hells there are anywhere in the universe, and any hell like this is the fertile mother of unhappiness and human misery. It is verily the enfolded and constricting veils of personality — these veils, these garments, enshrouding the inner spiritual splendor — which prevent that inner splendor from manifesting in the mind and in the heart of the average human being.

If ye want to immerse yourself in still thicker veils of personality and suffer from the restricted vision produced by selfishness and growing desire, then follow the illusory but often flowery pathway of the lower selfhood, the path of psychism; for these psychic powers and faculties, imperfect, illusory, merely reflected light, will lead you astray into the bypaths and side issues of life, will appeal to your lower selfish personality, from motives of personal gain, and these will condense and harden the enshrouding veils more than ever they were before. Herein lies the great danger of the psychic path.

Will ye go to the moon, my brothers, or is your pathway set towards the sun? Children of the sun, sons of the sun as ye all are, I call upon you to come to your spiritual parent! Be great! Ascend, take, be! Be the god within each one of you — which god is your own impersonal, immanent Christos, your own inner god, the

inner Buddha within you, the root and fountainhead of your own spiritual individuality. Becoming allied with this, then all powers will be yours; all inner faculties will open and blossom. All spiritual and intellectual energy will become your servant; and when this is achieved then the psychic faculties and powers will develop naturally and safely within you, will open naturally and safely, like the enclosing petals of the unblown bud. This is the spiritual road, the road of safety, because your heart will have previously recognized its kinship with the sun god within you: your inner light itself will be strengthened by the streams of the irradiating splendor within, and ye shall then stand a Master of Life because consciously linked with the very heart of the universe. Being such as this, you will obtain and control successfully all psychical powers and faculties whatsoever.

My brothers, do ye feel the beauty of these thoughts — the beauty in your own spirit? Does not your soul leap and quiver within you at hearing the call?

Do you know what beauty is? It is harmony and symmetry, the sense of spiritual harmony within the observer recognizing the harmony without. Beauty *per se* is a divine thing, for spiritual beauty is the twin sister of almighty love. That is why beauty is at once holy and dangerous to imperfectly balanced hearts and minds.

The other day a friend sent to me a little poem that was written by a friend of the one who sent this poem to me. It is verse which shows great promise because there is easily visible in it the poetic heart, the understanding heart, intuitively recognizing its oneness with the universe. Do you understand what that means? What inspiration there is in this sense of oneness with all that lives and is! Let me read these verses to you. The poem is entitled "We Are Upheld by Beauty."

We are upheld by beauty;  
Beneath our feet, above us; in our hearts.  
At night the heavens become a vast dim meadow  
Strewn with innumerable glowing flowers;  
Beneath our feet the gardens and the fields  
Unfold their myriad blossoms,  
Flaming poppy, delicate violet,  
Fair lilies breathing fragrance like a psalm:  
And, when in meditation, with closed eyes,  
We look within our hearts,  
Well is it for us if we find that garden,  
Fairest of all, filled with immortal flowers,  
Where, first to warm our hearts, in flaming beauty  
Is that flower men call Courage;  
Then radiant Faith, clad in heaven's own hues,  
And the white lily of unselfish Love.  
Beneath our feet, above us, in our hearts,  
Beauty enfolds us like a mother's arms.

The mother here spoken of is the mother divine, that is universal nature, spiritual nature — not the mere cross section of nature that we men call the physical universe, but all that is, especially the vast invisible worlds and spheres, and the innumerable worlds and spheres of life vibrating in ceaseless and incomprehensible activity. These are the invisible worlds and spheres of the boundless universe.

Would ye enter into these invisible spheres and know truth at first hand through individual contact? Will ye become a cosmic traveler, an inhabitant of the universe, leaving, as Oliver Wendell Holmes so beautifully puts it in "The Chambered Nautilus," the mansion of a day in order to enter into others still more grand? Ye can do so. Ye have the power to do so within you. There is not a power in the boundless universe which is not in you. You have

it within you. There is not an energy, there is not a substance, there is not anything, in boundless infinitude which is not within you, latent or active as the case may be. Ye have it all. Each one of you is a child of the universe, a part of it, inseparable from it; as a part of the whole, therefore, that part contains in essence, manifest or unmanifest, active or latent, as the case may be, all that the boundless whole contains.

Here then is the pathway that I call upon you, my brothers, to follow. Find yourself. Finding, ye shall know yourselves. Knowing yourselves, ye shall enter upon your cosmic rights, your spiritual heritage, and ye shall thereafter take command of yourselves and be true men. A true man is a god manifesting through a man's body. The universe is filled full with gods existing in innumerable hierarchies, and in all-various grades of evolutionary growth. And ye, the human host, are but one minor hierarchy of this countless multitude of hierarchies. Every one of you is individually a god in the core of the core of his being. Each one of you has within you the potentiality of becoming a Master of Life, of developing forth from within your essence powers and faculties which at the present time are completely unknown to you.

And why should you not begin at once to do this? The way to do it is to receive instructions, to train yourselves under competent spiritual guidance, given by those who know how to do it; and I can show you the way to enter upon this path of accelerated evolution if you will trust me. But ye must remember the law of compassion flowing from nature's own heart: ye can take this knowledge, this wisdom, only when ye take it in order to give to others. Just as a muscle grows through exercise, just as the mind develops its faculties and powers by exercise, so likewise does the inner growth proceed by study, by meditation under competent training; and ye cannot grow unless ye give to others what ye

yourselves have received. This is nature's way of working and therefore it is nature's law. All exercise is in a sense giving to others, because it means producing, and any entity or thing producing for itself alone is trying to do something which he cannot achieve. He defeats his own end ultimately.

How beautiful this spiritual verity is! The sense of beauty in the human heart recognizes this great law of spiritual nature with instinctive gladness. On the other hand, think of what selfishness means. Ye cannot truly enjoy anything without sharing it with someone else. The miser dies even while he lives, and the giver lives even when he dies, for he becomes one with the All.

My brothers, I call upon you all to follow the pathway unto the gods. You don't have to seek outside of yourselves for that pathway, for if you do you will never find it. That pathway is within you. Each one of you is that pathway. As I have just told you, each one of you is an inseparable part or portion of the cosmic whole. Therefore know yourselves, and in knowing your spiritual self ye will be following that pathway. That pathway will lead you to the sun, to the spirit of light and life, to the chief of our own home-universe. Sons of the sun ye verily are! Why not then recognize your spiritual parentage; why eat of the husks — to follow again the figure of the Christian New Testament — which the swine do eat? Why not go to the Master's table, to your Father's table? The average man does not see the beauty of this tremendous truth because he does not believe that he is a son of the sun. Not believing it he does not think about it. Not thinking about it, he does not care about it. Therefore you cannot interest him. He has no interest whatsoever in it. And it is these darkened human minds and stony human hearts enshrouded in the dark veils of selfishness and personality whom we must help.

But the brighter minds, those who can see even a little of the

sublime light, they desire to return Home; they want truth; they are avid for it. They are hungry for it, and they will have it; and to such as these I say: Come! There is indeed truth to be had; I can show you how to find that truth. I can show you how to put your feet upon the pathway which will lead you to that truth, and it is you who will travel along that pathway and prove to yourself that what I tell you is truth.

Every true theosophical teacher has as his first duty to show his fellow men that pathway sublime, splendid, leading to the very heart of the universe, and that pathway is within yourself. Each one of you a god as you verily are, kin to the gods which fill the universe full, O sons of men, why will ye not see when the vision sublime lies plain before your eyes!

A man said to me once: "When a Christian Scientist has had visible, tangible evidence of the results produced on a man's body by thought-power, it is impossible to convince him that he is wrong, and that theosophists are right in saying that such things are not possible."

*Question:* Does theosophy say that these so-called marvels are impossible of accomplishment, or merely that following such practices is extremely dangerous to the human constitution?

The questioner is right in the deduction. Now in answering this question, I don't want to step on any sensitive toes. I have very good friends, or have had very good friends, among the Christian Scientists. But I must nevertheless answer this question. I cannot answer it with an answer that I myself do not believe is a truthful one. So please remember that in answering this question I do so from the standpoint of a theosophist. Let me add, however, that the theosophist never, at any time, attacks the religious beliefs of some fellow human being. We look upon that procedure as disgraceful, and also as being short-sighted and as showing a lack



of an understanding heart. But while we try always to render unto others the same kindly courtesy that we ask of others when they study our sublime theosophical doctrines, this does not prevent us from telling what we believe to be the truth as proved to us by our studies.

Christian Science, no matter what its proponents may claim for it, falls within the frontiers of what I have called psychical practices. Of course, by faith, or by thought-power, or willpower — call it what you will, let us not quibble about words — a man can work sometimes what seem to be marvels. He can not only change his thought-currents and thus change his character, which is indeed a wonderful and splendid thing to do, it may be, but he can even, by the power of his faith and by his thought, change his physical body. Hence, in our practical, pragmatism world, that is quite enough to enable anybody to say: "How practical! The fact is proved. I will proceed." But is the fact proved?

By taking drugs I can stimulate certain organs in my body so that for the time being I become almost superhuman. The unwonted alertness, the quickening of the life-flow, the stimulation of the mental and psychical faculties within, are in certain cases phenomena which follow. But the aftereffect — there is the proof of the pudding! The taking of drugs is always ill-advised, for drugs destroy: not only do they destroy nerve tissue and other tissue, thus making the man worse than he was before, but they strengthen mental and emotional selfishness, because no human being will take drugs unless it is to gain some personal advantage of some kind. And furthermore the very fact that a man takes drugs is a sure sign that the enshrouding veils of personality and individual appetite and passion are very dark around him. I am not now speaking of proper medical practice.

Do you realize that when a man has a disease, that that disease

has had a cause? Do you also realize that the man is simply working out what has come to him because he has brought it upon him by his own acts? Also that his nature is changing, is in process of cleansing, and that the inner poison, the poison in his mind and in his heart, which has been manifesting in his body as a disease, is now in the process of working out of his system. It is quite possible to dam back that disease and thus to throw it back into the constitution again. You can indeed dam it back; and the result is that someday it will come out again, but bringing in its train a thousand devils worse than itself, because it will have accumulated energy by being dammed back.

Christian Science, while I have deep respect for the sincere and beautiful characters who follow it and earnestly believe it, is something that I — and this I have a right to say undoubtedly — personally cannot accept. To me it is very dangerous. It is a meddling, by using psychical powers, with the delicate constitution of the human being. It is damming back what nature is trying to throw out. Disease is a purgation, a cleansing, and therefore the poison within ought to come out. Disease is nature's way of making the flow of life clean and sweet again.

Men of the West, as a rule, are cowards where disease is concerned, because they are short-sighted, due to the fact that they have no real philosophy of life and of the human constitution. A man has a disease, or a woman has, and he or she hunts up and down the earth for some remedy to cure the ill. And that in itself is all right. There is no harm in attempting to find a proper medical cure, no harm in trying to get relief. This is perfectly proper. But when you dam that disease back by willpower or thought-power, or psychical energy, this is another thing entirely, for the time will come when it will have accumulated strength by the increase of the latent fault of character which originated that disease; and heaven help the

unfortunate wretch when the time comes for this increased disease again to manifest its action, for this it will certainly do at some future time.

Much better is it to let nature purge the constitution, as it is trying to do; and I tell you that the physician of the future will have learned how to lead disease out of the body, carefully, gently, easily, so that the body will be neither wrecked nor even hurt, and yet the lesson will be learned. When I say the physician of the future, I do not mean men of a year from now, but the practitioners of a much more distant period.

There is much good in Christian Science, from one aspect at least. The Christian Scientists are so earnest, they are so devoted, they really believe what they teach; and those moral qualities are admirable, because worthy of high respect. In many ways they teach beautiful thoughts, such as kindness to others, love towards others, mutual helpfulness, kindly charity. All that is fine. I am glad to pay tribute to these splendid qualities — but the philosophy of Christian Science, if indeed it can be said to have a philosophy, which I seriously doubt, it is impossible to accept; and last but not least the methods of Christian Science do not *cure* the disease at all. They merely throw it back into the system and there it lies dormant until the time comes for it to reappear.

The last question that I shall be able to answer this afternoon, due to the shortness of time at my disposal, is the following:

Your announcement of a World-Congress of Theosophists at Point Loma in August 1931, has aroused so much interest in the theosophical world that there are indications that literally thousands of people will be planning to come here to attend this Congress. Are you going to be able to receive such a crowd at your public sessions? Will you have living accommodations for them all here at Point Loma? Or will you have to shut your

doors on the greater number of these, even if they be earnest and sincere theosophists?

We certainly shall not shut our doors in the face of anyone, but if they come by the thousands, where on earth could we put them? We have only two guest rooms at the present time; so I am afraid that the only thing to do will be to ask the kindly brothers of other societies and of our own society, outside of one or two prominent officials who have already been promised accommodations here, to live in San Diego or in Ocean Beach or in some outlying but close-by place.

I want to tell you something about this congress or gathering of theosophists in next August — 1931. I am very happy about the responses that I have received from all over the world to my suggestion to hold such a congress at which representatives from all the Theosophical Societies will be present; but I think that so large a gathering — I mean so huge a gathering as thousands attending it — would nullify any possibility of fruitful and efficient work. What I really desire is to have a heart-to-heart talk with the chief officials of the other Theosophical Societies with my own officials here present, so that we can come to some mutually honest and sincere understanding of each others' problems. I want brotherly feeling among theosophists. I want kindness, mutual charity, and forgiveness of each others' faults. That is what I want; and my hope is that next year, if I can gather the heads of these other Theosophical Societies at Point Loma, where they will meet me and my officials here in our Temple of Peace or in our Greek Theater, we can then iron out things that bar a complete understanding at the present time. They will then know me; I will know them; and distrust I hope will give way to trust; suspicion will give way to brotherly love and kindness.

Some of these other theosophists seem to think that I am going to

swallow them all. Well, I will frankly say that I wish I could. I am not a bit ashamed to say it. I am proud of The Theosophical Society which I have the high honor and responsibility of leading. I know, my brothers, what we have and especially what I myself have to give. I know what I have been taught to give to my fellow men; and it is my duty to give it to them.

But does this mean that I ignore the rights of others? No indeed. How could that be? I were not worthy to be a theosophical teacher if I could infringe the smallest right of any fellow human being. My heart tells me also that this my duty lies even more plainly in the case of other men and women who are theosophists and who, through the mutual misunderstanding and distrust that have existed in the past among theosophists, are members of different societies, and follow other leaders.

Now, I have no objection at all to the existence of other Theosophical Societies. What I want is brotherly love among them, and if possible a reunion. I want a common understanding among us. As I have said before, my idea is to found a super-society — not a political federation, for then there would be the same conflicts and trouble that we have had in the past; but my idea is to form a spiritual brotherhood, to which every theosophical organization would give honest allegiance and also be able to withdraw from it at any time; every such component Theosophical Society (and our own would be the first) to give up no rights; each one would retain all its rights, its own officers, its own constitution, its own field of work, its own particular teachings — in fact anything it likes; but in the name of the Masters and of the immortal gods, let us meet on a platform where universal brotherhood shall reign over our hearts and live in our souls!

This supreme society, according to my idea, would have one

supreme officer, holding his position by innate spiritual right due to his esoteric and occult training. This supreme officer would have no political powers whatsoever, but would be merely one who is accepted as the teacher and leader of this super-Theosophical Society; and he would hold office by and through the love and trust and confidence — the children of experience — that he would evoke in the hearts of all the composing theosophical bodies and individuals. Here, therefore, is just an outline of the idea and hope that I have in mind to bring about if I can. Some day it will certainly come to pass, and I hope that we shall see it a living reality soon.

Our time to close has now come. I have tried to carry you into the spiritual fairyland that I spoke to you about in beginning my lecture this afternoon. I have given to you ideas of supernal beauty. I have drawn your attention to the beauty which is at the very heart of things. I have called your attention to the fact that cosmic love, almighty love, is itself that heart of things; and that each one of you is a channel for expressing it, if ye will; that the cosmic pathway to magnificent experience and growth begins within each of you, and in following this pathway it will lead you to the heart of the universe; that the method of freeing your feet from the clinging mire of the personality is to become impersonal, self-forgetfully to love — to learn to love, and to learn to forgive. Then ye become already quasi-divine. Nothing except forgiveness and love and honesty will purge your heart of weaknesses, children of selfishness.

Remember then, my brothers, that each one of you in the core of your being, is an imbodyed god. Why will ye not be yourself — your greater self, your spiritual self!



**Second Series: No. 7 (October 27, 1930)**

**OCCULTISM AND PSYCHOLOGY**

(Lecture delivered August 10, 1930)

CONTENTS: Truth not exterior to yourself. — The brain but a mass of physical atoms. — The builder is the inner fire, identical with the universe. — The great men of science are becoming occultists. The mystic keys not yet in their possession. — Science rediscovering old things. — What is occultism? — What is psychology? As taught in the West merely physiological psychology. Modern psychology looks to effects not causes. — True psychology defined. — The three main divisions of man's nature. — The *nous* and *psyche* of Platonic philosophy. — The inner eye. What is it? — What is a hunch? — The only safe development of the psychical faculties. — Purveyors of so-called psychical faculties. — H. P. Blavatsky's words on psychism. — Spiritual teachings are never sold. They are man's heritage. — How much can the photographic plate record? — A rational explanation of fairies. — A promise of the way to light and truth.

Truth, my brothers, is something which is not radically exterior to you. You cannot know anything of that which is exterior to you in its principles unless, and because of the fact that, ye yourselves have truth within. It is the percipient mind and the comprehensive understanding which are in you — not which *give* to you, but which are in you — communicating to you the ability to know; and all that you can know is that which is within the compass of the reaches of your own understanding. Do you get the idea?

How then is it that when the human mind reaches out, for



instance into the deep abysses of stellar space — into those realms of cosmic existence which on the face of it, according to the appearance of things, are outside of you — that there is understanding, that there is appreciation, of law and order and system and harmony and beauty, and that the comprehension of it all draws the understanding portion of you on into still deeper reaches? Because it is within you! You cannot understand something which is without the bounds of your understanding; and, radically, naught in the universe is impossible for you to understand. Each one of you is an incarnate divinity, clothed with enshrouding and encrippling veils, vehicles, bodies, ethereal bodies — call them what you like — through which the divine fire, the divine flame, of intelligence must penetrate before its brilliance can reach the human mind, enlighten the physical brain, and to these communicate the understanding of the spiritual man.

Your brain is but a mass of physical atoms. It is something builded up for a purpose, precisely after the same way in which an automobile is builded by man's inventive genius for a purpose, or as is a steamplow so builded, or any other thing. The builder is the inner fire, the inner life, which builds its own vehicle; for your very brain substance is a deposit from the more etheric part of you. It is the lees, the dregs, the deposit, of the inner ethereal man, itself the vehicle of the spiritual man, because each one of you in the inmost of his inmost is a spiritual-divine being.

This is the reason that man's consciousness is at home in the divine spaces; this is the reason that he has this understanding within him, this divine faculty, so that he can reach out indefinitely, not only into the stellar spaces, but — listen, brothers — far more marvelous, into those inner spaces of consciousness, which the ancient Hindus called the pathway of the self, which self in its essence is a divine thing, in its essence is a spark of the

cosmic fire; and therefore is identic with the universe: so to speak blood of its blood, life of its life, bone of its bone, flesh of its flesh. Hence the universe, both visible and invisible, is your home; therefore ye are children of the universe, and there are no frontiers that can be set to your advancing and evolving understanding and growing intelligence.

What a sublime picture! This is the message of all the great seers and sages of all the ages. Do you know that the greatest minds in scientific research today are beginning to understand this fact, so ancient, so familiar to the human heart, taught by every great world religion, voiced in every great world philosophy? Our modern scientists are beginning to understand it, I say, and in beginning to understand it are beginning to teach it. Men like Professor Eddington, the great English scientific thinker, talk about mind-stuff as being the fundamental of the universe.

But none of them, none of them, I say, understand the divine mystery fully. Why? They are pursuing a divine profession, led on by the divine hunger for greater truths; their minds are expanding and opening, receiving the illuminating rays from the cosmic life and from the divine flame of the cosmic intelligence; but they have not yet seized the mystic keys; and yet those keys can be had. Do you know that every such ultramodern scientific researcher is becoming a mystic, and that in becoming a mystic he has set his feet on the pathway of occultism?

Do you know what occultism is? It is the science of the things which are hid, whether entities or things or so-called laws matters not at all; yet whatever is hid but which can be discovered and found out, and the science which shows you how to do this, these two combined are occultism. It is an ancient science; it is not new; it is as old as thinking man. You aggressive Occidentals are not the first who have ever thought, who have

ever tried to penetrate behind the veils of the outward seeming into the inward life. You think you are, but you are not; and the more the great philosophies and religions of the far Orient are examined and studied and investigated, people of the West come to realize that there are in these ancient literatures things very familiar to the human spirit, and that the subjects of thought that modern researchers in science and philosophy and religion are now beginning to find out and think about are as old as the enduring hills. This science of exploration into the things which are hid, not immediately observable, is occultism, the secret science, explaining the mysteries of the universe, which means explaining the mysteries of human consciousness also.

Are you in the universe? Yes. You are not outside of it. Being in it, you are parts of it. Do you get that idea? You can never leave the universe; for in the sense in which I at present employ the word that universe is boundless infinitude. All the universes, not one universe merely, but all the universes scattered like cosmic seeds throughout frontierless space, are simply innumerable.

Nevertheless you, in the inmost of the inmost of you, are inseparable portions of it all. Everything that is in boundless infinitude: every energy, every power, every faculty, everything: is therefore in you, because you are, each one of you, an inseparable part of the cosmic whole.

Do you see what this means? It means that you have within you, if you can find it out, a doorway opening into infinity; which means, to change the figure of speech a bit, that each one of you is a pathway leading into infinite fields, both visible and invisible, inner and outer, which fields are collectively your own self, your higher self, your spiritual essence, for this your spiritual essence is the same as the spiritual essence of the cosmos.

Do you get an adumbration at least of the idea thus placed before

you? What a dignity does it confer upon you as men!

Now, what is psychology? Can any one of you tell me what psychology is? It is a new study in the West, yet it is as old as the enduring hills, and we should know this if we could trace its history back through past ages. In itself it is nothing new. But in the Occident, due to the lack of the esoteric keys given by the great sages and seers of mankind in past ages, men in the West, instead of having at their command as an instrument of thought a true and genuine psychology — the science of the human being considered in his emotional and intellectual parts — has only, due to the painful work of a few scattered researchers, a quasi-science which is properly called physiological psychology.

To speak more accurately, this is not psychology at all. You might perhaps call it psychological physiology, and thus you will see easily that it is a very different thing from true psychology. The results and effects on the human mind, and therefore on human conduct, of certain misunderstood and in certain cases unknown mental and emotional energies and forces in the human being, which express themselves in thoughts and acts, are the bases for this modern psychological physiology. It is only a quasi-science, and it does not carry one far.

I would not spend, I would not waste, one half hour of my precious time in studying the mere record of the experimental researches of these otherwise devoted and self-denying researchers into the human constitution who are trying to know something of the inner constitution of man by studying its effects as they manifest themselves in man's physical cadaver. I want truth. I can get truth by going within, by studying myself, and I can do this for the reasons that I have set forth before. I can do this because I am essentially a god, a divine being, feebly manifesting its transcendent powers through the crippling and

enshrouding veils of the person — through the mind, through the emotions, through the appetites, through the mere brain. Can I understand the god within by studying the psycho-physiological reactions to thought of the human body?

Do I want to study the sun? Shall I study merely its reflection in a pool of water? That reflection will help in giving me some ideas; it will indeed give some vague idea of the surface of the sun; but if I want to know something of the sun *per se*, something of the solar heart, I raise my eyes to our day-star itself, and then I try to look within myself, for within me lie the explanations, and therefore lies the understanding, lies the consciousness, which interpret what I see. In doing this I have every chance to see aright.

Let me now tell you what true psychology is. True psychology is a study of the structure, functions, and operations of the intermediate part of man's inner and invisible constitution. There are three parts to man's constitution — there are more parts, indeed, but there are three *main* parts — the spiritual, the intermediate or psychical, and the astral-physical. Those are the three main bases of man considered as a septenary entity. The spiritual part we may call the pneumatic part, from the Greek word *pneuma*, the spirit. The study of the intermediate part of man's constitution we call psychism or psychology, because either name is perfectly good. When we study the structure and operations of the physical cadaver, we properly call it physiology.

Our modern psycho-physiological researchers are studying the body, and the reactions of the mind and emotions upon that body, and *vice versa*. They do not know what this intermediate part of man's constitution is. Every man of course knows that he thinks and feels. But psychologists do not study as much as they ought to these thinkings and feelings. They are much more inclined to study the effects on the body of thoughts and feelings, or rather

the reactions of the brain and nervous system to thoughts and feelings. For instance, how does a man react to certain tests?

There is a faculty within you which, if cultivated under training, will lead you to understand all that is in you, will lead you along the path of the most wonderful adventure that it is possible for a human being to undertake — the path of exploration of consciousness. Do you follow me? This is the path which teaches you to find your self, to know its powers, to comprehend its faculties, to direct its energies rightfully. This is the true science of psychology as studied by the ancients, and the record, at least in part, of this ancient study still remains in the archaic literatures.

In our days in the Occident, men and women are fascinated by what they call the psychical powers and faculties. They do not really know what these are. There is absolutely no reliable public information about these things, for you will never get such reliable information in public print nor in public lectures. You will get only more or less vague ideas and statements at the very best in public writing or speeches. Nevertheless, accurate, profound, and indeed perfect knowledge of these psychical powers and faculties can be had. Anyone who wants the truth and wants it for spiritual and intellectual progress can get such information. As I have told you again and again: Come to the door and knock, and if you knock with a pure heart, driven by the divine hunger to get wisdom and impersonal knowledge, these will be given to you. Ask, said in substance Jesus the Syrian sage, and if ye ask aright, ye shall receive.

There is in very truth an explanation full, complete, all-comprising, of the riddle of the universe. This complete explanation can be had. This explanation is held in the guardianship of the most evolved human beings of our planet, whom theosophists call the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion

and Peace. These great seers and sages live today as a brotherhood pursuing their sublime work in the quiet, undisturbed, and they live wholly to benefit their fellow men.

You cannot have happiness if the frontiers of your consciousness are no wider than your own merely personal sphere. You cannot thus reach beyond your personal limitations into the grand spaces; you must become impersonal, cosmic in other words, if you wish to understand cosmic truths. You must leave the restricted person, the small powers, the limited faculties, of the ordinary man, and reach out with your greater inner faculties with your spiritual powers which are cosmic in their scope, and these spiritual powers are really you, for they remain with you when you cast the body aside; and all your merely personal gains inner and outer are then left behind and profit you not at all.

You see here the meaning of the words of Jesus the Syrian sage which I repeat in substance: Lay up for yourselves treasures in the realms of the spirit where thieves do not break through and steal from you what you have laid up, and where rust doth not eat away what you have stored aside. The meaning is: cultivate the spiritual powers and faculties within you; become selfless, become self-forgetful; learn to forgive; exercise your intellectual and moral powers; learn to love. These are spiritual qualities and powers, therefore cosmic. They are eternal; they spring from the fountainhead of the ever-enduring part of you. I tell you these things as often as I can, because they are the very foundation of the truth that human beings can understand and therefore should follow. I cannot drive them home too often into your minds. They are the foundation for the receiving of a greater truth than that which now you know.

The ancient Platonists called the spiritual-intellectual part of man the *nous*, and said that man attains freedom in the spirit, cosmic

freedom of consciousness, when his inner constitution becomes *noetic*, which is the adjective from *nous*, the higher consciousness. These ancient Platonists said, likewise, that man has a lower faculty or power or field of consciousness within him, which they called the *psyche*, and which James of the Christians spoke of rather discourteously, I think, as earthly, devilish, and impure. I would not use such words. You see, I am not a Christian!

Therefore, the psychical part of you is not high, because it is the field of your ordinary mind, of your ordinary emotions, of your ordinary likes and dislikes. It is the field of action of all the energies and forces within you that can act on such coarse stuff as the physical body is made of. I want you to get this idea clearly.

On the other hand, you have spiritual willpower; there is a god within each one of you, your own higher self — not God in the ordinary Occidental sense, but a god, a divine being, the very core of you. Why not link yourself with that inner divinity?

Some of you who are of a philosophic bent of mind may question me, and say: "Well, are you teaching a kind of fatalism? We are just ordinary human beings, and if this god is within us, are not we humans mere slaves, psychical machines, under the control of its transcendent powers?"

My answer is No, for this god is your self, your divine self, that part of you which links you into the very structure of the universe in its highest aspect — if there be indeed a highest aspect, for the universe is infinite. We do most emphatically teach the existence in man of a free will streaming forth from this god within, enabling man therefore to choose his own path of thought and feeling and action.

Or do you like the idea of the young person spoken of in a few verses that were sent in to me the other day, suggesting that men



are only slaves, fatally driven beings, mere automatic creatures of some superpower? I don't know where these lines came from, but will read them to you:

There was a young man who said, "Damn,  
I suddenly see that I am  
A creature who moves  
In predestinate grooves,  
In fact, not a 'bus, but a tram!"

As you know, a tram is an English name for a streetcar running along tracks already laid. As a matter of fact you are not trams. You are more like buses. You can go wherever you like, think what you like, exercise your inner faculties and powers as you will; and why, in the name of holy truth, do ye not do it! Ye are free, my brothers. There is naught that hinders you on your path except your own faults and imperfections of willpower and judgment. Do you get the idea that I am trying to convey to you? Do you not immediately see the scientific basis for ethics that is involved in this conception? Morals are not merely man-made conventions: they are based on the very structural harmony of the universe. When a man acts harmoniously, he acts in accordance with the universal scheme and law; and harmony in consciousness and thought and therefore in action is what men understand by the term ethics.

Just think how grand a man seems to us when we see him choose his pathway in life with a will, acting with a will, like a man, realizing that other men have rights also, and that he, with his will, will not infringe those rights! That picture is a grand one. It is the very essence of all religious thought.

This instinct of ethics springs out from within your inner constitution. It comes forth from your spiritual being recognizing harmony, order, the stateliness and majesty of beauty — beauty

in thought, beauty in aspiration and feeling, beauty in action. Do you think that it is a weakling who can follow this sublime pathway in life? Then try it yourself! When you go out of our temple door this afternoon, at the first opportunity that comes try to act like a true man, self-forgetful, kindly, brotherly. And if you succeed, you will feel your shoulders rise with the expansion of thought within you; there will be happiness in your heart; you will feel a sudden expansion of your consciousness; you will feel that you have begun to act manly, because you have become self-forgetful.

That is good psychology. That is most excellent occultism; and every man who so acts is an embryo-occultist, beginning to explore the mysteries of his own consciousness and finding it unspeakably fascinating, entering into the secrets, into the hid things, of his being, and thus developing himself, expanding, growing.

No true occultist ever does a wrong to a fellow or indeed to anything else. You cannot be an occultist unless you forget yourself. Further, you cannot be an occultist unless in addition to forgetting yourself, you try to help your fellows. This is a fine spiritual exercise. Try it! You will gain an experience such as you have never had before. You will gain something that you will never, never lose, for you will have thus builded into the fabric of your character both strength and vision. The god within you will have begun to enclose you with its divine radiance. Love will be yours, because if you follow this pathway you will become lovely. Love will be yours also because, in following this pathway, you will evoke love from others' hearts. A greater understanding will be yours, because you will have given your understanding exercise, brought out its latent power, because, merely in order to see these things, therefore to do them, you must use will and your understanding.

Clairvoyance will be yours, spiritual clairvoyance — not the psychical reflection thereof which is so dangerous, but true spiritual clairvoyance — enabling you, as I told you on last Sunday from this platform, to see with the inner eye what passes at any distance from you, at whatever distance in space or on earth, for there is this faculty within you and you can develop it. It is the inner eye. Don't you believe it? Then examine merely the ordinary records of literature and ponder over what you will find in those records. Spiritual clairaudience will be yours: the power to hear with the inner ear, not with the physical organ so deceptive because so imperfect, but the power to hear anything you will at whatever distance, whether on Mars or on the sun or on the moon, or on Jupiter or on some distant star, or anywhere on earth. Men exercise these faculties even today, and do not know it; but when it happens, then they say: Oh, I had a strange hunch, I had an unusual feeling! And I followed that feeling and everything came out right. I am referring of course, my brothers, to those cases which are real hunches, not merely to imaginary hunches which also occur frequently.

Cultivate the powers and faculties of the spirit. For instance, having this clairaudience, you can hear the grass grow, and that hearing will be to you like a symphonic musical poem. You can hear the celestial orbs singing their songs as they advance along their orbits through space; and do you know why? Because everything that is, is in movement, producing sound, simple or composite as the case may be; so that in very truth every tiny atom sings its own note, its own musical note, and every composite entity, therefore, is an imbodyed musical poem, a musical symphony.

Your bodies are, each one of them, singing its own composite song. When a flower unfolds its petals, there is motion, therefore

it is musical, and if you have the spiritual clairaudience you can hear it. I mean every word of this literally; and spiritual clairvoyance and spiritual clairaudience are but two of the powers of the spirit. There are many others.

Psychism is a word to conjure with today in the Occident. What our bigwigs of the various European and American universities call psychology, the man in the street — who understands very little about the Greco-Latin names and the abstruse phrases and whatnot, and who knows that there are powers latent within him and in his fellows, and who wants to know something understandable about these hid faculties and powers, — calls psychical powers, psychical faculties; and in so-called psychical circles he hears a great deal about 'clairvoyance,' and clairaudience, and thought-transference, etc., etc. But he receives no accurate or reliable information about any of these, because such reliable information being too dangerous to give out publicly, the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace do what they can to prevent such public communication. These so-called psychical faculties and powers are very dangerous indeed unless developed under a wise spiritual teacher who knows what he is about, and furthermore under the severest kind of restrictions and conditions.

How many unfortunate men have lost much money, for instance, by following the advice of those who had no spiritual right and who lacked the proper training to give such advice. Of course I don't want to be unkind, you understand. I detest throwing mud, but it is my duty to warn. Therefore I say to you: Be careful! How many hearts have been broken — and this is a much more serious thing — of men and women in trouble seeking help and going to what they call — well, to the purveyors of so-called psychical teachings. Broken homes, orphaned children, divorces, and almost endless misery of both heart and mind have resulted from

such unwise action. Do you wonder that theosophists, who know the existence of these dangerous powers and faculties in man which the ordinary man calls the psychical, do you wonder why we feel it our duty to call the dangers especially to your attention? We do not do so unkindly.

Many of these so-called psychics are honest people. In some cases they mean well. But they are not illuminated. They have not been trained by real occult teachers, and consequently are themselves also wanderers in the illusory shadows of the astral world. The spiritual part of them, the spiritual part of their constitution, which is the divine sun within them, the inner star, the source of all the great spiritual faculties and powers within, is not deluging the hearts and minds of these psychics with the brilliance of its rays; and consequently even with the best of intentions they have neither the esoteric right to teach nor the vision to know what to say and what not to say.

Let me read to you in this connection what the founder of The Theosophical Society in modern times, H. P. Blavatsky, wrote — one of her last messages to her students. She sent it to the American Convention of Theosophists which took place in 1891. She wrote as follows:

Your position as forerunners of the sixth sub-race of the fifth root-race has its own special perils as well as its special advantages. Psychism, with all its allurements and all its dangers, is necessarily developing among you, and you must beware lest the psychic outruns the Manasic and Spiritual development.

Psychic capacities held perfectly under control, checked and directed by the Manasic principle, are valuable aids in development. But these capacities, running riot, controlling instead of controlled, using instead of being used, lead the

Student into the most dangerous delusions and the certainty of moral destruction. Watch carefully, therefore, this development, inevitable in your race and evolution-period, so that it may finally work for good and not for evil; and receive, in advance, the sincere and potent blessings of Those whose good-will will never fail you, if you do not fail yourselves. . . . Theosophy first, and Theosophy last; for its *practical* realization alone can save the Western world from that selfish and unbrotherly feeling that now divides race from race, one nation from another, and from that hatred of class and social considerations that are the curse and disgrace of so-called Christian peoples. . . . In your hands, brothers, is placed the welfare of the coming century, and great as is the trust, so great also is the responsibility.

These are truths magnificently set forth in words! It is precisely because theosophists have been taught to know the existence of these dangerous powers and faculties in man, the so-called psychic powers, that we call your attention to them and beg of you, as you love your own beloved friends and the peace and tranquillity of your own consciousness, to turn to the spiritual light, to the source of all wisdom and knowledge, which is the divine sun, within you — the source of all the things which make life great and high and noble. Equally important is it for you to beware of the deceptive moonlight of the psychical part of man's constitution.

I tell you again that there is no reliable public information about these psychical faculties and powers existent in the West today. There are many lecturers going about the country talking much about these things; but I tell you one most important fact in this connection: that the Masters of Wisdom, who are the titanic spiritual and intellectual flowers of the human race, the fine flowers of mankind, never teach dangerous truths to untrained

minds.

Would a mother's loving heart put dynamite into the hands of her little child? Dynamite exists, of course. Would she hand her little boy or her little girl a flask of violent poison, merely with the idea that everybody should have everything indiscriminately without training and without warning? Even your public schools of all grades know better than to act in this way. Many things are not taught in public; and I can tell you why: because the teachers know that it is not safe to do so.

It is a thousand times more dangerous to teach things such as these psychical subjects to men and women who don't know what these psychical powers really are and who are absolutely unprotected by any adequate spiritual and intellectual training or development. It is easy to teach about these psychical powers — very easy indeed. You don't have to be spiritually and intellectually great to understand them. And here lies the temptation that men have in this connection: it seems to them to be a quick and easy way to get some power over their fellows. But you will never be able to use a spiritual power to the detriment and hurt of your brother. Do you here see the enormous difference between spiritual and intellectual training, on the one hand, and the very uncertain and illusory and unreliable teachings about the psychical powers and faculties that can be picked up only for a price? You pay; and you receive nothing that is of any worth at all.

The spiritual powers and faculties which form the higher part of your own constitution will evolve forth within you only when you become impersonal, when you live to benefit mankind, when your heart is so stirred that no longer can you live for yourself but must live to help others. Such a life is sublime. That is what the seers and sages of the ages have done in the past; that is what

Jesus, that is what the great Gautama the Buddha, did, that is what all the great ones of the past have done; and the world even today reveres their names, reveres their lives; whereas the murderers, whether of names or of bodies or of human souls, have been forgotten.

O my brothers, the pathway to divinity is within you; that pathway to divinity arises not outside of you. It does not lead to an outside, to an extracosmic deity, for there is no outside of the universe. The path to divinity is within you and begins within you. It takes its beginning, for each one of you, in heart and mind conjoined in your consciousness. It leads ever more and more within, so that as you follow it, you grow in power and faculty of understanding, and you become more and more what you innately are. You bring out more and more into manifestation what you have of glory and grandeur and strength within you. And where does this pathway leading to divinity end? There is no ending of it. It never had a beginning for it was always you and it never will have an ending because it will always be you — your spiritual essence in each case. It leads onwards and onwards and onwards forever. Sons of the sun you are, and one of these days you shall evolve spiritually and intellectually to the point where you shall pass through the portals of the spiritual sun, merely to pass onwards and still farther onwards towards that ever receding goal.

Brothers, I bring to you light. My duty is to try to bring to you help, to give myself to you. I have been approached, since I succeeded our great-hearted Katherine Tingley as Leader of The Theosophical Society, to give private spiritual teachings for a price; and my answer has invariably been: the day when any theosophical teacher accepts one penny for teaching the ancient wisdom-religion or the esoteric secrets of man and of the universe, on that day the Theosophical Movement will die. No



spiritual teachings are ever given for a price. They are yours by right, your heritage, your own. I have no right to hide them from you, but I am not going to give them to anyone until I know that the receivers are capable of receiving and of guarding them sacredly. Do you think that I would give to any man on earth the key to open a power within himself which he would use to the hurt and injury of his brothers? Never!

But come, come with open heart, with eager intellect, with at least the beginning of an unveiled spiritual vision, even if that beginning be small. Knock at the door of my heart; ask, and ye shall receive. It is my duty to give all that I have, but only when I know that those to whom I give can be trusted absolutely.

There are curious ideas abroad in the world today about some of these things. Some people believe in sprites and fairies, goblins and gnomes, angels and — the other kind of angels; and all this simply shows how hungry men and women are to have something in the nature of immaterial and spiritual truths given to them. These truths verily exist and can be given, but only under due guarantees of secrecy and silence. They are never in any circumstances or under any conditions given out publicly either by lecture or by print.

But men today are ignorant of these things and, because they do not know the laws of the universe, desire to become spiritually rich quickly. They desire to get everything all at once; and men don't grow in that way. It is against nature's law of evolution and slow but sure development and growth. Isn't it obvious that it would be utterly impossible for me to communicate powers to you unless you had grown or evolved to the point where you could receive them and understand them and thus properly use them? How can a little child of six or seven years carry the burden that his stalwart father carries? There is the idea. How

can a child of seven or eight years solve a recondite problem in Euclid, for instance, that to his father may be a simple problem? It is all a matter of inner spiritual and intellectual growth.

And so, when I hear some of these itinerant lecturers going over the country and talking about fairies, and saying: "Here is an interesting thing: here is a photograph that I took of a band of fairies, or of gnomes," what can I say that is at once truthful and yet brotherly and not unkind? Can you photograph electricity? Can you photograph energy? Can you photograph force? Can you photograph the astral? You cannot. All that the photographic plate, that the camera, will record is the traces of energy and passing fluidic substances left on our physical sphere and in our physical sphere by forces or energies working in the invisible realms; and such things as these traces are the commonest experiences of life. The lightning's flash, the falling rain, the opening flower, the growing tree, a walking man, a running automobile, the stars in their orbits, the brilliant luminosity of the nebulae in the midnight sky, the flash of the electric spark in the laboratory, the tiny sand-pillar whirled by the winds of the desert, the oncoming cyclone — all these things, in fact everything that is visible, can be photographed because these are all traces of the hid powers working behind the veil, but these powers themselves in their essence cannot be photographed because they do not belong to the physical sphere, and it is only things of the physical sphere that the photographic plate of the camera can catch and record.

Here is a question that was sent in to me for answer today:

I am interested in fairies and nature spirits. [So am I!] I always did love nature [so do I], and nothing pleases me better than to wander in the woods and enjoy the delightful feel of things. But how much better it would be if I could learn how to see the

beautiful sprites and things which must live there.

I am thinking of joining your organization so as to study the occult side of things. What would it cost for lessons, or have you got books about it? I understand that it is only necessary to subscribe to the principle of universal brotherhood in order to join. Well, that would be easy, because I never was one to quarrel with others.

My wife says she thinks I've got my ideas tangled up about these things, but she can't tell me how. What do you think about it?

Now isn't that an interesting question! Well, I am going to astonish you perhaps in what I shall say. I also believe in fairies. I also believe in sprites. I also believe in gnomes. I also believe in cosmic spirits. I believe that the universe is filled full with gods, with semi-divine beings, and with beings of much lower grade in nature's innumerable hierarchies. And I know all these invisible entities exist in all-various kinds and at all-various stages of growth, of evolution, high, intermediate, and low. But do I believe in fairies and sprites with little green caps and little green jackets and long shoes with pointed toes sticking out, as mere copies of the clothing of the inhabitants of Europe of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries? No. Why should I? Why should these supposititious fairies and gnomes be clad according to the clothing of Europeans of medieval times? Why should these fairies be shaped like men, only very small? The whole suggestion is unnatural and therefore untrue. There are planets in our solar system which have inhabitants, just as the earth has. And yet their inhabitants are as different in form from us as it is possible to imagine different forms to be.

Why, then, must we say that because we have a human form, every other entity in the universe or on earth must have human

forms also, perhaps a little taller or a little smaller than we are? I don't believe in that kind of fairies. When I say that I believe in sprites and gnomes and goblins and kobolds and elves and what not, I believe what the theosophy of the ages has taught the existence of: in other words, I believe in conscious entities living in the invisible worlds.

What this kind questioner refers to in his question are what theosophists call elementals, elementals existing in many stages of evolution and possessing many kinds of forms, some a little like the human and most of them very unlike the human form. Elementals are growing, learning entities; they are entities beginning their growth towards becoming human. They are very young in evolution and are not yet far evolved along the pathway of growth; but they will be men in some far, far distant time of the future when evolution shall have worked its magic upon them.

Why are we human beings here? We are self-conscious, and we have hearts; we feel, we understand, we have wonderful faculties locked up within us. What does it all come from? Did it just happen so? Do you really believe that anything just happens so? Now, I do not so believe. I simply do not understand what this phrase means, "just happened so." We humans are here because of preceding causes stretching backwards illimitably; and we human beings are the present effects of those preceding causes; and we ourselves are at present causes expressing the intelligence and feeling and understanding of the powers locked up within us and which will make us very different in faculties and powers and shape in future ages. In just the same way there are hosts of entities far below us humans. We are not the only self-conscious beings in boundless infinitude.

Of course I believe in these growing entities, in these evolving

entities all growing progressively greater just as men are. You can call these inferior entities fairies if you like, or sprites, gnomes, kobolds, elves, because the name does not matter much. But I certainly would like to see anyone capable of photographing them. When I see that, then I will believe that you can photograph energy, as energy. You cannot do it. All you can do is to photograph the traces of its action left behind in this physical universe, because you photograph by light, which is a physical thing, a substance-energy, and the material photographic plate can receive and record only material impressions.

I think that this kind questioner has his ideas badly tangled. I think that his wife was right!

No spiritual truth is ever sold. We have our theosophical books in which as much as it is safe to print publicly is given out, and that which you will find in our books is really wonderful. It will be a revaluation to those who have not studied theosophy; and the price that we charge for our books is simply to cover the cost of printing and publication and mailing. But do you think that any price on earth could buy me? My heavens! I would not be worthy of looking an honest man in the face if I could be bought. You try it, and see. I mean it too! But nevertheless you can have the holy truth. Come to me, any one of you who chooses may come to me with an earnest heart, willing absolutely to accept the conditions of learning, the conditions which are not mine but those which I am obliged to lay before you, and if your heart is honest and your will is strong, and I find that I can trust you, then I will give you as much truth as I can. This is a promise.

Every theosophical teacher says the same; and furthermore, my brothers, I can show you how to put your feet on the pathway of light which will lead you to personal acquaintance with the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace, if you follow that

pathway unfailingly to the end. Cultivate the divine within you. Try to be at one with your inner god.

You, my brothers, I am speaking to as an audience of gods, as divine beings, as cosmic spirits, which you truly are in your higher parts. You have totally unknown faculties and powers within you. You have not touched the fringe of acquaintanceship with what you have within you. Sons of the sun ye are. Sons of the spiritual sun which is the heart of the bright luminary our day-star. A god is the core of the core of the heart of the heart of each one of you. Divinity irradiates your consciousness. Oh, why not become your divine self, and then take the kingdom of the spiritual realms by strong will and intense purpose. Ye are gods, my brothers, in your inmost!

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[Vol 2, No 8](#)  
[Contents](#)

**Second Series: No. 8 (November 2, 1930)**

**GODS, MEN, AND ATOMS**

(Lecture delivered August 17, 1930)

CONTENTS: Within you is the light of eternity. — The limitations of the argumentative brain-mind. — The secret of the physical atoms of chemistry. — The ten hierarchies of our own home-universe. — What do you mean by self-study? Can it lead to self-worship? — The ever-receding holy of holies. — What is a star? — Smashing the prejudices of scientific fanatics. — Why the repetition of a truth is good. — What has brought about the diversity in the universe? — The Gayatri, an ancient Vedic prayer: an interpretation. — What draws us back to earth? — What attracts us after death? — Will there be a preliminary meeting of all theosophists in May 1931? Dr. de Purucker firmly maintains his original position. — Fundamentally men are trustworthy. — Spiritual ideals cannot be voted upon. — It is ideas that rule the world. — Words from the *Journal* of the Swiss philosopher, Amiel. — Awake to a cognizance of the life sublime!

A speaker who has something to tell his audience which is real and beautiful and true because based on the very structure and operations of almighty nature herself, and who stands before an audience as a theosophical lecturer does, wonders, when beginning to speak, just how much of what he is going to say will sink into the minds of his hearers, so that through their minds these wonderful theosophical thoughts may reach the understanding heart of you, the center of consciousness. This center of consciousness is a brilliant flame, an inner light, which passes through the tissue of living veils of personality cast around

it by evolution and will. It streams forth from the very heart of being, and may, rightly be called the very light of eternity.

It is to this light within you that I always address myself: this light which is not a physical brilliance at all, but nevertheless of which even the physical brilliance of the stars of the material universe is, as it were, a shadow. This light is composite of consciousness, love, understanding which is the root of intelligence; and these are not three things, but one thing, like a three-faceted jewel showing now this, now that, now the third aspect of itself.

The faculties which a human being shows, which he manifests, obviously spring forth from within him. They do not come from without. They arise in his own inner forum of consciousness; and just in proportion as the percipient ego, the self-conscious human being, can penetrate more and more inwards towards this flow of light, this light of eternity within, does the man who is this percipient ego enter into the deeps of himself, which is the same as saying into the deeps of the universe of which he is an inseparable part.

This light it is that I appeal to. I care nothing at all for argumentative brain-minds. It is these brain-minds of ours, although useful in ordinary affairs of life, which nevertheless cause divisions among men, which separate man from man and race from race, and bring about the misery and sorrow of the world. My appeal is to that within you which is eternal, for it is the very light of eternity streaming through you.

These observations are drawn from a part, a beautiful part, of the teaching of all the sages and seers of all the ages, a teaching existent among all men and in all times. Ye are gods, says the writer of one of the Christian scriptures, and he spoke truth. As men of course we are not gods; we human beings as human beings are but feeble and imperfect manifestations of the



supernal splendor struggling to escape through the living tissue of the encircling veils and garments of the personal selfhood; but the inmost of the inmost of us, the core of the core of the heart of the heart of us, is a god, a divine being, not merely rooted in the universe but a very part of it — life of its life, bone of its bone, being of its being; and when once you understand this sublime thought, you will realize that you yourselves are — each one of you is — that universe, for each one of you is but an inseparable part of the incomprehensible whole.

Everything that is in the whole, as I tell you again and again from this platform, is therefore in each one of you, gods as you are in your inner parts; and each one of you is striving to manifest your transcendent spiritual powers through these crippling and encircling veils of the lower selfhood. This teaching really is the heart of the heart of all the great world religions and world philosophies. I allude to it on every Sunday when I speak to you, because it is all important.

How can a man understand the universe, apparently outside of him but of which he is really a part, unless he knows himself? It is not enough merely to feel, merely to think. You must *know*; and how do you know yourself? By studying things apparently outside of you? No, by going inwards, into your own consciousness — not the brain-mind consciousness, not the physical consciousness. These last are merely two of the veils, two of the garments, two of the living tissues, of the inmost of you. But the process that I now here refer to is going deeper within, into the deeps, and thereby following that still, small path of which the Hindu Upanishads tell us, leading ever more within. It will lead you to the very heart of the universe, if you follow it faithfully and without fail.

Consider how this sublime thought clothes you as men with high dignity; see the responsibility inherent in your lives as men. You

recognize yourselves as collaborators with the gods in the great cosmic work — and the universe is filled full with gods. Like you not the name? If so, you make me think of what a clever Irish writer recently said. He said: "Our fathers were afraid of ghosts, but we moderns are afraid of names." Call these gods then cosmic spirits, or archangels, or angels, or whatnot: Dominions, Principalities, Powers — what does the name signify? It is the thought involved which is all important.

These gods which fill the universe full are our parents, our kin. They have produced us, not "created" us, but somewhat after the manner in which an earthly father will produce from his own being his physical child. As the child in a sense is a part of his father, so have these divine beings in the universe produced or evolved forth the demigods who in their evolutionary course on earth we call men. We are gods in our inmost, demigods because children of the gods, and on earth we are men. And we demigods, we men, who are gods in our inmost, are living in bodies of flesh at the present time, bodies composed of atoms, of chemical atoms; and what are these atoms? Are they different in essence from us? No. Has not an atom, each one being an inseparable portion of the universe just as every man is, everything essentially within it that a man or a god has? Verily so, for these atoms, even the physical atoms of chemistry, are but the outer living tissue of the divinity at the heart of every atom — of each one of the atoms.

Therefore it at once becomes obvious that every man is a little universe, a microcosm; every god is a greater universe; while at the other extreme every atom even is an infinitesimal universe.

Gods, demigods, and atoms — gods, men, and atoms — are the subjects of our study together today. Do I choose these three, gods, men, and atoms, because I mean thereby to signify that these three hierarchies or classes of beings are the only self-

conscious entities in boundless infinitude? Not at all. But simply for purposes of easy understanding I have taken three interlocking and interblending hierarchies. In our own home-hierarchy, which comprises all within the encircling bounds of the galaxy, the Milky Way — that is, our home-universe — ten, so teaches the sublime wisdom-religion of the archaic ages, are the subordinate hierarchies or stages or steps, from the highest to the lowest, within this our home-universe; and these ten include within their compass all the classes of living beings existent within this home-universe.

What are these ten classes, according to the ancient enumeration? They are the following: gods, demigods, daimones, men; then, coming to our earth, beasts, the plant kingdom, the mineral kingdom, and the three kingdoms of the elementals below the mineral kingdom — ten in all. Note well that every cosmic hierarchy in boundless space is divided in the same way; but some of these cosmic hierarchies are high and some are low, if we use our own Milky Way as a convenient standard of reference. There are no frontiers to infinitude.

Did not every great seer and sage teach that within a human being lie all the mysteries of the universe? *Man, know thyself*, was the profound injunction of the Delphic Oracle. Why was so much emphasis laid on this injunction? Because the way to wisdom, the way to knowledge, the way to understanding, lies within man himself. The understander is within.

Some people like to be on what they consider the safe side in religious and philosophical questions. I met a man once who had joined a certain church. I said: "Why? From what you tell me, you really don't believe in those teachings." "No, I don't." "Well, why did you join?" "Well, it is good to be on the safe side. I may be wrong, you know." This prudent individual reminds me of a joke

that was sent in to me yesterday, or a day or two ago:

An old lady in church was seen to bow whenever the name of Satan was mentioned. One day the minister spoke to her and asked her why she did so. "Well," she replied, "politeness doesn't cost anything, and then — you never know."

I have known people to come into The Theosophical Society on much the same grounds. They like our teachings; they think that these teachings are fine, are scientific, philosophical, and religious; but I have always felt that there was a little something about these people that did not ring quite true; and I remember in one case that I spoke to a comrade in this connection, and I said (I will call him Jack): "Well, Jack, why did you join?" "Well, I liked the idea of joining." And I said: "Why? You are not — well, I don't mean to be unkind, Jack — but you are not doing exactly as you ought to do." "Well," he said, "I will tell you why, G.deP. I thought that perhaps, after all, your teachings might be true; and that after I joined The Theosophical Society, and accepted these ideas with my intelligence such as I have evolved it, these teachings might be a sort of protection against my doing things that I might do if I were outside."

I could tell you quite a lot of funny stories about people who have joined us in the past, and in certain instances about some people who have dropped out of membership. I will tell you that I am not eager for that kind of Fellows in The Theosophical Society. I direct my appeal always to the real inner man, to the essential spiritual manhood of you. I would not give a snap of the fingers for all the wealth of the world and all the power of the world if I could bring them into the Theosophical Movement but by doing so lose my own soul. I know that having found myself, my real inner spiritual self, I have found all, for at will I can enter that portal opening inwardly to the Mystic East, and thereafter follow a

pathway which, if I pursue it faithfully, will lead me to the very heart of the Universe, past the portals of the sun, our own glorious day-star. I mean every word of this and mean it literally. It is to this element in you, my Brothers, that I always make my appeal.

In connection with what I have just said, a question was sent in to me that I will now read. It seems to fall into place here.

If a man looks within too intensively, is there a possibility of his becoming a self-made man who worships his creator?

This is a rather clever question because it points out that there is always a chance of a man losing his spiritual way, and worshiping himself. My answer to this question is a positive negative, because any such lower self-examination is morbid. It is not the study of and aspiration towards the spiritual being within that I have heretofore spoken of. You cannot study this inner spiritual life of you too intensively. It is compact of truth, of almighty love, of compassion, of pity, of all the elements in the universe which produce, through the intelligence and hearts of men, kindness, brotherhood, gentleness, and things of good and high report. This study of our spiritual being shows us that we must break through the enshrouding veils of the lower selfhood and penetrate within to the divinity, to the inner god, which is the heart of the heart of each one of us. Then, when we have reached that sublime goal, we shall have the impulse to turn around, as do the glorious buddhas of compassion who turn backwards on the path, and help our fellows trailing along behind. This compassionate act is what all true spiritual saviors of men do.

The self-study which I was told to teach is not the study of the lower personal elements of our being, but it is the study of the god within, your inmost being; and the way consciously to reach it is to break through the encircling veils of the lower personality,

to pass these, to break down these barriers if need be, and to cast them aside, but in any case to enter into the holy of holies within us. How wonderful this adventure is! This inmost of us, which I have called a holy of holies, as soon as you reach it fades away into something still more sublime on the distant mountain peaks of hope, and then ye pass onwards, and reaching that more distant goal ye find that the same experience happens again. But at each such recurrence of this sublime experience the stage of understanding and consciousness attained is higher than the previous one; and so it continues, each stage being higher still, ever more high, until ye reach the portals of the spiritual sun, not only the spiritual sun within you but also of that very day-star which is the source of all life and light on our earth.

Our fathers thought that our physical sun was but a huge furnace burning itself out. What an amazingly puerile conception! The ancient Mystics taught that every star in the cosmic spaces was but the luminous veil or garment of a god, just as they also said that every body of every human being is but the outermost veil of a divine entity working through that outermost veil.

There are times when I take pleasure in smashing, if I can, the old prejudices of so-called religious and scientific fanatics, if by doing so I can let light in to darkened minds. As a matter of fact men's minds today are in deep obscurity and lack spiritual illumination because the men of our present day have been brought up in the old scientific and religious materialistic teachings of our fathers. Even today the universities teach this materialism from their lecture platforms, despite the astonishing progress that scientific discovery and research have made; the books that you read in the libraries are written with this moribund materialism as their main theme; and yet I tell you that this materialism, at least in the minds of the great men of the world, is now dead. The scientific and religious teachers of the world no longer accept it. No truly

eminent man believes today in that old materialism; and some of the greatest scientific minds of the day are thinking of new and lofty intellectual departures; these men are seeing visions and dreaming dreams of spiritual truth. A few of them are even talking of mind-stuff as being the foundation of the universe; and as a great English scientist wrote a short time ago, the materialism of our fathers was a scientific superstition — the scientific materialistic thought of our forefathers was a superstition — as much so as was the belief in devils and witches; and yet that same materialism is still taught today to your children and youth. The whole thought-world of the Occident is still filled with it, although everybody who is well-informed now knows that it is untrue. And yet it is taught, and therefore it shapes the minds of our youth, and their minds are still more or less governed by it.

Do you now understand why I love to smash these scientific and religious fantasies of a bygone day? On the contrary, I assert that the world is filled with gods and that every living thing and the so-called inanimate things also, are trees of life, with their roots above in the spiritual realms, with their trunks passing through the intermediate spheres, and their branches manifesting in the physical realms. Such a spiritual tree also is man. So also is a beast. So also is a plant. So also is a demigod. So also is a god. So also is a super-god.

I was asked the other day why I repeated so often what I had said on previous occasions. I answered: Because it is a wonderful, beautiful series of thoughts that I have been told to deliver from this platform; and also please remember that you cannot repeat a good thing too often. It is repetition which is the very soul of advertising, and when you have a truth to advertise and to give, tell it and tell it and tell it again, and with all the energy and earnestness which you have.

I am a believer in the divine source of the universe. Spirit is the root of things; and the gods and demigods and daimones and all the other vast armies and hosts of cosmic entities, invisible and those which we apparently see, are all collaborating together in the cosmic work; and they are the causes of the natural so-called diversity that you see everywhere — atom differing from atom, man differing from man, one demigod differing from others; and so forth throughout infinity. In these divine and spiritual entities lies the cause of the diversity of the universe.

This point may not interest some of you, perhaps, but uninitiated thinkers of all ages have pondered over the problem: What has brought about the diversity in the universe? It is the divine beings existent therein as the lives and intelligences of the universe; and of these divine beings men are one host. O my brothers, ye are gods — at present feeble and undeveloped human beings, but yet each one of you in his inmost is a god — each one of you in his heart of hearts is a divine being, a spark of the universal cosmic intelligence.

Strictly in connection with what I have said to you, about reaching the portals of the sun and passing beyond it into realms still more sublime, there came to me a question the other day which I will now read to you:

I do not understand what you mean when you speak of men as sons of the sun, implying that thereby some greater dignity attaches to them than is usually the case. I know what is meant by being sons of God [I do not], in the sense that when we turn from our crude, elemental, human ways, and sincerely try to follow the high ethics of Jesus Christ, we are redeemed from our earthly nature. But sons of the sun sounds like a Pagan idea to me. I do not wish to appear critical; I just do not understand. Can you explain further?



I most assuredly can explain further. "O spiritual sun, Father in heaven, giver of life and light, enfold us in thy radiance; awaken in us thereby thy own light in our hearts, so that it may flood our pathway and guide our feet on our journey to thy sacred seat." This is a paraphrase of an ancient Vedic prayer called the Gayatri, and is even today one of the most sacred verses of Brahmanism. I quote it for its esoteric significance and don't quote it as signifying sun worship, for that is not the idea at all.

The spiritual sun, of which the physical sun is but the outermost veil, is the channel through which all beings pass on one phase of their aeons-long evolutionary pilgrimage. It is for a time a home in which we must stay. Sons of the sun, said the ancients, are the sons of men. The sun is, men also are, and both are parts of the cosmic whole, both are productions of the cosmic life. You may say that instead of being sons of the sun we are brothers of the sun, and you would say aright; but as that brilliant day-star of ours in its spiritual essence, in its spiritual parts, is the fountainhead of the life with which our solar system is filled, the open portal through which streams the light of eternity — and I am not using poetical words — it is therefore perfectly correct to use the phrase sons of the sun, for in us, in each one of us, there abides a divine spark, a spiritual electric scintilla so to speak, a spiritual spark, drawn from the spiritual sun.

You Occidentals have been thinking for too long a time that the only power of thought resides in your own Occidental brains. Too long a time have you disregarded nature's outstanding fact that consciousness and the energy of the spiritual life inhere in all human beings. Why does this kind questioner call this idea a pagan idea, if not from this Occidental egoism which qualifies its own small portion of learning as the standard by which all the rest of mankind shall be judged? Yes, it is a pagan idea, because it

is a true idea. It is also a pagan idea to say, as the writer of one of the Christian scriptures said, Ye are gods. It is typically pagan! Shall you reject a truth because some people whose minds are three or four hundred years behind the advancing times say that the truth is a pagan truth? You won't find this narrowness of spirit in other parts of the world.

Yes, it is a pagan idea, thank the immortal gods. Am I therefore a pagan? I am, in the above sense of the word, because I am a searcher for truth. Do you ask me: Are you a polytheist? I answer: I am, because although you must not imagine that I believe literally in the ancient, worn-out mythological teachings of Greece or of Rome, or of Hindustan or of China, yet I do believe, and in fact I know, that the universe is filled full with sentient, conscious entities, whom I call gods because I know that they are far greater than men are, but yet have intelligence and life and understanding, and in a sense have understanding hearts, and furthermore are the causes of the vast and seemingly bewildering diversity of the natural universe, because they are the roots of that diversity.

Now, when a theosophist speaks of the universe, does he mean merely the physical universe that he sees? No, no, no! I have already told you often that that physical universe is but the outer garment, the outer veil, hiding the wonderful secrets of the inner worlds and realms, worlds spiritual, worlds ethereal, existing in all-various grades and degrees of evolutionary advancement. So fully are theosophists evolutionists that we do not stop short at any frontier, but say that evolution applies to all things and everywhere, and during boundless eternity. It never began; endings it knows not. Evolution is growth, is progress, and all things grow and progress, and how can they do so unless there be the fields of life on which they may live and learn; and these fields of life are the worlds invisible and visible.

Therefore I beg you to think. Pause before you hastily judge. How beautiful is life when properly understood! With what dignity does the understanding of it clothe men's minds! Consider the one cosmic life, common to all things. Remember the one destiny, endless, always growing larger, growing greater continually, and common to all entities and things. Forget not the endless growth or evolution common to all entities and things.

In repeating the beautiful thoughts that it is my duty to lay before you, I do so with a purpose, hereinbefore stated: to drive home by repetition the sublime ideas; but yet I am not like the Negro preacher of whom I was reading this morning. Do you want to hear about that Negro preacher? I will read a paragraph to you just as a little mental diversion from these deeper thoughts. This humorous skit was sent in to me by a kind friend. I don't know from what paper it originally came. This is it:

#### FULL MEASURE

*Judge Brown:* "Well Ephraim, what are you preaching to your flock these days? I hear you are making a mighty stir."

*Ephraim:* "Well, sur, yassur, I is, I gives it to 'um dis way: Fustly, I tells 'um what I'm gwine tell 'um, den I tells 'um what I said I wuz gwine tell 'um, and den I tells 'um what I done tole 'um."

I am not quite such a repeater as this Negro preacher, because at each separate time when I repeat a beautiful thought I try to vary it a little, to give you a little more than before of the wonderful light of the ancient wisdom-religion of mankind. Always remember that the things that are great are not the things which are seen. The things that are seen are results, effects, of the inner lives. The great things in life are those which are invisible, those which mystically draw us on to themselves, those which are

greater than we and include us within the compass of their being. It is these greater things that interest real men. It is these greater things that you will discover in endless succession as you follow the mystical path leading ever more within towards the inner god.

O my Brothers, realize what you have locked up within you. Everything that the boundless infinitude contains is locked up within each one of you, active a little, latent greatly. But they are all there. See what this means for your future, as you grow and develop and bring out through evolution what is within you: unfolding, unwrapping, throwing forth from within outwards, just as a flower grows. So indeed does a flower evolve, or men or gods or worlds or suns.

The time is coming when a race of men your descendants of a far distant age in the future, will walk the earth, as I have told you on other occasions, and act like gods and talk like gods, because they will think like gods, and they will think like gods because the gods within them shall then have begun to manifest their transcendent energies, faculties, powers. There is the fundamental reason of their growth. You could not become a god unless you were one even now in your inmost; you could not have become a man unless you had had manhood latent within you from the beginning. Can an acorn, can an apple seed, bring forth respectively the oak or the apple tree unless these were lying latent there? No.

Here is also a question quite along the line of our thought. It is preceded with a quotation from Bulwer Lytton's *The Coming Race*, chapter 15, and the question itself follows:

"Minds accustomed to place happiness in things the reverse of godlike, would find the happiness of Gods exceedingly dull, and would long to get back to a world in which they could

quarrel with each other."

Such being the case, should not a belief in reincarnation be very popular?

Yes, and a belief in reincarnation is and always has been exceedingly popular in the world. More than half of the human race today believes in it. But the citation from Bulwer Lytton's noteworthy book contains the key to the explanation why men come back into human bodies again and again. Their psychical constitutions are appetitive of what earth-life provides for them. In other words, men hunger for human life on earth! Being imperfect entities, their desires are imperfect; and it is nature's fundamental law that what we long for we ultimately always go to. What ye wish for, ye shall ultimately obtain. Now, please get the full sense of this profound truth. If ye crave and hunger after the things which hurt and blind both yourself and others, then ye shall have them in time, and the consequence is that ye will follow the downward way. If ye long for the things which expand the consciousness, which open the heart and develop the intellect; if ye love love and hate hate, and aspire for all that is great and noble and true; if ye wish to make of your human consciousness a cosmic consciousness, ye shall obtain it all in due course of time. The reasons are obvious, and lie in the fact that the currents of your vital energies are directed along the path which your mind and imagination open before you; and if your mind and imagination are centered on this or on that or on something else, thither will ye travel the pathway.

There is an ancient Sanskrit saying, exceedingly profound, mystical, esoterical, based on one of nature's fundamental laws, which no Occidental Orientalist has ever understood, and here it is, first the original Sanskrit and then its English translation:  
*Yadyad devata kamayati, tattad devata bhavati*: that is to say, in

English: "Whatsoever an entity (a god, *devata*, is here taken as an example) longs for, that very thing the entity will become."

But men being as now they are, half god, half animal, their desires partake of both these classes of entities, and consequently they live partly in the spirit and partly in the material worlds. When a man dies, the better part of him is raised by its own attraction — irresistibly drawn upwards so to speak, or inwards, at any rate drawn to the spiritual realms; and when the long, sweet, and happy sleep of devachan is ended, the seeds sown in the last life and in previous lives in the very character, in the fabric, of the entity then in his spiritual rest — when the repose is ended, I say, these seeds will begin to grow, to manifest themselves, to open, and then the human being descends through the spiritual realms again to the fields wherein those seeds were originally sown, to earth-life.

It is a man's psychological hunger, his psychological thirst, in other words the appetites of his nature, which direct him hither or yon. Isn't it so? The same rule prevails when the physical garment of flesh is dropped, and consequently the soul is then drawn to what it feels to be familiar scenes, because it has had these scenes in its mental picture gallery during the life just passed, and has dwelt upon them in imagination, and has thus built up a fabric of energy. This is the devachan. When the reverse process takes place and the seeds of material appetites begin to awaken after the devachanic rest, they attract the entity back to the familiar fields of material existence. Thus is reincarnation on earth brought about, for a great part of the lower constitution of the human being is of earthly fabric and construction, compact of earthly thoughts and earthly passions and earthly desires which, although sinking at death into latency, ultimately awaken when the devachanic sleep is ended; and thus the entity is drawn back to earth-life.

Yes, men want to come back to "quarrel," as Bulwer Lytton so neatly puts it, in other words to be men again: to love with their little loves, to hate with their little hates, to play a few more antics on the stage of earth-life, to lay up for themselves more treasures on earth where thieves break through and steal, and where the rust doth corrupt. They want these things, and hence they come to earth again. At the present time men don't want to live like gods and to think like gods, and therefore to act like gods. Their appetites, their wishes, their thirst for existence, are not set with godlike ends as the goal.

Nevertheless you can change all this, and you can strive to be, even now, at least somewhat of the divinity within you. You can indeed do this. You can set for yourself a divine ideal and work towards it, strive to become it, and thus grow to be at least godlike men. All the powers of the divine are already in you. They are locked up in you. They are native to your spiritual self, to the god within you. That inner god is your essential being. Why not strive to become it?

Here is a little question that I desire to answer today. I promised to do so, although it stands apart from the thread of our thought. It is a question sent in to me by a boy in our school, fourteen years old.

When a cell divides by fission, do two new lives enter the cells thus formed, or is one of them still the same cell as the original?

This is a pretty good question for a boy of fourteen! The theosophical answer to it is briefly this: What happens when a father casts into the appropriate environment the human life-germ? Is the father the same as his son or his daughter? No. The one cell, when it divides into two, follows the same law. One

remains what it was before, and the other or daughter-cell is the beginning of a new life which the parent-cell has produced. There is your answer in brief.

Another question before me is the following:

In the August issue of *The Theosophist*, edited by Dr. Besant, in a report of the Geneva Convention of Adyar Theosophists, your proposed congress for all Theosophical Societies to be held next year at Point Loma on August 11th is spoken of. But I also read that an effort will be made to call a preliminary meeting of the chief officials of these various societies to meet in May and to discuss ways and means, etc. It has been suggested that you convoke this preliminary gathering. Will it be done? It seems to me to cast an entirely different color on the whole thing and to give it more of a political aspect and less of a spiritual one.

The facts as stated are correct. It has been suggested that I convoke this preliminary gathering, and I shall refuse. The situation is not an easy one to face. The effort which originated at Point Loma for fraternization and brotherhood among all theosophists and Theosophical societies whatsoever was a spiritual effort; and I greatly fear that if any such introductory meeting were held, the spiritual atmosphere or the spiritual appeal of the original idea would be lost; and, by the immortal gods, my brothers, I dare not take the chance! Too much is at stake! So, for my part, I shall be obliged to refuse.

My original invitation, however, stands just as it originally stood, and I am ready. The congress spoken of is not to be a universal congress to which anybody who is a theosophist belonging to whatsoever Theosophical Society may come and vote. That was not at all my idea. The idea was in no wise that this convention at Point Loma next year should be a political gathering with all the



soul-killing atmosphere of such a political meeting; but my effort took the form of an appeal to the spiritual feeling in men's hearts and minds to be brotherly, to be kindly. The idea was to have the chiefs and perhaps a very few of the other principal officers of the different societies meet together and talk over their common problems together: to give each the other his hand and to converse as brothers. That is what I want; that is what I hope for; and that itself, I believe, should be the only and sole preliminary step to something greater to come in the future.

Never shall I consent, as long as I remain the Leader of The Theosophical Society, to bring down a spiritual ideal to be judged and to be discussed and sat upon by men, however splendid as men they may be, sitting in conclave and adopting the results of their deliberations by the expedient of counting upraised hands or noses, or the ayes and the nays. Has it never struck you men of the Occident that it is great men who prevail in the world? No truth is so common; but when the application of this truth is called for, men are doubtful and timorous in following it. It is ideas which move the world; it is ideas which make and unmake civilizations; and ideas do not originate in the multitudes, they originate always in the mind of some individual.

Are ye going to cripple that individual's power by subjecting his thought to the votes of those who, even with the best of good will, perhaps do not, because they cannot for the time, understand? Are ye going to kill a spiritual idea by subjecting it to the forms followed by political gatherings? I will have nought to do with such a thing. Here is my hand extended to any brother, to any human being, genuinely and sincerely. Come, my brother. Take my hand. Let us live in peace and harmony. Is not that enough? There is my pledge and there stands my honor.

When will men learn that the hope of the world lies within and

not without? The way to stifle a great and sublime idea is to discuss it too much, and thereafter to vote upon it. Immediately questions of expediency arise: "Shall I, or shall I not? Is it best?" Doubt, suspicion, immediately enter in at the door thus thrown wide open.

But in the heart of man there is the light of eternity. Personally I will trust my fellow men. I have always trusted, and I have never yet appealed to this heart-trust in vain. There are some men who have tried to deceive me; but these men misunderstood me. Once, my fellow men understand me, there will be no more trouble. Fundamentally men are trustworthy. I trust them. Make an appeal to the god within your fellow and let the god within you be the one who appeals, and even though the one who hears the appeal may turn his back and pretend to be deaf, yet you have cast a seed into his mind and heart which will grow in the silences; and someday it will open, and your man is your captive — a captive of your heart, a lover of the love which you have given.

There is the difference between a spiritual plan, a spiritual ideal, and one which is tested and determined by the mere brain-mind adjudications of political conclaves.

In each of you is divinity — you are a god within a man — and the man is enshrouded, veiled, by a body of atoms; hence you are three, god, man, atomic vehicle. You in your physical being not only represent the universe, but I tell you that every one of you in his inmost is a living god. Take that thought home with you and ponder over it; and once it enters into your minds, once you catch the light, all things that are worthwhile will be yours.

As the Swiss philosopher and writer Amiel wrote in his *Journal*, of which I will read an extract:

Never to tire; never to grow cold; to be patient, sympathetic, tender, to look for the budding flower and the opening heart; to hope always; to love always — this is duty. . . . Every life is a profession of faith, and exercises an inevitable and silent propaganda. . . . Every man is a center of perpetual radiation like a luminous body: he is, as it were, a beacon which entices a ship upon the rocks if it does not guide it into port. . . . Such is the high importance of example.

Begin to be then the god within you. Dignify your lives by lofty thought; for I tell you that when you begin to feel like a god, it shows that you have begun to think godlike thoughts, and when you so think and when you so feel, your fellows will instinctively recognize the god within you, and love you for the love that you pour out into their hearts, thus awakening them to a cognizance of the life sublime.

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[Vol 2, No 9](#)

[Contents](#)

## Second Series: No. 9 (November 10, 1930)

### VISIONS

(Lecture delivered August 24, 1930)

CONTENTS: Vision is the fundamental of every great world religion. — The clear calm visioning of the spirit. — Distorted visions of the psychics. The adamantine wall around their beliefs. — The misleading visions of the would-be teachers. — The Saptadarsana or "Seven Visions": — the seven schools of archaic Hindu philosophy. — Dean Inge and the problem of suicides. Does he understand karmic consequences? — The after-state of the suicide hinted at. — Are the arts of the Christians superior to others? — The glory of ancient art. — Music lives apart from religious belief. — The effects of selfish gratification. — Did the science of the stars originate on the plains of Babylonia? — Archaic records of the Hindus, Chinese, and ancient Americans. — Does theosophy foster a sense of separateness? — The "broad-minded" follower of no beliefs. Where does he stand? — A definite, clear-cut policy is necessary. — "Come to heaven" with the theosophists!

Seeing visions! We all see visions. In fact whenever we think, which is continuously, we are seeing visions, because thinking is visioning; and thus it is that even in the current speech of everyday existence, you will find men saying: "What is his *outlook* on life?" This is vision. "What are his *views*" This is vision also. "What do you *see* in it?" This also refers to vision.

All thought is vision: all the mental processes, all the wondrous fabric of imagery that imagination builds up, is vision. The poet, the religious seer, the philosopher, the scientist — all who think, which means all men — see visions. Some visions are long in

duration. They may last even for a lifetime; and all the man's consciousness is circumscribed by that one long vision. But other visions are short, brief, transitory, and such are the visions that come sometimes like flashes of illumination; and then the man, or the woman, says: I see!

Great men see great visions, men of smaller capacity see visions which are not so great, but all of us continuously see visions. Try to get this idea clear in your minds, and then you will understand much of what lies at the bottom of the great religions and philosophies of the past. For they are actually visions, seen by the titanic spiritual seers of the race; and therefore at the bottom of every such world religion and world philosophy there lies truth, wondrous truth, because these greater visions are simply the interpretations of the forces and energies and substances of universal being which flow through man, the child of the universe, and imprint their characteristics on his consciousness; and then he says: I have seen! I have light! I have the vision of truth! Therefore at the bottom, as the fundamental, of all the great world religions and world philosophies, there lies this fundamental truth which today we call theosophy.

Yes, and how many visions there are of other kinds! Good men see good visions, as I have already said; but bad men see evil visions, and that is hell — misunderstood, misconstrued — because really hell means unhappiness, and it arises out of the workings of the lower, circumscribed personal individual who cannot expand his consciousness to universal reaches. Hell is limitation, hell is concentration around the insignificant personality, instead of being the cosmic love which takes within the compass of its sweep all that is, and therefore, being universal, there are no contradictions in details in it, there is no contrariety in it, there is nothing of opposition in it; all therein is harmony and peace.

Therefore good men see good visions because they are in tune with the universe — "in tune with the infinite" to use a rather ludicrous but popular expression of the day; and therefore also for the same reason evil men see evil visions because such visions are small and circumscribed, limited and imperfect. All the doing of crime is a distorted vision. All acts of heroism and greatness are high and lofty visions of some spiritual reality leading to self-forgetfulness. Indeed, all thought is vision, and our consciousness is the fountain of our visions. Every invention is a vision; every act of noble statecraft is a vision; every deed done well is born in a vision; every deed left undone or evilly done arises out of a distorted vision. Every scientist who discovers some new law of universal being, "law" to use ordinary human terms, does so because he sees a vision. The truth comes to him like a flash of light from within, from within his own understanding, not from without; and he sees this vision because he has raised himself up so that his ordinary brain-mind is at one with his own spiritual being where truth abides in fullness, and thus he becomes at one at least temporarily with his inner god. He sees a vision and thenceforwards his life is changed for the better.

So it is with us all: and when men make mistakes, it is simply because they have seen awry. The fundamental of every human being is good, for every man inwardly longs for beauty, longs for high thought, for clean thought, for inner harmony; but then comes in the working of imagination, the image-making power within us, moving according to our own suggesting faculty within, and if the imagination be inharmonious, it stirs up and roils the sweet and clear picture that the spirit within presents to the conscious mind; and evildoing is often the result.

Abandon your own small personal wishes, and ye shall have peace. Live for the eternal, and ye shall become like unto the

eternal — calm, tranquil, clear visioning, at utter peace, and immensely strong — and then your visions will be those of great genius. You will then become a true spiritual leader and a true guide of your fellow men, because you will see truth, and seeing, you yourself will follow, and your fellow men will recognize that, and oh how gladly will they follow you.

Every spiritual seer is a seer because he sees. He visions. The noblest of them see the vision sublime, which is truth. There are deceptive visions also, as I have just pointed out. Some of these deceptive visions belong to what is today so popular in the Occident, to psychism as it is popularly called, and these are deceptive visions because most people who follow these so-called psychic practices do so because they desire gain for themselves, for the mere "me," all of which is selfish, limiting, circumscribing, condensing, shutting out the light, and a narrowing of the consciousness instead of its expansion.

The psychics see visions. Of course they do, but these are distorted ones, and therefore false visions; yet it is a vision of its kind, because it is a seeing. The practice of psychism is easy; so is wrongdoing. But the fruits of it are bitter, because they mislead. Yet the spiritual part of you, linked with divinity, your own inner god, is immortal, and there lies all that makes a man great — there real, inner, spiritual vision and real strength lie. That is where light comes from, from the inner spiritual sun. It never leads astray; it illuminates the pathway not only for yourself but for all with whom you live and work as fellow human beings; and the marvel and beauty of it all, my Brothers, is that you can see the visions that you will. You have willpower, you have choice, and precisely because you have free will and choice and can choose your pathway does responsibility lie upon you. You must also abide by the pathway that you have chosen, and what comes to you comes to you because you have followed a certain pathway

in life.

You can change your pathway. You can change your visions. Each one of you in the core of the core of your being is a divine entity, a god, that is the spiritual sun within you. This is what the mystical Christians of today call the immanent Christ, the Christ living within each man; and it is what the Buddhists for instance call the inner Buddha, or the Brahmanists speak of as the inner Brahma. The name by which we call it matters not at all. Oh, what powers lie within the constitution of man, in most cases utterly ignored! Most men do not believe that they have these powers lying latent within them, and not believing, they have not the vision, they do not see; but you can see. You can have the vision.

Speak about these matters to the average psychic today, and try to transpierce the mental barriers that his mind has set up around itself, and you will find this to be very difficult because this wall which the average psychic builds around his beliefs is adamant, diamond-hard, and yet so fragile. But there is one method which always wins, and that method is the way of love. It penetrates all things; naught can shut it out; and the magic of it all is that once the tender ray of love reaches into the stoniest human heart, it there begins to glow and to set on fire with its holy flame all responsive material, and when this is done, then the man without answers to the call, so that the man is captured from within his own heart, in the core of his being, and thenceforwards he is your man, saved by you for noble ends.

Love will always win, and this is not mawkish sentimentality at all, but real, impersonal, self-forgetful love. There is a still small voice within which will tell you always when you are on the right path, and you can cultivate this voice, make it a living reality in your life. It is a voice which is not a voice, but only called a voice in order to employ some human word that gives an idea of what



it is. It is a vision. It is the life within. It is the voice of the silence, the voiceless urge which, when you cultivate it and become one with it — for it is your own inner spiritual being — is like the tones of thunder in your heart and mind.

Yet people are like little children in these matters, at least most of them. I have said this before, and I have been asked afterwards questions somewhat like the following one: "Well, is it really a voice? How do you hear it?" I said: "Listen!" "Well, I have hearkened, but I have not heard anything." "Well," I said, "feel." "Well, I have tried to feel but I have not got any feeling." "Well," I answered, "wait, and in time, if you aspire faithfully, you will both hear and feel, and very clearly too."

All this reminds me very much of a humorous little story that was sent in to me today. I am going to read it to you. I like to read innocently comic things. I have a strong sense of humor, and I also like sometimes to poke fun, innocent fun, at some of the human Sobersides that I occasionally meet; but innocently humorous things are always pleasing to me. Do you want to hear about a little child who listened to the voice of God? I don't know where this bit of humor came from, but it is really clever and good:

Mama was trying to teach her four-year-old daughter the difference between right and wrong. She said, "Listen, baby, and you will hear a little voice in your heart, which will tell you what God wants you to do."

A few days later, having some disturbance in digestion, and hearing a rumbling noise within herself, she called to her mother, "Mama, mama, come quick; God is talking to me in my stomach."

There are people who are just like this little girl, grownups who,

because they do indeed see a vision, but a distorted one — who, because they have not cultivated the spiritual part of their being which is truth and vision of reality — when getting an idea or a whim or a notion, which are all visions but distorted ones, set themselves up for teachers, and teach. Some of these are the erratic psychics that I have before spoken of, who stand on platforms and lecture upon their favorite topic. Don't you realize, my Brothers, that there is a heavy moral responsibility in implanting seeds of thought and of feeling in others' minds, and that you become thereafter responsible insofar as you have changed the character, through the thought and the feelings, of those who have heard you?

According to our teaching of karma, what you sow you shall reap, now or at a later date, and the sowing of seeds of thought or of feeling is something which carries with it a heavy load of moral responsibility. By nature's fundamental laws of harmony and inseparable union, you become connected, linked, with those whom you have misled, and this moral connection remains until you have undone the wrong which your words brought about when they were cast as seeds into the minds of your fellows, or into their hearts.

I feel very strongly about this matter. Before I come over to this our Temple of Peace in order to speak to you, I tell you that I cast out of both my heart and my mind, to the utmost of my power, everything that I can find within me that is personal, so that I may deliver unto you the message of which I am the bearer, which message is not my own but is a repetition of the message of truth as given to mankind by the titanic spiritual and intellectual seers of the ages. That message is theosophy. Even then the responsibility lying on me is a heavy one. Yet what happiness there is also for me in the thought that if I can awaken the dormant soul, break stony human hearts, give light to darkened

minds, through sowing seeds of thought and hope and love and peace and harmony and compassion and pity, I then can feel that I have done some good, at least, and have accomplished part of the mission which I was sent to fulfill, however imperfectly and inadequately my work may be done. Yes, I call upon you to see the vision sublime.

So well is the fact known by all thinking men that thought is visioning, that references to this fact recur constantly in the language of everyday life, and to this I have alluded in opening my lecture today. In archaic India the ancient philosophers, in recognition of this psychological truth, gave in accordance therewith the graphic title to the seven schools of philosophy that the Hindu genius had brought forth, and which these Schools collectively bore, and this title was *Saptadarsana* meaning the "Seven Visions." It is obvious that every religion is a vision, good, bad, or indifferent. It is obvious that every philosophical system is a vision, good, bad, or indifferent. It is obvious that every idea in your mind is a vision. It may be to you good; it may be to you bad; it may be indifferent to you. Why then, having free will and choice and understanding now somewhat of what you have within you, why will ye not follow the pathway leading within you and ultimately conducting you unto the gods?

Ye are gods in your inmost, and when the writer of the Christian scriptures said thus much, he said truth. Most men pollute the temple of the divinity, the living god within, as well as the mind and the heart and the body, with visions from below, and with the acts flowing forth from those visions of the nether realms; and nature will require them to pay for this to the uttermost farthing. The reason of this is that ye have changed nature's harmonious courses in one way or in some other by doing so. Ye have used energy, ye have chosen a path, and thereafter have begun to carve your way; and you have inbuilt, consequently,

into your character, a certain fabric, a certain shapeliness or a certain distorted form, which will remain with you and govern your life, now and in the future, until you change the ugliness to beauty and the distortion to harmonious symmetry.

Therefore, try always to see the vision sublime. This is permanently within you; and if you want to know how to see the vision sublime, in other words how to put your feet upon the pathway leading you to see that vision sublime on the mountain peaks of the Mystic East within you, then come, and I will show you where that path begins. Study the sublime wisdom-religion of mankind, today called theosophy, and you will find therein the keys which you yourself will insert one after the other into the portals of the temple enshrining the god within you. You yourself will unlock the doors of your own inner being and, passing the thresholds, enter into a light growing greater in each new chamber of consciousness into which you penetrate. Love will guide your way, will lighten this path, but only if you permit it to do so. Love is clairvoyant, it is strengthening, it is harmony, it is peace, it is invigorating, it is all-penetrating. Nothing can bar its passage; and having impersonal love shining in your heart — a love which is impersonal utterly, kindly, pure, and clean — you become it, and then even your physical manhood will manifest the transcendent powers of the holy thing within you.

LOVE by CHARLOTTE PERKINS GILMAN

It takes great love to stir a human heart,  
To live beyond the others and apart,  
A love that is not shallow, is not small,  
Is not for one, or two, but for them all.  
Love that can wound love, for its higher need;  
Love that can leave love, tho' the heart may bleed;  
Love that can lose love, family and friend,

Yet steadfastly live, loving to the end.  
A love that knows no answer, that can live  
Moved by one burning, deathless force — to give  
Love, strength, and courage — courage, strength, and love;  
The heroes of all time are built thereof.

This is the love of which I speak — cosmic, universal, divine. Here is a question that I was asked to answer:

On August 21st, last week, one of the daily papers published a comment of yours on Dean Inge's statement of approval of suicide under certain conditions. As your paragraph was short, would you mind enlarging upon your views in your next lecture? I was surprised to see that several other San Diegans were quoted approving, to a degree, Dean Inge's views. (By the way, does Dean Inge know anything about karmic consequences brought over from previous lives, etc., etc.?)

I do not know whether Dean Inge knows anything of the theosophical doctrine of karmic consequences. I presume that he does have some literary knowledge of it, but I fear that if so, he does not understand it from lack of sufficient study of it. Dean Inge is a courageous man, a forward-seeing man, a man with a vision — such as it is; a man who has shown the fine stuff that he is made of in the various stands that he has taken time and time again on different subjects. But when asked if I approve of Dean Inge's views regarding suicide, of physical self-destruction, then I say No. What do you think of a man or a woman who, in any circumstances whatsoever, weakly bows the head before the adverse storms of destiny and circumstances? Your faces show me what you think, and that's what I think, too. My answer therefore is No! Stand up! Face the fight! You brought it upon yourself: therefore face it like a man, no matter what it is. There

is nothing in the universe that can conquer the spiritual you, conquer your indomitable spiritual will. Your mental and psychical self may go down time and time again; but stand up again each time and go to the battlefront anew, and each time ye will be stronger than before, braver, more clearly visioning the end, which is the conquest of adversity — and self-conquest first.

Suicide is cowardly and foolish. We see before us, for instance, a miserable wretch broken in body and mind and without a friend in the world — what can be done? Have we the picture, the vision, making us say, "Kill him. Put poison within his reach so he can kill himself"? To what good, I ask? What is that animate body there for? By accident? If you believe in accident, then I have nought else to say to you except *I don't*. There is no chance in the universe; everything runs according to what men call law and order, harmony; and this unfortunate and miserable wretch, however much the picture of his misery and suffering may tear our hearts, brought himself to this pass and none but he can bring himself out of it. What matters if he die by nature's own processes? Nought. He will come back again and begin life anew; he will have his other chances again and again and again.

But it matters a great deal if, in a spirit of cowardice, bowing the head in weak submission to what he himself has brought upon him himself, he drinks the potion or takes the revolver or casts himself into the sea. Such an act is merely one more crime added to the long list which have brought him to this terrible pass. And furthermore, I don't know a single case which cannot be helped. Do you mean to say that you, as human beings, if you had a chance to help some miserable wretch like this, would weakly and cowardly pass the sufferer by, unheeding the wail of pain or the cry for help? No, you would certainly do something; it would be your duty. Furthermore, there are our splendid public and private institutions established for helping cases just like this.

Why does the wretch take his own life? It is cowardice, fear, weak will and a weaker moral sense, lack of moral stamina — lack of real manhood or real womanhood. Mine is what you might call the view of the spiritual surgeon who, on the battlefield, will amputate a limb in order to save the life, and he does aright. But this does not mean that, because we recognize this fact, we should pass the sufferer by in stony-hearted indifference. It is our duty to help. But you cannot permanently help a man like that unless you arouse in him the spirit of self-help. Therefore restore the man's self-respect. Try to do that. Do you say that it is difficult? Yes, verily it is a problem; but there it is and it has to be faced. It is one of the problems of life, it is indeed not at all an easy thing to solve; but there the problem is and must be solved. To urge this mental and physical weakling to commit another crime, suicide, which is the worst of all, and so to say, call to him: "Act like a coward, you beast: kill yourself!" is simply urging a fellow human being to become more cowardly still and to be a participant in the ugliest of spiritual and natural offenses. Thus analyzed, we see clearly what it really is that these misguided and unfortunate injunctions to self-destruction in such circumstances mean.

Forgive me if my language seems strong, but I feel strongly about it. In a great many people there is the feeling: "It is a good way to be rid of these creatures." Ah, my Brothers, think of your own loved ones, and pause! We owe a debt to each other, a debt which has no end; and how beautiful life would be if this fact were realized: each to all and all to everyone owes a debt of help, a duty of comradely feeling. There in this realization is the solution of the problem.

Give new ideas to the world; change men's hearts; instill active self-respect into them instead of injunctions to cowardice, and you will be a worker of magical good among your fellow men. I

could talk to you for half a day on what happens to the poor wretches who suicide. Their condition is ultimately a thousand times worse than what it was before the frenzied act. Someday I will talk to you about what happens in the after-state to those who destroy themselves willfully from cowardice, from fear, from false pride; and the cause of suicide is found in these and similar intellectual and moral weaknesses.

But don't confuse such cases with the man who may even seem to throw away his life in order to rescue the life of some one else. This is not suicide, it is heroism; it is grand, it is sublime. Or, take again the case of one who gives even his life to some great and surpassingly lofty cause: this too is beautiful, grand, manly, heroic, godlike. Thus you see the difference between the coward and the great man. "Greater love hath no man than this: that he give up his life for his brother."

Why is it that the personality of Jesus has been the source of the greatest music (vocal) ever written, and similarly in poetry, and painting? Christianity is the only religion I know that inspires songs of praise and thanksgiving in the hearts of its followers.

I think that the kind questioner is wrong all along the line. There is of course no doubt that people who are, or who have called themselves Christians, have written some beautiful musical compositions, vocal or instrumental as the case may be; and also that European poets of high standing and European artists of equivalent inspiration have respectively produced great works. There is no doubt of it. But the European musicians, poets, and painters are not the only ones who have ever lived in the world. With the single exception of Buddhism perhaps — and that only because it is so loftily spiritual that the whole inner constitution of man seeks expression on a plane far higher than that of merely



physical expression of harmony and symmetry of form — I do not know a single great religion which omits or has omitted music, poetry, and painting from its ceremony or ritualistic observances, and this applies both to ancient times and to the present; and to say that Christianity has been the producer of the greatest music, the loftiest poetry, and the most suggestive art is in my judgment exaggerating the case preposterously.

From time immemorial, and with every new decade that passes, research is proving the truth of this more clearly. Poetry and art have occupied a place in the religious and emotional life of the human race which perhaps was greater and more inclusive than that which these two phases of the activity of the human spirit have occupied in the last two thousand years of European history — two short millennia in the long annals of the history of the world. How about the marvelous development of art of the Greeks from whom even today modern artists draw their finest inspirations, merely because the Greek art is best known to us; and even today some of our noblest buildings, national, municipal, and private, are more or less copied after the ruined temples and other structures of the great Mediterranean peoples. How about the poetry of Homer, of Ennius, of Vergil, not to speak of the religious and epic poetry of the sages of Hindustan, expressed for instance in the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*

Every scholar knows that the ancient peoples of the world all chose poetry as the fittest medium in which to enshrine their loftiest conceptions, not merely of religion but also of philosophy, and likewise to record the great deeds of past generations.

Again, the stories that have been related about the marvelous painting of some of the Greek artists, we have no reason to doubt. Anyone who has examined the pictures copied from the temple walls and other great buildings of Persia, Assyria, Egypt, the

temples of Hindustan, the Angkor Wat of Cambodia, and again the monumental pile of Boro-budur in Java, where practically every square foot of space is filled with delicate carven tracery and harmonious form, will realize how great a part pictorial art played in the lives of these ancient peoples. The Egyptian temples and pylons are carven with poems in stone which if we had the artistic eye to appreciate them would seem to us at least as noteworthy as the best of medieval European paintings with the latter's utter disregard in so many cases of the rules of background and foreshortening and whatnot.

All over the world, man from time immemorial has let his heart out in song and praise either of nature or of the gods, and merely because we have, as regards the ancient peoples, in many instances merely literary records of their greatest work, why should we jump to the conclusion that their work was inferior to our own? All such deductions seem to be not only preposterously biased, but betray a lamentable ignorance. The temple music, as well as the civic or other choral music, of the ancient peoples seems to have occupied as large a place in their life as it does in ours, and perhaps a larger part, because the ancients were far more religious than the Europeans have ever been, if indeed less bigoted and narrow-minded; and the presumption therefore is that their music was on a higher plane than ours, and occupied at least as large a part in the heart-life of those bygone races as medieval music did in the ritual services of European Christianity.

Of course one can only point to the music of the Hebrews, or to the music of the Greeks as instances, existing in literary records, because their literatures are full of references to musical instruments and to songs of praise and thanksgiving. We don't know much about it all today, but the literatures do tell us a good deal. Also Persia, Babylonia, Egypt, Hindustan, where do we not

find a people whose whole soul has not been more or less enwrapped in musical expression in matters of religious service?

The view of the questioner, of course, is an Occidental view, the view of one brought up in the Christian Church, I suppose; and therefore it is the usual Occidental view, in this present case kindly, but nevertheless greatly limited. It is not a great view, not a great vision to have, and amply demonstrates the usual Western racial egoism. It is a circumscribed view, limited by habit, by the customary way of viewing things.

Furthermore, I might call your attention to the fact that some of the noblest music ever written is not by any means church music — not by any means; and if you have heard, as I have often heard, choruses of European peasants, for instance, singing some of their folksongs, with chest dilated with enthusiasm, so that the sound rolls forth like thunder, you would soon realize that music springs from the human heart itself, quite irrespective of any race's religious belief.

But there is something beyond and nobler than audible music, lovely and inspiring as good audible music is, and that is the music of the heart — the music of the silences, surging through the corridors of our consciousness and of our memory; and when one has heard this inner melody of which the outer is merely a feeble reproduction and interpretation, all other music loses much of the hold that it has had upon us. This is the music of the soul, the music of the spirit. Call it by what name you will, it remains the music of the heart which springs from the light within.

Everything — this is literally so — everything that moves emits sound. Every atom therefore sings, and every electron in every atom has its own characteristic musical note. As I have told you before, the music of the spheres of the Pythagoreans is an actual

truth, and we cannot hear it simply because our gross senses cannot take it in, as Shakespeare also so grandly saw. Every celestial orb, as it swings along its pathway, sings its own majestic paean, and everything on earth or elsewhere, animate or so-called inanimate, being a collection of atoms, is therefore a symphonic melody, a symphony, the aggregated volume of sound being composed of the notes of each and every singing entity, and every atom thereof is a singing entity, so that our physical bodies themselves are imbodyed song.

If you had awakened the power of the inner spiritual ear, my Brothers, as I have told you on other occasions, you would hear as a song the opening of the rosebud, and you could hear the green grass blade grow. You could hear every hair on your head as it lengthens in growth, for growth is movement. The growth of a little child you would hear as a prolonged chorus of singing atomic entities. Here, then, is the real natural music, nature's own orchestras, the orchestrations of nature's own ever-beating heart.

A soul born of wealthy parents lives its life after the conventional way of rich people — self-indulgence, no thought or sympathy for the poor or unfortunate, or any conscientious sense of morality. Is not such a one sowing seed-thoughts of a return to the same conditions in other incarnations? As a parallel suggestion, take a life diametrically the opposite.

No, such a one as the former is more likely sowing seeds for mental and physical degradation, for he has deliberately been imbibing the opiate, the psychic drug, of selfish gratification through a long lifetime perhaps; and nature will take him at his own act — and in the next life, or the one following it, nature will render to him a mind and body corresponding to his former weaknesses, a body which he himself will have made for himself because he has built into the very fabric of his being the

distortions of character and weaknesses of will arising out of self-gratification and self-indulgence. It is thus that a man strengthens his character or weakens his character; and nature in the next or in some future life or perhaps in this same life will make the body follow the lead of the improved or enfeebled character.

But do not make the common mistake that this kindly querent does, to wit: that all the rich are selfish, and all the rich are self-indulgent. It is not so. There are among the wealthy those who are blessed, so called, with this world's goods, who have as noble impulses and as fine feelings as anyone. It is not wealth that places the real man. Man places himself, and the true man can be a true man when born in the lap of luxury just as well as when born in the peasant's hut. It is the man who should be taken into account; and it is therefore wrong to say that because a man is rich, he is self-indulgent, he is evil, he is weak. That is plain bunkum; just as much as it would be to say that because a man is born poor, he is therefore a paragon of all the virtues.

Men are just as you find them, and there are good men who are rich men, and evil men who are poor men, and evil men who are rich men, and good men who are poor men.

Modern astronomers say that astronomy "originated" on the plains of Babylonia. Is this true? Were the Babylonians so highly evolved that they could originate such an intricate science, or did they themselves get it from some other peoples?

This is not so easy a question to answer as it seems, although it is the usual or popular view. It is the view that you will find in the encyclopedias, and because people see it there they think that of course it must be true. "I have read it in print!" But is it *true* This view simply signifies that the modern scientific researchers have not been able to trace the origin of modern astronomy farther

back than the remarkable achievements in astronomical lore of the Chaldeans. That is all it means; and when men read this statement in the encyclopedias, then they couple it with the old, worn-out but still prevalent idea that thinking man, in his evolution from the ape — which is another worn-out but more or less prevalent falsehood — is some ten thousand or fifteen thousand or possibly twenty thousand years old.

Now, I will tell you a little about the origin of the sublime science of the stars as theosophy explains it. In ancient times this sublime science was called astrology, which does not mean the unreliable tattered remnant of that ancient starry science which goes by that name today; but in those archaic days it was a starry science in very truth, the science which looked upon universal being as animate, as alive, and upon the celestial orbs as being merely the physical bodies or garments each one of an indwelling divinity, just as man, physical man, is merely the outward garment, the outermost garment, of an indwelling divine entity.

Consequently, the great seers and sages of the ages, who know how to do it — who were taught how to do it through initiation — sent the spirit of themselves behind the veil of the outward seeming into the deep abysses of invisible nature, into the inner realms and worlds, and found therein the causes of things, and having found the causes of things brought the knowledge of it back and told this knowledge to their fellow men in formulated systems of thought. As much as could be told to the average man was told, and this part that was told publicly formed the astrological part of the ancient religions and philosophies; and the part that could not be told to all, because all men were not trained to understand it, was kept sacred and secret, and was taught in the Mystery schools to those who came for light and instruction and who in coming gave the "right knock" at the portals of the temple.

Astronomy therefore, as astrology, as the starry science of the living orbs of the heavens, originated according to the theosophical teachings some eighteen million years ago, according to our records, among a human stock who at the time were emerging from intellectual unconsciousness into intellectual activity; and it was taught as the inner explanation of the living universe, including therefore man's constitution also as an inseparable part of that living universe; and thereafter this starry science descended through the long, long ages to race after race of men, until finally it reached our own times.

In the Occident, because the Occident has lost the keys to this ancient starry truth, we have what is modernly called astronomy, divided into two parts: astrometry, dealing with the dimensions, the forms and the movements, of the celestial bodies; and physical astronomy, dealing with the physical composition of the celestial bodies.

There were greater astronomers in ancient Hindustan, for instance, than any whom Europe has given birth to yet. There was in existence in Hindustan, and also on the plains of Babylonia, and likewise in Egypt and in Persia and in the ancient Americas also, a great and beautiful science which today would be called astronomy. The *Surya-Siddhanta*, for instance, of ancient Hindustan, claims for itself an origin more than two million years ago; and some of our Occidental astronomers are studying this Hindu work even today, and are finding the study interesting. They can understand the *Surya-Siddhanta* better than some of the other ancient astronomical and astrological works because it is more like what is today called astronomy, and because it is not so astrological as some of the other works are.

No, Astronomy most emphatically did not 'originate' on the Babylonian plains, although the Greeks derived virtually all they

knew about Astronomy, at least in the earlier part of Greek civilization, from Babylonia and Egypt. Ancient China knew Astronomy before even the ancient Babylonians did, and recorded eclipses, recorded various conjunctions of the heavenly bodies, and recorded what not else; and our modern European and American astronomers are just beginning to understand better the ancient records. There are in European and American museums clay tablets taken from old Chaldean ruins, which are today commonly called astrological works, and many of these have not yet been read or properly understood, and perhaps when they are properly understood, our recognition of the great antiquity of Astronomy will be more common than it is today.

I will answer one more question before I leave you this afternoon:

Dear Sir: I attended your lecture for the first time last Sunday afternoon, August 17, and I was entirely in sympathy with all that you said; but there is one question I should like to ask you, as I understand you receive questions from any and all who care to send them in.

My question is this: Why do you label what you teach "theosophy"? Why limit your philosophy by any name at all? I have met many broad-minded and progressive people who in almost all points think as you do, but who are unwilling to group their ideas of philosophy and life under any one name, as they feel that doing this would immediately draw a circle around them thus excluding thousands of others whose beliefs differ but slightly from their own.

It seems to me that your calling your philosophy "theosophy" fosters a sense of separateness between you and the rest of the world. Are we not all working towards one great truth, which no one has as yet arrived at, but which, through the efforts of



us all, will be the possession of the human race at some time in the future? [Yes, I will answer affirmatively this point at once.]

I cannot help but think that if theosophists (among whom I doubt not are many fine and progressive people), would join hands with the rest of us in their and our efforts to find out the truth about man and nature, we should all be nearer to the realization of that Universal Brotherhood of which you spoke so forcibly on Sunday last.

Very sincerely yours.

Isn't this questioner kind! In the first place, theosophy is not an invention. Nobody invented it and gave to it a name, as a man might invent a new kind of buzz saw and give to it a trade name, or a new kind of pigs-in-clover puzzle and give to it a new name.

Suppose that the suggestion of this kind friend were adopted by us, what then could we do? Suppose I were to ask the question: "How do you call your teaching?" It has no name. "What name do your beliefs go by?" Oh, they have no name. "Well, don't you call yourselves by some kind of name?" No, we haven't any name. We don't want any name. We are so broad and universal that we take in the whole universe. We are, let me say, Roman Catholics and Protestants and Jews and Brahmanists and Buddhists and the inhabitants of Venus, and we don't require a name. We are IT. We are so perfectly universal and well known by everybody that we don't need a name. We are just like the sunlight shining in our brilliance upon everyone.

Now, such a mental attitude looks very pretty at first sight, and people who adopt it may perhaps flatter themselves that they are wonderfully broad-minded. But such an attitude of mind has its great disadvantages. Personally, I think it is uncommonly fierce egoism. That is my private opinion about any such attitude. Now,

I have heard of people — and the woods are full of them today — who think they are so broad and generous-minded and perfectly universal and so assured of their own superiority, that they don't want to ally themselves with anybody or anything. They just want to be superior to any attachments, spiritual, intellectual, ethical, or social — being such superior people you see — and the consequence is that they are just as colorless and diffuse as the air is. They have not much individuality; they have not much force of character; they have no definite beliefs; they are just most wonderfully diffuse and characterless.

You cannot accomplish anything in life that is of worth by following such a fallacy. You must have one-pointedness, a directed will, a definite policy, a system, order, coordinated thought, if you are to accomplish any kind of work that is worthwhile in the world; nevertheless, we theosophists don't follow theosophy merely because we look upon it as a circumscribed and restricted thing, which it most emphatically is not. We Theosophists don't say to anybody: "If you don't believe as we do, then get out. This is our circle here and in it we live and move and have our being, and it is for us alone." Never do theosophists talk in that way. Our platform is so broad and yet so profound that the only prerequisite to fellowship in The Theosophical Society is an honest belief in universal brotherhood. Now, if that isn't broad enough for anybody, I would like the objector to show me something better. Nevertheless, the theosophical teachings are a formulated system of thought originated by great spiritual seers and sages depicting and explaining the structure, operations, nature, origin, and destiny of the universe and therefore of man who is an inseparable part of that universe.

Our teachings are definite, clear-cut, well-defined, and satisfy both the heart and mind of man. We are obliged to call ourselves

by some name. Everything that exists must be verbally defined if we are to allude to it definitely either in thought or in speech. We must give to the Universe a name, but everybody recognizes that this is a name. Infinitude must be defined by some human word if men are to allude to it in human speech.

The ancient wisdom-religion of mankind, my Brothers, however, was not called by the name theosophy in all other ages. That is the name given to it today, simply in order to give people some idea of what it is and to have some name to call it by. Being merely a name, of course it does not adequately characterize and explain this ancient wisdom-religion of the human race which has existed in all times, among all peoples, and has been given different names in different ages.

If theosophy were merely a new way of explaining science or one of the already known great religions or great philosophies, the question of the querent might have good sense in it; but theosophy contains doctrines and teachings which are utterly unknown in the Occident today or nearly so, as well as the teachings which of course are found in all the great world religions and world philosophies. It gives a grand, a magnificent, an imposing, outlook or vision on the universe and on human life and explains this vision both in general and in particular; and thus you see it is something which stands by itself, although theosophists claim, and claim with positiveness, that it is universal, that it is all-inclusive, that it covers all the fields of every activity of the human consciousness. It is obvious, therefore, that we must give it a name, and if it is, as I have just shown you it is, something so different from anything else that men are ordinarily accustomed to, we are obliged to give it a name in order to allude to it when speaking of it. It seems to me — and I say this without any wish to give offense to the thoughtful questioner — that not enough thought has been

devoted to this question, because it is juvenile in its restricted and narrow views.

Furthermore, I tell you that theosophists have a work to do in the world. That work is what we are doing, or trying to do. You come here, I suppose, to learn something about what theosophy teaches. Suppose that we were to advertise: "Come to Point Loma every Sunday afternoon at three o'clock to hear Dr. de Purucker talk on nothing at all — or what is the same thing — talk on everything." Such an advertisement, to me, would be a madman's advertisement.

I don't think that this question shows very deep thought. There are so many people in the world today — oh, the woods are just full of them, and I have met many of them — who don't want to belong to anything or to believe anything definite. They merely want to be spiritual and intellectual dreamers. I have sometimes said to people like these: "You have just said that you don't want to belong to anything. Haven't you any idea of order, of system, of one-pointedness of thought and work? Do you know how things are accomplished in the world? Theosophists have a work to do. We must have a mental and psychological plowpoint. You cannot plow a field by waving your arm over it. That may be a beautiful gesture, and it is easy, but it does not accomplish anything. It does not mean honest-to-goodness work, the exercise of willpower, the use of your intelligence. If you want to do anything, you must set for yourselves a program, you must outline your policy; you must define your field of thought or work, and then go to it."

Study theosophy, my friends, and if you find that it is circumscribed or limited or shuts anybody out, anything out, then come and tell me, and I will take your hand in thankfulness for what you have shown to me. But some unfortunate people are narrow-minded, and they don't know it, and consider themselves

exceedingly broad-minded. They are actually so narrow-minded that they want even heaven for themselves alone — although I have never heard them say that they wanted the other place for themselves alone! All this really originates in the fact that these people have lacked training in concentrated thought, and therefore are actually impatient at people who don't accept their own vague diffuseness of ideas.

I am going to read to you a funny little poem that was sent in to me as quoted in *The O. E. [Oriental] Library Critic*, an interesting periodical edited and published by the theosophical modern Juvenal or satirist, Dr. H. N. Stokes of Washington, D.C., a man of trenchant wit, whose favorite occupation in life seems to be pricking bubbles of fantasy and bursting bladders of pretension and perforating shams. The four lines of this selection are as follows:

We are the sweet elected few;  
May all the rest be damned;  
There's room enough in hell for you;  
We won't have heaven crammed!

Now, theosophists don't think in that way. We want you to "come to heaven" with us. And that is why I always appeal to you to awaken the inner god within you; and when that inner divinity is awakened and you then begin to see the vision sublime in your own heart and mind, my Brothers, then you are hooked. A fisher of men I am, and my bait is truth; and I catch my fish by awakening their own inner beings and thus giving them light and the grand consciousness of a living, immortal love. Love is the captor, and those who love are the captives.

**Second Series: No. 10 (November 17, 1930)**

**MASTERS OF WISDOM AND COMPASSION AND PEACE**

(Lecture delivered August 31, 1930)

CONTENTS: Are the Masters of Wisdom great men or gods? — The names of some are household words. — The fine flowers of humanity. — An explanation of the word god. — What is meant by evolution? — Our real home is the universe. — What is the work of the Masters of Wisdom? — What is the truth which they teach? — The call from the teacher — from darkness into light. — The paradox of self and Self. — Success: what is it? — How does growth come about? — What is personal magnetism? Should a speaker cultivate it? — The appeal to the inner god. — Orient and Occident contrasted. — Nobility is not confined to one particular race. — Walk in the light of the spiritual sun! — Seize the scepter of power! — Come up higher!

The world, my friends, has always known of the existence of great men, men of outstanding spiritual power and of intellectual fire, who, on account of the great record which they left behind them, have come down through the annals and chronicles of history as the so-called Saviors of men. Myths, stories, legends of various kinds, have been written about their birth, about the lives that they led, about the so-called marvels that they did; and scholars in all the ages since they passed away from the scene of ordinary human life have studied these records, these stories, and have given the fruits of their studies to the world usually in more or less *baroque* or distorted form. They have been called Sons of God, and they have been called Kin of the Gods, as in fact they are. But in very few cases has the other half of the truth been told:

that they were men, great men, men of outstanding capacity and power, so that the impression that their figure, spiritual and intellectual and otherwise, made upon the minds of succeeding generations has produced these stories, these legends, these *mythoi*.

Who are these men? You know the names of some of them just as well as I do. You have heard these names time and time again; the names of some of them, at least, are household words at every civilized fireside, and in every civilized home: Jesus the Syrian sage, the Buddha-Gautama, Lao-tse, and Confucius of China, Krishna again of India, and in the lands farther west such men as Pythagoras, Empedocles, Apollonius of Tyana, and many, many more.

In what did these great men differ from the average man? What was it that made them great? Was it a gift from God or from the gods? Or were they the fine flowers of the evolutionary process — men who had unwrapped and drawn out from the treasury of their own inner being the powers and faculties and energies which made them what they were? The latter is what theosophists say. They are, and were, and others like them will be in future ages, the fine flowers of humanity. Every one of them in the past was and every one of them in the future will be what he was or what he will be merely by bringing out what is within: by unwrapping, unrolling, manifesting, the latent powers, energies, faculties, of each one's inner god.

Every great world religion, every great world philosophy, has spoken, has taught, of the existence of an inner god in every human being; and in modern times in the Occident the Christians of a mystical turn of mind, coming back to an original truth of primitive Christianity, speak about the inner Christ, the immanent Christ, the Christ within, of which the outer man is but

a feeble manifestation, a feeble expression. The Buddhists in similar vein speak of the Buddha within, the inner Buddha; and the Brahmanists, the Hindus, will likewise speak of the Brahma in the seven-ported city, man. But in all cases, whatever the terms be by which the explanation is made, the truth is the same in them all: that there is in every human being an essential divinity, his own inner god, his own highest self.

Alas! that this sublime truth should have been lost to the Occident, for in it lies all spiritual hope; in it lies all real spiritual and intellectual power and the explanations of these powers and faculties when you see them manifested in your fellow men. Every one of you, my Brothers, is a divinity encased in vehicles, in sheaths, of an enshrouding lower selfhood; and all the work of growth, all the work of evolution, is the thinning out of these sheaths, is the dissolving of the gross physical aspects of them and the raising of them to become ethereal, translucent to the rays of the inner god-sun, the god within. As these encircling, enshrining, enshrouding sheaths of the lower selfhood — intellectual, psychical, astral, and of the physical body also — become transparent, in exactly the same degree, in the same ratio, *pari passu*, can the supreme splendor within flow forth and manifest itself through the mind of the man who is expressing it, and then his fellows say: "Behold! A God walks the earth!" There is the key to the whole matter.

In proportion as the individual human being can manifest this splendor within, just in the same degree do men call him great — the great poet, the great scientist, the great religious founder, the great philosopher, the leader of men, the great scientific researcher who has his flashes of intuition, who has hunches, as the world says; and then, standing even higher or above these, the god-men who form the subject of my discourse today.



That in substance is all there is to the matter. The teaching is simple, so simple that a child may understand; and yet so deep and so far-reaching in the implications that it has — and in the inferences that you should draw from those implications — that if you pursue this path of thought faithfully, you will find that it explains fully and satisfactorily all the intricate problems of human genius and of human destiny.

Such, then, are the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace. As I have said, they are great just in proportion, just in degree, as they evolve forth from within the powers of the inner god.

"Know ye not that ye are gods?" says the Christian Scripture, and the writer who wrote this wrote truth. See what sublime hope this teaching gives! Consider how it explains the intricate problems above alluded to.

The psychology so called of the Occident is mere child's play, mostly guesswork, a guessing after the manner of functioning of the physical body and of the physical consciousness — of the mere brain, but leaving unexplained all the really great things of the human constitution, as these great things express themselves in human life. In what I have said I have given you the key to it all. See how it clothes human beings with dignity. Have ye not consciousness, my Brothers? Have ye not love in your hearts? Have ye not intelligence? Having them, why not then develop them? Exercise brings facility in usage.

All evolution means unfolding what is latent within. Evolution means an expansion of consciousness from the limited, the personal, the restricted, the circumscribed, the little man, outwards, so that the individualized consciousness of man finally becomes cosmic, universal in its reaches. You can so evolve yourself by allying yourself with the inner god that I have spoken

of; for that inner god is cosmic in its consciousness.

The world is filled full with gods; and when I say the world, I really mean the universe — the boundless spaces of infinite space. Of this space your inner god is a native. In the cosmic spaces your highest self is at home even as your human self is at home on earth; and hence your true home is the universe. That is why you have the feeling of familiarity when you study nature and gain a comprehension of her wonderful laws.

O my Brothers, enter into this consciousness. Become at one with universal being; for it is your home. There is where you belong. Nothing in boundless space is alien to you, to some part of your being; to the divinity within you, to the intellectual part within you, to the divine flame of intelligence which enlightens your being, even to your emotional character, all nature is akin, because ultimately they all derive from the very essence of the universe. Note how familiar this sounds to your heart. See where it places man: at home in the universe! Only the mind and heart of the limited human being prevent the inner flame from returning to its cosmic home consciously, and from that returning home, from entering into what is your heritage — nay, more, from becoming what you really are in your inmost being — only the lower, crippling, selfish personality shuts you out.

You see now what the great seers and sages of all the ages had in mind when they spoke to their fellows and taught them as Jesus did: "Give up thy life if thou wouldst live." Give up this circumscribed, restricted, personal life, and enter into the consciousness of the spaces. Man is a wonderful being, marvelously constructed, strangely builded, possessing within him everything; and the average man of the West knows it not. You are children of the universe; you are here within it, living in it, born from it, deriving all that you have and all that you are

from it; therefore you are a part of it. Since you cannot ever leave it, you are an inseparable part of it; therefore whatever that universe is, is you; and whatever you are, is the boundless infinitude — frontierless, beginningless, endless. It all flows through you. Deduction: "*Kas twam asi*" — "Who art thou?" — said the ancient Hindu teacher. And the answer came: "*Aham asmi parabrahma*," "I am the boundless infinitude." Profound conception!

You see now, perhaps, who, what, why, and how the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace are. They have become at one with and at home with the buddhic part of their inner constitution — the spiritual part, if you will. Their consciousness thereby has become quasi-universal, quasi-cosmic; and in later stages of evolutionary growth their consciousness will become entirely universal, fully cosmic; for the destiny of mankind is to become a race of gods, not created, not just happening so, but by bringing forth what even now is lying within, even as the acorn brings forth the oak by unrolling, by unwrapping, by breathing forth, evolving forth, what is in the seed.

Evolution is merely becoming, growing; and those wonder-men, great men, who have outrun the average of men, who have exercised their will in self-discipline and their intelligence in visioning the vision sublime, are the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace. They could not not be; their existence is a necessary result of the structure and operations of universal being. Indeed, your own instinct tells you somewhat at least of what you have within you. Just pause in your consciousness a moment — the most precious privilege, the most fruitful thing, that you can possibly do — and feel your own inner grandeur, feel the inner god work within you, become temporarily at least transparent to the rays divine. No argument of your merely argumentative brain-mind — critical, circumscribed, inept

because imperfectly evolved — will ever thereafter take away from you the memory of the vision sublime.

The entire lifework, the entire labor, of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace is living to benefit mankind. In that they find their supreme joy, just as you do, though ye know it not. From feeling that they do perennial good, they draw one part of their sublime reward. Seeing others grow great under their teachings, blossoming forth into use of faculty and power, beginning to see — my God! beginning to see and to feel — oh, what a blessing this reward is! They live to benefit mankind; they teach; they stimulate all spiritual growth in whatever men they may see manifesting just enough of the buddhic splendor, of the spiritual splendor, to be able to begin to grow.

Furthermore, from time to time they send out into the world chosen disciples, chosen pupils, to strike anew in the hearts of men the age-old keynote: to pluck with musical hand the hearts of men, so that those hearts shall ring a joyful response. These pupils come; they teach; they act as their own Masters have acted: they instill these thoughts of beauty; they give hope to men; they point the way to the wonderful path of evolutionary growth; and on the distant horizon they show you the goal that you can reach. Such is every true theosophical teacher; and if he teaches not the truth, he is no true teacher.

What is the truth? What is the path? The truth is self-forgetfulness, which means growth into the cosmic reaches which continual remembrance of self, limited, circumscribed, prevents. What is the pathway? The pathway is you, and is not alone your teacher. The pathway is yourself, your spiritual being; and therefore the call from the teacher comes to you: Awake, my Brother, awake to the god within yourself, not outside, not in me, but in you — the Master supreme! Where is the fountainhead of

your understanding? Where arises the flame of your intelligence? What is the wellspring of love within you? Where is the sun of compassion and pity and self-forgetfulness and peace? All within you. That therefore is the path.

Who am I? I am *That*. Do you understand the meaning of this? The word *That* refers to that to which we cannot, to which we dare not because we cannot, give a human name. By calling it the Boundless That perhaps we give to it the best, because the most impersonal, word. Each human being is in his essence the universe. This, therefore, is the pathway. Do you see, my Brothers?

Were I to call your attention to things of minor moment, to talk to you about the psychical powers and principles, and so forth, I should mislead you, because I should distract your attention from the things of great and outstanding value. I should cripple your growth by thus misleading your minds, and before the gods immortal, I should be responsible as a spiritual criminal! On the contrary, I point to the path of the spirit, to the cosmic way, to that still small path within the core of the core of the heart of every human being, of which the Hindu Upanishads speak, which is within each one of you, which is a call to each one of you to follow it, so that ye may grow and pass from darkness into light — into light ineffable, beyond human words to describe or explain. There is where all things of value are. The psychical powers are deceptive, because they are quasi-material. The spiritual powers are truth-giving and illuminating, because they flow forth from the very heart, the divine heart, of the invisible universe.

And powers? Shall we talk of powers? Look at the powers that these great men had. See the works that they wrought, the deeds that they did, the teachings that they taught. And every one of them said unto his followers: "Come up. Come up higher. Come

up. All, all that I do, shall ye do likewise." Self-conquest, self-discipline, self-study — the study of the higher self — self-understanding, self-evolution, self-growth: there is the teaching. Forget the self in order that ye may find the Self. A paradox, but how wondrous true! Forget the lower, circumscribed man of limited self, so that the consciousness of that self may expand into the fields of the universe — its native home. Expand your human consciousness so that it may become the consciousness of the god within you. What a sublime and encouraging teaching!

Success? Do you know what success is? Powers? Powers! Powers to walk, to think, to talk? Can the beasts do these? Walk, think after a fashion, talk — a bit, perhaps. But not yet is the brain of the beast enlightened with the divine flame of cogitative intelligence, so that it may actually construct works of beauty and grandeur on the face of the earth. The beasts are coming towards humanity as humanity is evolving unto becoming gods.

Powers? I will show you the way to gain powers — powers that will make you like gods on earth, but powers ye never can obtain until every vestige of the selfish selfhood is washed out of you; for nature will not allow it. The very way by which to gain wondrous powers is by giving up the selfhood which prevents those powers from acting. Clairaudience — the spiritual kind — will enable you, as I have already told you, to hear such things as the moving of the orbs in heaven; and the opening of the rosebud will come to your inner consciousness like a symphony — because every atom is singing its own musical note. Clairvoyance — of the spiritual kind — will enable you to see, not merely at a vast distance, but much more marvelous still, into the invisible worlds, so that, as Paul of the Christians put it in language that he knew could at least be understood: "I was raised up into the third heaven and saw things which I dare not, because I cannot, repeat and make understandable."

Many more powers: the ability to transfer your consciousness to any part of the earth, and to be there, self-consciously; and not only to any other part of the earth, but to the very orbs in the spaces surrounding the earth. My Brothers, this is possible, because the cosmic spaces are your home. You are they and they are you. The very powers which work in them are also in you. The very substances out of which they are born and builded, you also are builded out of. You are native there; and therefore manifesting such powers as these is a natural thing to do. There is nothing weird about all this, nothing uncanny or strange. It is the most natural thing in the universe, even as it is today when men manifest intelligence. Think what thought means! How glorious is thought! How marvelous! The ability to think constructively, to think beautiful things, and to produce works of wonder and beauty modeled after the thought!

And success? The average idea of success today in the Occidental world is to prevail over your opponents — a most short-sighted view! That was the view even in commercial matters only a relatively few short years ago, when the idea of success then was to drive the other fellows to the wall. But now in the Occident men are becoming wiser; they realize that it is better business to help the other chap, to keep him going; for every man who is successful is not only a buyer but an advertisement.

Here is a question on success that was sent in to me to be answered.

We read: "Success is of rough texture and coarse material. The most delicate fabric in all creation is suffering." [How true!]

Is success, material success particularly, the *alpha and omega* of all that is? — [the beginning and the end of all that is.]

Professor Joseph Jastrow of the University of Wisconsin once

declared: "A man's success is mostly good luck coupled with just enough brains not to stand in the way of it."

I think that there is a great deal of truth in Professor Jastrow's observation. The worst foe of a man is the man himself. This is a fact, and furnishes us with the substance for a somewhat melancholy commentary on human weakness.

Success is coarse — material success of course I refer to. The most delicate fabric of character, the most delicate power of the soul, is the ability to suffer manfully; for that delicacy is significant of power. Think and reflect. What are the most powerful agents that men know of? They are the silent, delicate things. Electricity, gravitation — tremendous in power but so intangible and delicate. The battleship straining through the seas, and creaking in every plate, with all the thunder of her engines, is a play-toy compared with nature's handiwork, with nature's silent and mysterious powers working as they do. Look at the mystery locked up in the atom. You never hear it. You cannot see it; but those unspeakably enormous energies, powers, forces — call them what you like — have builded everything that the visible universe consists of, and have builded you too.

How does growth come about? In the silence, mostly through suffering, which opens our hearts; and through pain, which opens our minds, because it gives us thought. Pain and suffering, sorrow and its ilk, are the great things, are the grand things, because they are the friendly ones to man. Welcome them then, when they come to you. Only the coward weakly bows the head. The brave man, the courageous man, recognizes his kinship with what is coming to him, takes manfully what comes to him, and is greater and better for it. He has grown!

Give me the man whose heart has been rent with pain and whose mind has been racked with sorrow, for I know that he is a better



and a stronger man for it. Yes! I care very little about material success. In some ways it is good and most excellent if the results can be applied to good deeds in helping others, and in carrying on a noble work such as ours. But if you ask me what personally I prefer, I answer: Give me the hand of a man who has suffered hell, for I feel that I can trust him — at least the chances are ten thousand times greater that he knows the truth after having been through the fire than the one who has never tasted of sorrow or pain.

On the other hand, if we speak of spiritual success, of spiritual attainment, then that is indeed something else, something very different from the former. What men call good luck is simply what theosophists call karma — the consequences, the results, of what you yourself in past lives have thought and felt and done, because your thoughts and your feelings and your doings have changed your mind, changed your consciousness, changed the very fabric of your character; and as your character is you, in the next life or even in the same life it may be, your character which has thus been wrought upon and changed will work after the new pattern given to it and bring to you joy or bring to you pain. So you see that out of pain comes good — growth. So fear not pain, it is friendly; fear not suffering, it is a friend.

Here is a funny question:

Dear Dr. de Purucker:

Please pardon the personal nature of this letter. I have been attending your lectures for some months, and have received so much help from them that I persuaded a friend of mine from the East to come and hear you last Sunday.

Imagine my disappointment, after the lecture, when I asked my friend how she liked it, and she said: "It was very

interesting, but you know, Dr. de Purucker sadly lacks magnetism!" [Well, I hope I do — that kind!] I don't know what this magnetism is that she speaks of, but personally I have never felt a lack of anything that is beneficial in your talks. Please tell me something about this 'magnetism' that so many speakers claim to have. If you found you could appeal to a larger number of people by employing it, would you do so? Do you know how?

Again apologizing for the personal character of this letter, but I really want to know.

I think that it was one of the stronger and more beautiful sex who asked this question. I will let you into a little secret, if you will forgive me for being a trifle personal. I have heard certain speakers lecture, and sometimes I have liked the general tone and trend of their efforts, but I have also been offended at the very obvious appeal made, deliberately made, by what the average person calls animal magnetism. I think that such an appeal is highly reprehensible; and if anyone at any time should see a trace of it in me, I shall thank him or her from the bottom of my heart if I may be notified of that fact. I have trained myself completely to avoid that.

What I desire to do, my Brothers, is the direct contrary of any appeal by animal magnetism, because my effort is to appeal to the god within *you*, to bring out the beauty latent in *your* character, to bring out the divinity within *you*; not to impress you with the fact that I have animal magnetism or even mental magnetism, thus making you feel that you like to come and hear me speak because I put you into a state of physical feeling which is — just the opposite of the state that I hope you will leave this Temple in. My message is a spiritual and an intellectual one, and it is to the spiritual and intellectual faculties in you that I appeal.

I could not reach the divinity within your hearts, at the core of your being, if your attention were concentrated — mental attention or other attention — on what flows forth from my mere physical or even mental being. Your minds then would be looking downwards towards what the theosophist often calls the pit. My appeal is to you as imbodyed gods, as I have told you before. Every afternoon when I speak in our Temple of Peace I feel that I am addressing an audience of imbodyed gods; and being an imbodyed god myself, although feebly manifesting through this mind and body of mine, my appeal is to the imbodyed gods who are before me, in their turn feebly manifesting, each one, his or her inner godhood it is true; but nevertheless and despite the difficulties my appeal is solely to the divinity within each one of you.

I had liefer die a thousand times than make my appeal on so coarse and low a plane as that of mere personal magnetism. Were I to do so, I should fail utterly in bringing about what it is my effort to achieve, and instead of giving to you what I was sent to give to you as best I can, as a spiritual teacher, I should direct your attention and concentrate your mind on the lower if not lowest elements of material existence.

In your lectures you frequently speak disparagingly of Occidentals and with favor of Orientals. Now, I don't want to say anything unkind in this era of theosophical fraternization, but I don't think all the specimens of Orientals that we have here in the West are superior to us Westerners. Some of them I think are decidedly inferior. And then, you yourself have warned us against *some* swamis and such like who come from the Orient purporting to teach truth. Wherein lies their superiority?

*Non peccavi* — I have not sinned. *Non culpa mea* — It's not my fault! I don't think that I have ever said that Orientals were

superior to Occidentals. I have said this — and I will say it again, because I believe it to be true — that the Occident has been spiritually asleep for more than two thousand years under the influence of a spiritual opiate; whereas the Orientals during that time, and for thousands of years before that time, have been cultivating the interior faculties of mankind rather than looking without into the material surroundings as aggressively and exhaustively as the Occident has.

And, as I have tried to point out to you in the earlier part of our study together this afternoon, my Brothers, all that is of value to you as men, collectively and as individuals, is within you; it is your first duty to know yourself. And if anyone of you is so crippled in intellect as to misunderstand me to mean that I suggest that you follow your mean and selfish lower selfhood, then I say that my speech is fruitless — that it is useless to speak to you. I do not mean that. When I speak of the inner self, I mean the god within, the divine flame of intelligence and love which is the very root of the root of your being, and of which the outer, exterior selfhood is but an imperfectly evolved shadow — a shadow of the reality.

In the Orient — and there are awfully bad Orientals just as there are awfully bad Occidentals, and there are fine Orientals just as there are fine Occidentals; but nevertheless, in the Orient — for thousands and thousands of years the inner constitution of man — spiritual, intellectual, psychical, and astral — has been investigated carefully, studied diligently, and strenuous efforts made to gain an understanding of man's invisible constitution. Only recently has the Occident begun to awaken to the need of knowing something about man's constitution, and the result is that you have that curious apology for real psychology which is indeed called psychology but is not it, yet it is a stepping-stone, poor as it is. It should more truthfully and honestly be called

psychological physiology; it is not worthy of the name of psychology, and the sooner the truth is said the better. I stand here to tell what I have found to be the truth and to lay it before you for you to accept or reject as you please.

No! I don't favor Orientals over Occidentals; I don't favor Occidentals over Orientals: it is the man whom I am looking for, the individual, the one in whom I see the divine flame; he is the one I am after, the one who shows me in his eyes and in his face some glow or mark of the buddhic splendor within — Occidental, Oriental, civilized man, barbarian, or savage, it is all the same to me; it is the man I am looking for. It matters not to me what be the color of his skin, nor the tongue that he uses in speech, nor what his social standing is.

I have seen this buddhic splendor shining in the peasant in his hut and in the prince in his palace, and recognizing a brother I gave him my hand. It is the noble man, the evolved individual, whom every true theosophist is looking for, hunting for; and, metaphorically speaking, every true theosophical teacher goes into the highways and byways of the world seeking for those who, to adopt the words of your Christian scripture, may be invited into the feast at the Master's table; and those highways and byways are just as much the prince's palace as the peasant's hut and just as much the peasant's hut as the prince's palace.

Wherever I see the flame of the inner god showing on the face and manifesting in the life, thither I go and say, "My Brother, come, come with me." And there is immediate and mutual understanding between us.

Don't you think that we Occidentals make entirely too much of funerals? Birth is entering into one phase of existence and death is entering into some other phase. Why don't we have the same elaborate ceremonies and display of emotions when

a birth occurs as when a death occurs?

Why not — when you come to think of it? No matter what your religious view may be, or lack of a religious view, don't you pity every little child when you reflect on what that child has to go through? Just let your hearts speak. And yet, as I told you, that is the way by which we grow — through suffering, through pain, which softens us and gives us compassion and pity for others, because we ourselves have been through it. Pain and suffering have raised us to a plane of understanding and impersonal feeling. Therefore life, even with all the pains — and however much our hearts may ache at seeing the little child beginning its new pathway, nevertheless it is life — is a treading of that other pathway, mystical, still, unseen, which is the growth of the inner man.

There were some ancient peoples who had funeral ceremonies at the birth of children and who put on the white garments of festivity when merciful death had released the inner man from the tortured and suffering body. "Depart, splendor of the sun," was their hymn; "depart unto thine own. Son of the sun, rise along the etheric pathways to join the ineffable glory, thy parent."

My Brothers, I want to make a plea to you, an appeal, which I make on every Sunday when I speak here — a plea which is for *you*. "Father Sun, enlighten the hearts and minds of my Brothers, that they may see their whole duty on their way to thy sacred seat, and by the light, thy light, cast on their pathway, I pray that they may not stumble on the road, while returning to the portals of thy self, the Spiritual Sun!" That is my plea — a paraphrase of an ancient Vedic verse, called the Gayatri or the Savitri, considered even today as the holiest verse in all the Brahmanical scriptures, because it condenses in its few words the entire mystical and esoteric meaning of occultism: your essential unity

with the spiritual universe, your origin therein, the fact that you are now living therein, the fact that this inner guiding light is even at the present moment shining through you, showing you your way, threading as best it may down through the encircling veils of the lower selfhood into your heart and mind, and thus giving you light and peace and understanding and consequently help.

Ally yourselves, therefore, my Brothers, with the god within each one of you, your own inner divinity; for this ye are destined to do in the future, when ye shall have become a race of men-gods; and those who have preceded you on the path, who have outrun the average of mankind, are the Masters of Wisdom and Love and Peace of whom I have spoken to you. There is no reason why you also should not now seize the scepter of power — spiritual, intellectual, impersonal, divine — sooner than the laggards on the ways of life who through suffering will be brought to do it also in later ages. Why not now begin to become the divinity within you? Come! Come up higher!

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[Vol 2, No 11](#)  
[Contents](#)

**Second Series: No. 11 (October 5, 1930)**

**WAS JESUS MAN-GOD, GREAT SAGE, OR MYTH?**

(Lecture delivered September 14, 1930)

CONTENTS: Jesus in various aspects: the sage, the central figure in a "mythos," the avatara. — The terms buddha and avatara explained. Is the accepted birth-date of Jesus correct? — The Gospels not historical truth but symbolic truth. — The story of initiation. — The teaching of Jesus: the immanent Christ. — The testimony of the disciple John according to Irenaeus of Lyons. — Baptism a mystical word. — The two kinds of avataras. — The appearance of avataras at cyclic times. — Did Jesus meet death by violence? What about the spear-thrust? What about the cry from the cross? — Initiations take place even today. — What is the significance of the cross? — Parallel symbology in the Scandinavian Eddas. — The intuitive vision of the poets. — At what age did Jesus receive initiation? — In regard to mental healing. — There is always a vision beyond. Follow the pathway and pass through the portals of the sun!

It is commonly supposed that Theosophists claim that Jesus was a myth, which supposition is not true; or again that Jesus was a great Sage, which supposition is partly true; and thirdly the supposition that Jesus was a god-man Theosophists accept only in part. The Christian idea of the Great Man, the illuminated Individual, who is supposed to have lived some 1900 or 2000 years ago, is that Jesus was a god-man — just that: the incarnation in a human vehicle or body of the second Person of the inseparable Trinity that orthodox Christians believe in.

Theosophists do not accept that belief; but we do teach,



nevertheless, that Jesus was a man-god and an avatara — a Sanskrit term which I shall explain soon. We also say, voicing the doctrines of the ancient wisdom of mankind, that in his human aspect, Jesus later called the Christos, the Christ or the "Anointed," was a great sage and seer; and we also claim that this great man was in no sense a myth, but that he was the central figure in a mythos — a series of mystical teachings — which is a very different thing indeed from the ordinary English word myth as commonly used.

Jesus was not the only avatara who has ever lived on earth — the only manifestation in a man of a divine being. Other avatars lived before him. It is the teaching of the wisdom-religion of antiquity, today called theosophy, that these great beings or avatars appear on earth at cyclical intervals, when, as Krishna says in the Hindu scripture, the *Bhagavad-Gita* — and I paraphrase slightly the passage: "When righteousness is running low in the hearts of men and unrighteousness and evildoing sway their souls, then come I, as a portion of my divine self, and appear in the world in a human vehicle; and then do I teach and show again to men the way to peace and love and happiness and the heights of spiritual glory."

An avatara, then, is a partial manifestation of a divinity in a human being, and is not the manifestation of a man's own inner god; for when this latter happens, then we have among us what theosophists call a buddha: this is our technical term, meaning an "awakened one," one who manifests the divinity which is the very core of the core of his own being. But an avatara is one who is not the reincarnation of a reincarnating ego, and therefore not a unitary being as ordinary humans are, but is one who appears after a certain fashion which I will try briefly to explain to you — who appears as a great glory among men, and who does an especial work on earth. An avatara never has a prior birth, nor a

succeeding reincarnation.

The avatara Jesus, for instance, will never have a birth on earth again, in other words will never reincarnate; for such is an avatara: a divinity manifesting through the psychological apparatus of what theosophists call one of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace who gives himself for that purpose, in order that the sublime powers of the divinity thus manifesting may show themselves among men and teach men.

Obviously, then, such a particular composite entity, such a spiritual-psychological-physical composition, is not the reincarnation of a preceding unitary entity coming over from other lives as a reincarnating ego and having future reincarnations when the present earth-life is ended, as is the case with all other human beings.

Thus then, as Jesus was the manifestation, or rather the channel for the manifestation, of a portion of the powers of a divinity, he was a man-god or a god-man; he was of course also a great sage and seer at the same time, for sage he certainly was and seer he most emphatically was, for he had wisdom and he "saw."

There did indeed exist in Palestine at some time before the supposed birth-date of Jesus — say a hundred years more or less — this being, this man-god, about whom clustered within less than a hundred years after his passing, all the legends, all the stories, that were gathered together and edited and later set forth in the books that compose the Christian New Testament. Those stories are not historical: they are mystical, symbolic, and therefore are as true as truth itself, because conveying the actual facts, not so much of the life and work of Jesus the Christos considered as an individual, but setting forth what theosophists call the story of initiation. Do you get the idea?

Every country had its schools of initiation, its schools of the great Mysteries; and these mysteries were closely guarded and kept very secret indeed. It was the habit in those days to choose some great human being who had taught men, and around that individual to weave a web of symbolic teaching, setting forth — so that ordinary men in reading could not understand but yet would be attracted to spiritual things — what actually took place in the initiation chamber.

That is what happened in the case of Jesus called the Christos. Consequently, the sayings of the four books called the Gospels are not historical truth but symbolic truth.

Jesus the Syrian avatara did not teach anything new. What he did was to point once again to the old, old pathway to the spiritual life: the pathway to wisdom and spiritual power; and he told his followers how and what they might achieve by following this pathway, so that ultimately they could become such as he was — such as he was so far as wisdom and power went; for in the heart of the heart of every human being there is a divinity, his own inner god, which the Christians of a mystical turn of mind today call the immanent Christ.

Therefore each one of you has it within the power of his will and of his choice to follow this pathway that the great seers and sages of the past ages have trodden, and to become like unto them. This inspiring teaching lay at the basis of the reason for choosing such a great individual and weaving around the legends of his personality as he appeared on earth a mystical tale describing in symbolic form what took place in the chamber of initiation.

It is implied in the Christian Gospels, for instance, that the entire lifework of Jesus lasted about a year or two and that then he was crucified; and yet we have one of the earliest and most prominent of the Church Fathers of the West, Irenaeus of Lyons in Gaul,

saying that, according to those who knew best, among them being Jesus' own disciple John, the Master Jesus lived to be nearly fifty years old. As the accepted teachings state that he was "baptized" in his thirtieth year by John the Baptist, then if Irenaeus' statement has any basis of truth, Jesus must have lived twenty years after the baptism and nearly twenty years after the alleged crucifixion.

Baptism among the ancients is a mystical word, and therefore when so used it is a technical word signifying one of the phases of initiation. Consequently, if Irenaeus' statements are true, Jesus died, threw off the body, abandoned the body — put the matter as you will — some twenty years after he was baptized and "crucified," and therefore when he was in his fiftieth year. Let me read to you the words of this Church Father, Irenaeus who was as I have just told you Bishop of Lyons in Gaul about the middle of the second century. Irenaeus states the following in his famous work, *Against Heresies*, Book II, chapter 22, paragraphs 4, 5, and 6:

Exactly as the Gospel and all the Elders testify, because those who had known John, the disciple of the Lord, intimately in Asia Minor, affirm that John had given them that information

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about Jesus having lived until his fiftieth year, which means twenty years after the supposed date of his crucifixion.

You may now begin to see how the entire matter of the story of Jesus is all tangled up — partly by those who so arranged the situation and partly by reason of the lack of modern understanding of ancient ways and of ancient institutions. We see, therefore, that the Christian story of Jesus is a series of symbolic scriptures written in symbolic form and style, not pretending to be an accurate personal history but trying to

convey a truth to men, a spiritual bait; trying to convey to men a mystic hope and call under the guise of allegory, symbolology, so that men in taking this bait would discover that their minds were fascinated and their hearts turned to the light, and thus, in all probability, they would come and seek for initiation — as the old expression had it, they would come to the door of the temple and "knock" and "ask." Such was the old way of making a public appeal or call to come up higher and to develop the spiritual part of the human constitution.

Let me also add in passing that the four canonical Christian Gospels are not by any means the only Gospels that were ever written. We know from the ecclesiastical history of Christianity that there were dozens of old Gospels, which with the exception of the four now accepted as canonical, were after the third or fourth century of the Christian era set aside and for many centuries have been called apocryphal.

If you will study the lives, as they are set forth in the more or less imperfect literature in which these written lives are embodied, of the great seers and sages of past times, you will find more or less exactly the same entanglements of thought and circumstances that are so easily discernible in the Christian story of Jesus. The very names of most if not all of these great seers and sages have been covered around with allegory and symbol — myths have been told about them — in a few cases they are alleged to have been born of a virgin or born in some other mysterious way, and to have lived and taught, moving the hearts of men by their works of marvel, and, after finishing their teaching, finally passing away in some mysterious manner.

The story of Jesus is not new as a type; in essentials it is in large part a repetition in the case of that particular avatara called Jesus of what other great seers and sages or avataras or buddhas did

and taught; and most of these great figures of history after they died or had vanished, left behind them an entangled system of symbolology, of symbol, of allegory, usually supposed in much later years to be accurate historical records, but such they were not at all. This does not mean that these entangled records whether in the case of Jesus or in the cases of others were wholly devoid of some actual historical facts or recorded instances, but it does mean that the historical record or actual events have been so garmented with symbol or so disguised in allegory that they are difficultly discernible in these enshrouding veils.

Jesus was an avatara, a direct manifestation of a portion of the powers of a divinity working through the psychological apparatus of one of the Masters of Compassion and Wisdom and Peace, who gave himself for that purpose, in order that at that cyclical time, which then had arrived on the whirling wheel of destiny, the particular divinity involved in the case could show at least somewhat of its sublime powers among men and teach them, and once more point out the way of truth and of light and of compassion.

I would like to add in passing that the doctrine of the avatars shows us that there are two kinds of these unusual beings: one, human avatars, of which Jesus and Sankaracharya of India were types, and non-human avatars, technically called "Anupapadaka" avatars. This latter kind of avatars or the anupapadaka type refers only to what I may call a cosmic mystery. Anupapadaka is a Sanskrit compound word which literally means "parentless" or "without a parent," or more accurately "one who does not follow," as a son follows his father in direct serial succession.

This latter class of avatars would take too long to explain further in a Temple lecture such as I am delivering this afternoon, and

any further elucidation of this, should anyone be interested, will have to wait until the inquirer joins The T.S., and, indeed, takes a further step into our Esoteric Section, where the deeper teachings of theosophy are explained and elucidated.

The human type of avatara, or the first type just spoken of, occurs when some sublime human being, such as one of the theosophical mahatmas or Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace, offers the psychological part of his own being as a vehicle in order to transmit or to step down to the human plane a portion of the divine energies and faculties of a divinity, and this psychological portion so loaned to be such a vehicle seeks incarnation by overshadowing and enlivening some human life-germ of clean and appropriate heredity.

Strange and mysterious as this doctrine is, and rare as is the event of an avatara's coming, nevertheless it is a fact; and should anyone be interested, I refer him to other lectures of mine where he will find further elucidation.

There was no reincarnation at all in the case of Jesus the avatara, because he was not at all the reincarnation of a reincarnating ego. An avatara is what may truly be termed an act of supreme white magic. O Brothers, do you get at least an adumbration of the idea? The Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace knew that the time had arrived for the manifestation of a divinity among men, an actual manifestation of one of the gods with which the universe and in this case more particularly the solar system is filled full; and one of this noble company, of this Brotherhood of Masters of Wisdom, gave himself for the purpose of enabling this divinity to manifest through him, and overshadowed the human seed which was to be born — in perfectly normal human fashion — in Palestine as a little child: enlivened and inspired that boy, and then, when the time came — when growth, when adulthood,

had been reached, in one of the sanctuaries of the Mysteries which existed in those days, Jesus, then or later called by that name, was baptized — a technical word — this meaning that he was "raised" from manhood into divinity by the "descent" or avatara of the divinity upon him which thereafter worked through him.

This is so simple to understand and yet so true; and I do think that those men have the minds of little children — undeveloped, immature — who cannot immediately see the beauty of this mysterious truth at which I have briefly hinted in the remarks that I have just made.

My Brothers, you yourselves: what have you within you? You have understanding, you have intellect, you have spiritual and intellectual faculties of a high order, and yet you manifest them poorly. Nevertheless you have them, and you could manifest them in superlative degree if you wished to do so, and if your heart were wholly set upon doing it. Has not your heart ever been stirred? Are you passing your existence on earth like the dumb beasts, or are you living like men? Have you never felt stirring within your heart that mysterious spiritual energy which can with difficulty be named, but which every sane man senses? Have you never had a glimpse of the vision sublime? Have you never felt what majesty and power are lying latent within you? If you have, then you have the proof of the divine power in your own being, and all mere words of argument after that are useless, for you *know*. Pity therefore those who cannot understand, whose natures, whose inner faculties, have not been awakened, have not been aroused, who have never seen even a glimpse of the vision sublime, who have never felt the stirring of the god within.

I venture to say that those among you who have never had even an adumbration of this inner splendor, are very, very few. Has



your heart never expanded with love, with compassion, with pity, with self-forgetfulness, with those strange and wonderful intimations of truth and of glory, which come like a light which breaks through darkness, so that the man then exclaims: "My God, I see!" Of course you have! And such an experience is an initiation for the one who undergoes it. O my Brothers, if you knew what you have within you! Glory unspeakable, power to move the very stones of earth, if ye would only take that power! Each one of you is an embodied god, and you recognize it not. As John the disciple of Jesus begins his Gospel: "The light shineth in darkness and the darkness knoweth it not" — so does the spiritual light shine in the hearts and minds of men, in and through the darkness of prejudice, of misconception, of ignorance, and of egoism above everything else.

Who is the great man on earth? Who is the man who makes the mark? Who is the man who succeeds in doing great and noble things? Who is the man who has real inner power? Who is the man who moves the hearts and minds of his fellows? Is it the little, restricted, blinded, darkness-minded, man? Or is it the man with bright and flaming ideas? Is it not the man whose own conviction, as expressed in his speech and in his life, plucks at your heartstrings so that they quiver and return an answering music? The latter, assuredly! Therefore I say to you: See the truth! *Examine yourselves, and thus know!*

Every one of these great sages and seers, whether he was the Buddha-Gautama of India, or Lao-tse of China, or Sankaracharya of India again, or Jesus, or Empedocles, or Pythagoras, or Apollonius of Tyana — any one of a numerous host of them — all taught the same fundamental doctrines which therefore were identic. What were some of these teachings? "Man, know thyself!" For self-knowledge — the knowledge of the higher spiritual self — is the pathway of wisdom, of understanding, of light, of peace, of

power, and it comes to man through self-forgetfulness, and self-forgetfulness is the knocking, the mystic knocking, at the door of the initiation chamber of the temple. You cannot express universal powers, you cannot manifest the divinity within you, because that divinity is entirely impersonal, if your mind and heart are restricted and imprisoned by your personal desires. You must expand your nature and open it, in order to let the sunlight of the spirit stream in to you. Therefore, as you easily see, self-forgetfulness and impersonality mean the gaining of wisdom and great and holy power.

Another one of their teachings was that every human being, every entity anywhere, is a child of the universe. The universe is his or its home. A man is *de facto* as much at home in the starry spaces as he is here on this planet earth; and thus the great seers and sages also taught that it is possible for a man to pass from sphere to sphere, from plane to plane, from solar system to solar system, as the cycles of evolution roll by; and that his sojourn on earth is like the putting up at a tavern or at an inn for a day-night.

Do you not begin to feel what this noble teaching evokes in your hearts? It evokes first of all a realization or sense of our essential oneness with all that is; for I am — just as you all are — of the substance of the universe, its child, an inseparable part of it, and therefore am I at home everywhere and remain so throughout endless duration.

You see how this one teaching cuts the very root of selfishness and therefore of evildoing; you see in this teaching also the strong and unanswerable proof of the natural reality of ethics — how ethics are founded on the universe: ethics are founded on its very structure and operations, for what the All is, that you are; and what every man is, that is also the Boundless. Bone of its bone is man, heart of its heart, blood of its blood, substance of its

substance; and he is eternally at home in the boundless All, and spiritually united with all things, because all things come forth from the same fountain of being and all things return after any individual cycle is ended to that same fountain, only to issue forth again on a pilgrimage or course of evolution still more sublime than the preceding one.

Was Jesus man-god, great sage, or a myth? He was each in part, not one of the three wholly. He was man-god because manifesting a part of the very power and flame — the bright and starry flame — of a divinity. He was great seer and sage because he manifested the highest kind of intellect and vision: he was a seer because he saw; he was a sage because he knew. He was, finally, the central figure of a mythos, as the Greeks said; but his existence was not at all fabulous.

In this connection I will read to you a question or rather a series of questions that have been sent in to me for answer:

I am puzzled with my reading of the back numbers of "Questions We All Ask," when I come across the statement that Jesus the Christ, or any other avatara, did not meet death by violence.

Question: If the description of his death as given in the Bible is incorrect, only a symbol or a mere mystical saying, how did he meet his death?

The body was cast aside when the avatara no longer needed it — cast aside or laid aside and then was dissipated as all physical bodies ultimately are into its component atoms. No avatara has ever met a violent death, at least as far as is known to me.

You speak in another part of his not being "humble" before Pilate; so what happened after that?

May I ask you what your own intuition tells you about the alleged humility of Jesus? Is the neophyte in the presence of his initiator humble in the sense in which the word is usually employed? Is there then an ignoble sense of abasement? Or, on the contrary, is not the heart raised with glory, with sublime hope, with ineffable aspiration? The whole story of Jesus, as I have already told you, as it is given in the New Testament, is only a symbolological allegory, detailing briefly and in figures of speech what happened in the initiation chamber.

What about the spear thrust?

Yes, what about it? What spiritual or moral good does the literal reading of the story of the alleged physical crucifixion of Jesus do to anybody? As a story it is little short of being puerile. But the spear thrust was one of the parts of the initiatory rite or ceremony, having its own particular signification, which of course I cannot speak of in a public audience, but it was not a physical act causing a physical wound. In some of the initiatory ceremonials, instead of a spear being used, some other instrument such as a dagger was employed in the symbolic rite; but the fundamental meaning in either case was the same, to wit, that the man gave up his lower personal being as a sacrifice, so that the power and influence of the god within might have free flow through the entirety of the constitution of the man when he left the chamber of light after the initiation was completed. Do you understand? The spear thrust signified the dying of the personal, so that the inner spiritual man could be freed, untrammelled, unhindered. Do you understand, my Brothers?

What prevents men today from taking from the spirit what truly belongs to them? From taking spiritual glory, power, wisdom, all the things that are grand and sublime? Selfishness prevents it. The personal egoisms, the personal desires, all of them

circumscribing, limiting, folding in, making small the cognising part of our constitution. The exercise of the opposite qualities of all these place our feet upon the pathway, the road, to follow. Therefore I tell you: expand your character, don't contract it! Give; don't covet in getting! Be continuously; don't die! Such then was the mystic signification of the spear thrust — the death of the small, limited, personal man, so that the spiritual man within might free itself from the prison of the lower man. In a moment or two I shall explain this phase of our thought a little more clearly.

The last words, as given from the cross, how about them?

These last words are given in the two first Gospels, in *Matthew*, Chapter 27, Verse 46, and in *Mark*, Chapter 15, Verse 34, thusly: *Eli, Eli, lama sabachtani*. These words, called "the cry of the cross," have been translated into Greek in your Christian New Testament as follows, and this is the English rendering of the Greek translation: "My God! My God! Why hast thou forsaken me?" This is a false translation into Greek, although correct in English from the Greek, because these words in the original mean: "My God! My God! How thou hast glorified me!" For these words are good Hebrew, ancient Hebrew, and the verb *Shavahh* means 'to glorify' certainly not "to forsake." But in the Twenty-second Psalm of the Old Testament in the first verse, there are the following words in the original: *Eli, Eli, lama a'zavtani*, which do mean "My God! My God! Why hast thou forsaken me?"

Now, why in the name of holy truth — and this is a proof of what I have told you before that the Christian scriptures are written in symbolic form and with mystical allusions — why in the name of holy truth should the writers of these two Gospels use words which are good Hebrew and yet give a perfectly wrong translation of them? Because the intent was to hide the truth and

yet to tell a truth — typically in line with the mystical atmosphere and manner of the ancient when dealing with the Mysteries. Both the original Hebrew meaning and the wrong Greek translation are right when properly understood. The personal man, when it dies, always cries "My God! Why hast thou forsaken me to become dust?" But the higher, the nobler, part of the man, the spiritual man within, exclaims with a shout of joy: "My God! My God! How thou dost glorify me!" This last was an exact rendering of the natural reaction of the neophyte when reaching glorification during initiation.

It is also a proof, to one who knows how to read it, of the symbolic character of the writings of the Christian Gospels, although the meanings were all tangled up, deliberately so tangled, so that the real inner teaching could not be received by every curious eye which ran along and tried to read, but nevertheless containing just enough of mystical thought-suggestion to be a bait to men whose inner character, whose inner being, had begun to awaken; so that reading these things, seeing these strange discrepancies and contradictions, their interest would be aroused — and they would come to the Temple door and "knock," give the right knock, and enter in. Such was the symbolic cry of every neophyte initiated by the great teacher into the grander life.

For I tell you, my Friends and my Brothers, that these initiations take place even today, and they take place at a certain time of the year; and when these initiations occur, the neophyte who has passed through the rite successfully, and who has gained his godhood in his manhood, is in so elevated and ecstatic a condition that for a short time this inner divinity streams through his being like the flaming splendor of a sun, so that in very truth, as the ancients put it, he is clothed with the sun. When this sublime event takes place during initiation the whole spiritual being of the man answers as it were with a cry of joy: "Oh! My God within, my

Divinity at the core of my being, how thou dost glorify me!" — the very words that are alleged to have been used by Jesus on the cross.

The crucifixion itself was one of the phases of the ancient ceremonial rite. The neophyte in trance was laid upon a cruciform couch, a couch in the form of a cross, with arms outstretched; and for three long days and nights — and sometimes for a longer period, such as six or even nine days and nights — the spirit of the neophyte passed through the spheres of cosmic being, thus learning at first hand the mysteries of the universe. For I tell you truly, there is a way of unloosing the spirit of man from the trappings and chains of the lower part of him, so that, free, it may pass as a pilgrim from planet to planet and from planet to sun before it returns to the earth-body that it had temporarily left.

I desire to call your attention in this connection to an exceedingly interesting, very profoundly mystical, and suggestive passage from one of the Scandinavian Eddas, taken from what I believe is called Odin's Rune Song. It is as follows:

I know that I hung on a wind-rocked tree, nine whole nights,  
With a spear wounded and to Odin offered — myself to myself  
—

On that tree of which no one knows from what root it springs.

In these few lines this passage from the Edda gives another version, and a most interesting one, of the "crucifixion"-mystery. The reference also to "hanging on a tree" is most suggestive because this very phrase was frequently used in the early Christian writings as meaning "hanging on the cross." In this Scandinavian mystical story, the tree is here evidently the cosmic tree, which is a mystical way of saying the imbodyed universe, for the universe among the ancients of many nations was portrayed

or figured under the symbol of a tree of which the roots sprang from the divine heart of things, and the trunk and the branches and the branchlets and the leaves were the various planes and worlds and spheres of the cosmos, the fruit of this cosmic tree containing the seeds of future trees, being the entities which had attained through evolution the end of their evolutionary journey, such as men and the gods — themselves universes in the small, and destined in the future to become cosmic entities when the cycling wheel of time shall have turned through long aeons on its majestic round.

As I have said in many other places, all initiation, so far as pictorial rite or figurative symbolism went, portrayed the mystic structure and operations and secrets of the hid universe as expressed in the acts and words of the master initiator and of the neophyte.

Here again we have a subject fascinatingly interesting but too deep to develop in the short time at my disposal in a public lecture. I merely point, by the hints that I have just given, to its deep esoteric meaning, and must now pass on to other phases of my subject, concluding with the observation that this Scandinavian version of the cosmic crucifixion, also mentioned by Plato, refers to the cosmic Logos "crucified" in and upon the cosmic world-tree of which that same Logos is the enlivening and intellectual spirit.

A friend sent in to me a day or two ago a beautiful little poem once printed in *Scribner's*, and I will read it to you. It is a most intuitive series of lines, so intuitive indeed that it is a proof that some human beings receive light, go through a certain kind of initiation, and during this temporary moment the inner light, the inner glory, streams through the consciousness. O ye living dead, who do not and cannot understand — living in the body but dead



in all other parts of your being — why will ye not understand what is within you? Here is the poem: it is written, of course, after the Christian style, but that style is without importance:

MANY MANSIONS by ARTHUR GUI TERMAN

Vast is my Father's house and glorious are  
Its many mansions, citadels of light,  
Enchanted moon and redly flaming star.  
Whether beheld or still beyond our sight  
They gem infinitude. Well named were they  
By dreaming bards of some wild desert clan,  
Nihal, Giansar, Betelgeuse, Er Rai,  
Gomesia, Fomalhaut, Aldebaran  
And Talitha the Maiden. Isles of rest,  
Inns of Eternity, they house the soul  
Upon its pilgrimage, that splendid quest  
Wherein from world to world and goal to goal  
We, too, shall tread, as myriads have trod,  
These stepping-stones on the long road to God.

The Christian term God almost spoils the beauty of the thought, but the thought is there nevertheless.

I would that you were all students of the esoteric part of our philosophy, so that I could explain more in detail and at greater length what I have here but briefly pointed to. Yet experience has shown us that with many, many human beings it suffices but to point with a wordless gesture to a truth. Then they catch the thought; their minds are brightened; they awaken; and they come to us.

I can show you the way; I can open for you the path. Each one of you is himself — or herself — that path; and therefore I can show you how to find yourself — your real self, the god within you.

Every theosophical teacher can do the same if he is a true teacher; and that is precisely what Jesus the avatara had in mind when in substance he said: "Come unto me, ye who are heavy-laden and weary, and I will give you rest, and light, and peace, and joy, and hope" — for all these are one in essence.

The foundation of all the teaching is to realize with both heart and soul that each one of you is an inseparable child of the universe: that you are It and that It is you. You cannot leave the universe; you are born of it and in it. Isn't that fact obvious? Therefore the universe is your home; essentially it is you yourself; for the divine part of you is cosmic in the reaches of its consciousness, just as the ordinary small part of you has a consciousness which reaches but little beyond the brain of flesh, and in that little brain of flesh most of you live. O sons of men, know yourselves and awaken to what is within you! Realize that you are one with the universe, for it is you and you are It!

This is the key of all the teaching; and you cannot even begin to follow this Path by following the will-o'-the-wisps of emotion and thought. You cannot begin the Path by following your little ambitions and the psychical attractions that small men live in and for. The reach of these, their extension, is too circumscribed, too deceitful. But the things of the spirit, the things of divinity, when you become one with your own inner god, give you power unbounded, and vision which takes the Universe within its scope; for you are, essentially speaking, a god in human flesh. This applies to all of you. What a blessed thought: that the Universe is I and that I am the Universe; that I am at home in it now and will be at home in it in a billion eternities from now; that I am what I make myself to be; that I am now what I have made myself to be; and that I can better my condition infinitely and grow and expand, become what is the Universe, because it is I in my highest parts. What a hope! What a vision!

I have here a little poem that was sent in to me, and it is so pleasing that I will read it to you. It shows the instinct in one human heart — I don't know who wrote it, but it shows the instinct in one human heart — of the sense of inseparable unity with all that is. This realization brings such peace, such vision:

### CONFESSION OF FAITH

I shall be one with my mother Earth,  
One with her rains, with her snows;  
One with the green of the path we trod,  
And I shall be one with God.  
With all things living I shall be,  
With man, with toad, and tall birch-tree;  
I shall be one with the worm you prod,  
With weed, with seed — One with God!

Now, these lines are beautiful. It matters but little that the phraseology is of the Christian type. The essential idea of unity is there; there is a glimmer of the vision sublime, the recognition of one's essential unity with all that is.

Here is another question:

Did Jesus get initiation *before* he gave the Sermon on the Mount? If he were not initiated until the time of his death, how then did he have time to give any teaching?

This is a very clever question. It is precisely the question that the Gaulish Bishop, Irenaeus, wrote about, of whom I spoke in the beginning of our study together this afternoon. He said in substance: "If Jesus was crucified within a year or two or three after he was baptized, how did he have time to teach all men?" The idea here is as I have told you before that baptism was a technical word of the initiation chamber, and means the

receiving of light, which is initiation. Do you understand me? And therefore this old Christian Church Father argued quite cleverly, basing his argument on what he said was "the Gospel and the testimony of all the Elders," that Jesus must have lived for some twenty years after his baptism, and therefore had attained some fifty years of age, in order to give him time to teach.

Here is a question addressed to myself:

My second question is concerning disease. You say that if you get sick you get a doctor and do not use mental healing. Now, how can a person of your and Katherine Tingley's attainments ever get "dis-ease" if constantly filled with love and working in harmony with the divine? There must be some disharmony in the body to create disease.

I also note that you use spectacles to read the questions. It has occurred to me and I am still questioning in my mind: Do the theosophical Leaders not have sufficient wisdom of physical laws to correct the defect, or do they think it so unimportant that they neglect it or feel that it is some karma [some law of cause and effect, some consequence] that they are working out?

The thought "Be ye perfect even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect": does it apply only to the spiritual or is the physical included? Are all physical ailments therefore to be ignored except as far as medicines or doctors or food will restore the body? I understand that mental healing only postpones and is therefore harmful.

Well, it is so, simply because the latter kind of healing dams back the poison in the system instead of allowing it to come out naturally through the body. A man can make himself believe that he has almost any kind of trouble and it will affect the body

correspondingly. A man also can indeed apparently cure certain diseases of the body, if he can use certain psychological faculties that he has, which these lovely people whom I don't care to speak of by name have found out how to use with a certain degree of skill. But the results, my Brothers, are not good. All disease is a purging, a purgation, a cleansing. Nature's law is that the poison should come out. If it remains within, it poisons the body, the constitution, still worse than before; and the physicians of the future will know perfectly well how to lead disease out of the body so that the body shall not be injured at all. But be very careful about damming it back, throwing it back into the stream of consciousness, for one of these days the trouble will come out despite your best efforts and it will have gained strength and power and be like ten devils worse than the first. Therefore, be careful. I have deep sympathy and respect for these perfectly lovely people who believe otherwise; but I have been asked the question, and I am answering it as my heart and my teaching tell me to answer you, truthfully.

Now, as regards myself. Why do I wear spectacles? Because I can see better! That is a good answer, I think: a perfectly good answer. However, I wish I could do without them. I have worn them now, I think, about two years. It was a friend who induced me to wear them, because he said that I was beginning to squint at print when I read it. I began to wear glasses, and now I have to keep using them. If (let me use the words of this questioner) "a person of my attainments, is constantly filled with impersonal love and working in harmony with the divine, how is it that I get sick sometimes, and also have to wear glasses?" My dear Friends, it is not I who put myself on so high a pedestal as this kindly friend places me upon; it is this kind questioner who places me there, and I wish that he would not so place me. I am not a Jesus; I am a man, trying to lead a good and useful life. I am a theosophical

teacher. I have been taught, and I know that the testimony that I give is a true witness. But nevertheless I am human. Such sickness as I may at any time have, or the wearing of glasses, are all due to my karma as we theosophists say. Even now I have to bear the consequences of evil deeds that I may have done ten lives ago, which have not yet worked themselves out. Perhaps in those ten lives ago I tried to do what these perfectly lovely people I have been speaking of themselves do: perhaps I tried to dam sickness back into my constitution, so that I would not suffer very much then, and thus only now, when I don't want it, it comes out now and bothers me occasionally, such as a cold or a headache or a susceptibility to indigestion.

Yes, my heart is filled with impersonal love, and I try — I try all the time — to go higher along the pathway of spiritual development. Nevertheless I am a man. I still have old karma to work out, and at present I know enough not to dam back any disease that may come upon me. I now want it to come out, I desire to be rid of it; and also I am now trying so to think, to feel, to live, and to act, that in future lives I may be a nobler vehicle of the god within me than I am now.

But having been taught, I myself can teach; having had experience, I know that the pathway of growth is endless; there is never a time throughout boundless infinitude when the pilgrim-soul reaches an impassable wall. There is always a vision beyond. Therefore I say unto you: Follow that pathway. It is within you, because it is you your self. Search outside for it and you lose it. Look within — not into the small, personal, restricted man, but within to the spirit within you, and sense the glory which even now fills both your heart and mind, but which you do not yet recognize. Follow your intimations of love and self-forgetfulness; sense them first, then follow them. Heed not at all the jeers of those who understand you not. Pity them, for they are blind.

Follow that pathway and pass through the portals of the sun into a splendor still more sublime. And if you need help, then from my heart I tell you, Come! Give the right knock and it shall be opened unto you. Ask, and ask from the god within you, and ye shall receive!

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[Vol 2, No 12](#)  
[Contents](#)

**Second Series: No. 12 (November 24, 1930)**

**GHOSTS**

(Lecture delivered September 28, 1930)

CONTENTS: Shadows of the astral realms. What power have they? — Ours is a ghost-ridden world. — We are the willing victims of ghosts. — The outworn half-truths of our fathers, philosophic, scientific and religious. — Look for new aspects of old truths. — The world is on the edge of a moral abyss. — An ethical, social, and physical catastrophe. — Quotations from Arthur Stanley Eddington. He glimpses the reality of inner realms. — "My rights!" the cry of the Occident. The fertile mother of selfishness. — Ghosts of egoism, intolerance, and hate. — What a man believes is vital. — Vampirizing mental ghosts. — The leaders of scientific thought and their intuitions. — Sir Oliver Lodge touches theosophical truths. — Are all paths to wisdom equally good? — Our world but one inn on the journey of life. — Become acquainted with yourself! Look towards the shining god at the core of your being!

I am going to talk to you this afternoon about ghosts; and to do so I require no dark seance room, and no subterranean dwelling where we may see in our fertile imagination the flitting, fleeting, wandering sights of the underworld. But I would that I could talk to you in the face of heaven, under the splendor of the golden sun, and in that beautiful environment call to your minds the fact that the ghosts I am going especially to talk to you about this afternoon are not the ghosts of Hades or the underworld — those dim and shadowy simulacra of human beings that have been; not those wan and bloodless spooks, not they — but the ghosts of which you, my Brothers, are the victims, willing, conscious, and



therefore enslaved: the ghosts of past things, of past ideas, of past ideals, which still exercise their sway over your minds, and therefore govern your conduct; ghosts whose influence is still powerful in your spiritual and intellectual life, because you still have more or less belief in them and follow them. Thus instead of raising your eyes to the golden sunlight, and breathing the spiritual effluence flowing from our day-star, your eyes are directed into the subconscious regions of your own minds, where the ghosts of the past still abide and enslave you: ghosts of many kinds — religious ghosts, philosophical ghosts, scientific ghosts, social ghosts — the astral-mental remnants of things that have been and which you still permit to enslave you, and to govern your conduct not only as between man and man, but in nearly all things that compose our average human life.

Now, as regards spooks, why should I waste time in telling you what the theosophical wisdom of the ages has long, long, long since probed, turned inside out, and thus exposed to the understanding of any intelligent student? It is the testimony of universal history that men when they die leave behind themselves in the astral world these pale simulacra — copies, images, of the physical vital men who were — and these images remain in those dim and shadowy astral realms until these images themselves fade out, exactly as the physical body contemporaneously dissolves into its elemental dust.

This takes place after the starry spirit has fled from the astral image or eidolon, that starry spirit which gave the living men all the spiritual and intellectual energy and force that they had, all the sublime and inspiriting ideas that those men had when alive on earth, ideas of great spiritual and intellectual value and power; for it was those ideas which shook the world of the time and made and unmade civilizations.

All this nobler spiritual part finally abandons these astral images of the men that were, leaving behind therefore but the pale and bloodless shadows — shadows, as the ancients truly called them, which have no power except that of astral-physical and moral infection. They can infect but automatically, much in the same way as a rotten apple in a barrel of apples can infect and spoil the other apples in the barrel. Their mere presence when sought and entertained is productive of repulsive effects on living men. But nature takes good care of all these things when not interfered with by man's over-inquisitive and curious appetite for sensation; and if these astral eidola are left strictly alone, and man turns while alive on earth to the spiritual energies within his being and cultivates these energies — I mean to these spiritual faculties which I have just told you make men great, and inspire them, and which form the spiritual essence of their being — then these repulsive astral corpses or images have no effect upon the living, and indeed are repelled.

But it is not of these astral ghosts of dead men that I wish to speak. As the novelist says: That is a story which can be told on some other occasion.

Our world today is a ghost-ridden world. Men and women today believe in theories and things, philosophical, religious, and scientific, that the leaders of human thought have abandoned as outworn, as at the very best only half-truths or a series of half-truths. But the average man today is hardly cognizant of this fact, and consequently he still uses the books that were printed in the time of our fathers, or indeed copies the ideas and theories more or less fully that were contained in the books that were printed in the time of our fathers, and uses these new editions as textbooks in schools and universities. These theories and outworn ideas are therefore truly ghosts that nobody now believes in — no one, I mean, of the great leaders, the real thinkers, of the human race.

These mental and emotional ghosts are of many kinds, philosophical and religious and scientific and social and whatnot.

Conservatism in some cases is an excellent thing; it functions as a rein on too hasty an acceptance of newer fads and theories; and contrariwise new thinking also in most cases is an excellent thing, because it is usually the result of a vision; but I have known cases where men have driven an automobile over a precipice because they thought they saw a vision of a clear road before them; and I have known of other cases when men have refused to accept a truth, a vision of actuality, because they had their faces turned to the past — actually worshiping ghosts of dead and outworn ideas.

I mean by a ghost a once living belief which has been rejected by the greatest thinkers of the human race, which is discarded by them, and nevertheless which is still taught as a living truth by the rank and file of other men. There is a whole series of religious and philosophical and scientific beliefs today which are taught, taught in your universities and colleges and high schools, and indeed in the lower grades also, and which are beliefs which have been discovered to be untrue or at best only adumbrations of truths, and which the leaders of thought have rejected either in whole or in part. These are the ghosts that I want to talk to you about this afternoon.

Part of my duty as a theosophical teacher is to awaken men to the real things of life, to those things which pass not but endure, and which, marvelously enough, are things that have a life which is everlasting. Such real factors in human existence which are perpetually true and perpetually inspiring are brotherhood, compassion, love, kindness, forgiveness, peace, altruism. These remain always the same. They pass not nor do they ever die. But all other theories and fancies and fads and so-called facts die that are not in that starry class; and these starry inspirations in our

minds are the reflected energies of the deathless spirit within us, the sublime teachings of our own inner god which we receive in the quiet when the mind is still, and in the silence of our fevered emotional nature.

It is a change in men's hearts that is required today, and this change is the easiest thing to accomplish, and yet the most difficult! This is a paradox. It is the easiest thing to accomplish because recognition of these starry spiritual energies of our being is native to us and comes stealing into our consciousness when we pause and reflect; and yet one of the most difficult things to do because so few men seek the silent places of the soul and thus learn to think clearly and consecutively. I do not know anything else except theosophy that has a shadow of a chance to achieve this change of human hearts and minds, and I say this for the following reasons: theosophy has, first, no dogmatic beliefs which must be accepted whether one is convinced or not of their truth. Our eyes are always turned to the Mystic East for a new light on old truths and facts; and it is marvelous how often theosophists find that we have already discovered this new light in our sublime theosophical teachings. Theosophists are always on the lookout for a new aspect of an old truth that we already have.

Next, our appeal is to brotherhood: our appeal is to men sincerely to love each other, truly to help each other, and this is not vapid sentimentality at all, but a recognition of a fundamental characteristic of our being; and hence our appeal is for men to treat other men as brothers; and, mark you, this does not mean falling on each others' necks and slobbering there. A brother can be stern with a brother if the need be, but sternness in right and truth and for a high principle does not mean cruelty. It means working for justice, it means labor in the paths of right.

There are many kinds of ghosts that you are psychologized with

today — I repeat, many kinds of ghosts — theories and doctrines and fads and fancies and ideas that are no longer living, but are dead, most of them being the beliefs and teachings and doctrines of our fathers, the scientific doctrines of our fathers, for instance, of fifty years ago and of one hundred years ago, which comprised the scientific materialism of our fathers which is still taught in your schools, changed somewhat it may be in some respects, but nevertheless still taught in its elements. It is in this atmosphere of a scientific past that your children are still brought up, and consequently their minds are distorted and perverted and set and crystallized in outworn beliefs; although today our greatest thinkers are telling you that that scientific materialism of the past is dead, because it was untrue.

The situation is serious, for the world today is shaking, is trembling, on the edge of a moral abyss, due to the false religious and scientific and philosophical teaching of the last three or four hundred years, and the only thing that will save the situation is a change in men's hearts, and this change can come about only with the coming of a new vision of reality. Without a vision of truth the people perish.

The Occidental world today has placed its scientific beliefs in the forefront of its civilization, and in most cases these scientific beliefs mean the outlived beliefs of fifty years ago, except for the enlightened few who have followed with intelligent mind and opening heart the latest discoveries, and deductions from those discoveries, made by the greatest of our scientific researchers. Many of the scientific beliefs still taught in our schools and still permeating our thought-atmosphere are based wholly or in part on materialistic beliefs that have been abandoned by the greatest scientists themselves.

I intend to read to you this afternoon two or three quotations

from eminent scientific men which will prove to you what I have just said. I have made this statement frequently before about the world still generally believing in an outworn scientific materialism, and after making such remarks I have sometimes received notes asking: "Why did you say that? Do you mean to say that our great educators do not know any more than to feed our children an intellectual pabulum of dead beliefs which have been openly abandoned by those in the forefront of scientific research?" And my answer is, YES! That is just what is done, and it is high time that earnest voices be raised to expose the facts, and to state the truth, before it is too late. Men's minds have been distorted. They have been taught that they are but overgrown beasts. They have been taught that the universe is uncaused by any spiritual energy, that it has been fortuitously built, and is proceeding in a crazy galloping race towards — what? Nobody ever really answered that question.

The average man of today does not know what the greatest scientific leaders of today are teaching: that the universe is ensouled, that it is a living organism, a living entity, and that mind — or, as theosophists say, minds, in the plural — is the instigating and inspiring energy which has built the Universe as it is, and thus makes of it an understandably evolving entity. That is in substance what the greatest scientific thinkers today are teaching; but the average of mankind still believes in the mental ghosts of what is now a dead past. A truer knowledge, as followed by the scientific leaders, has not yet seeped into the common consciousness of mankind; and it is high time that this newer knowledge were broadcast over the earth, for it will unquestionably be a saving power in the emotional and psychological turmoil in which the world is struggling today.

I tell you that our civilization is drifting, and drifting fast, towards a moral abyss, and only a real knowledge of the essential spiritual

nature of mankind and of the universe will save it from not only an ethical but a social and physical catastrophe of worldwide proportions. It is ghosts, the psychological infections derived from believing in ghosts of dead or worn out beliefs, which are the main causes of the troubles in the world today.

Arthur Stanley Eddington, F. R. S., Plumian Professor of Astronomy, University of Cambridge, in his Swarthmore Lecture of 1929, printed in that year in a small book entitled *Science and the Unseen World*, has the following interesting comments to make, among a number of other thoughtful observations:

I have already said that science is no longer disposed to identify reality with concreteness. Materialism in its literal sense is long since dead. But its place has been taken by other philosophies which represent a virtually equivalent outlook. The tendency today is not to reduce everything to manifestations of matter — since matter now has only a minor place in the physical world — but to reduce it to manifestations of the operation of natural law. By 'natural law' is here meant laws of the type prevailing in geometry, mechanics, and physics, which are found to have this common characteristic — that they are ultimately reducible to mathematical equations. . . .

It is probably true that the recent changes of scientific thought remove some of the obstacles to a reconciliation of religion with science; but this must be carefully distinguished from any proposal to base religion on scientific discovery. For my own part I am wholly opposed to any such attempt. Briefly the position is this. We have learnt that the exploration of the external world by the methods of physical science leads not to a concrete reality but to a shadow world of symbols, beneath which those methods are unadapted for penetrating. Feeling

that there must be more behind, we return to our starting point in human consciousness — the one center where more might become known. There we find other stirrings, other revelations (true or false) than those conditioned by the world of symbols. Are not these too of significance? — pp. 50 and 73

Indeed, these other stirrings, these other revelations, are verily highly significant. Reduced to its elements, what does this ultramodern scientific teaching mean? It means that the world that the physical senses apprise us a little of is but a small part of the universe, and the least part; that the greater is within; that the real world is the spiritual side of life — that which is behind the physical veil of existence, which works through that physical veil, and which we see around us as manifesting its invisible powers in producing all the phenomena of being.

Theosophists have taught this for many, many years, and have spoken of the invisible worlds, the invisible worlds and spheres, which are the real living inner causes of things; and furthermore we have always taught that the universe is filled full with gods, cosmic spirits, call them by what name you will — divine beings, thinking, conscious, sentient entities — which furnish the motivating and driving power of the universe of which our physical sense apparatus gives us only a relatively insignificant and quite imperfect report. These teachings are ancient, archaic, but nevertheless everlasting because they are true. They are not mental ghosts, not some man's or a number of men's beliefs, outworn and now dead but still exercising their infecting sway over the hearts and minds of later generations. So far as our modern world is concerned, a new vision has come to our scientific researchers: they are beginning to dream dreams of reality, and to see visions of truth.

In these days a theosophical speaker can publicly express almost



any part of the theosophical philosophy, because men's minds are more open than they used to be. The time was when we pointed out the dangers of what is now popularly called hypnotism, and then the wise public smiled or laughed, as the case was, at the stupidity of the lecturing theosophist in believing in such superstitions; but we nevertheless taught and taught and taught, and kept on teaching and pointed out that just because there was this power — and I am using this merely as an example of many, many instances — just because there is this power latent in all men, which those who have become conscious of it can exercise upon their fellow men, therefore is it a real danger; and in the wrong use of any human faculty or power there lies a heavy ethical responsibility.

One of the ghosts of the past is the idea of "rights: I stand for my rights!" A constant and unflinching repetition of this otherwise proper phrase has become nauseating. Where do you hear men today speak of "My duties, my obligations"? You hear it only in the cases of a few illuminated and kindly-hearted men who have freed themselves from that ghost of the past — the ghost of "my rights!" and who have come to realize a far greater and nobler ideal of being true to one's obligations, to one's duties.

The entire civilization of the Occident is builded on the basis of the idea of "my rights!" and we have almost lost any thought that so one-sided an ideal can be naught else than the fertile mother of selfishness and ultimate social disintegration, because every man thinks of his rights, and looks upon his duties as something to escape from if possible. All this means a lack of social coherence, and unless checked will in time bring about the downfall of the one-sided but proud fabric of Occidental civilization.

Think of your duties, ponder over your obligations. There is a noble manhood in this conception and a clothing of the human

being with a spiritual and intellectual dignity. Remember that other men are like you, my brothers; and if you get this idea and follow it out faithfully, in time they will think like you too. Don't you see that in getting this other and nobler vision you won't need to talk of your individual rights? In such case nobody will ever infringe them or will desire to. Let brotherhood and the sense of individual obligation towards others become understood and faithfully followed of men, accompanied with kindness of feeling and kindness of spirit, and then nobody will ever desire to attack your rights. Think what a heaven human life would be if we could shake off that one ghost of the past, and honorable and thinking men today realized more keenly their duties to each other, their obligations to each other and to the human race! Then all your disturbing and fevered political questions would die a natural death. These are the most ghastly ghosts of all, the most unreal things, the most stupid, because the most artificial.

You cannot legislate men into being good. Do you think that by changing your government you are going to change men's hearts? What will make our civilization endure, my Brothers, is a change in the heart of each one of you and a telling to others of the change in your heart. Then all your problems will solve themselves, and indeed there will no longer be any such problems to solve. Everybody will be safe and everybody will be truly happy, and men's faces will be set forwards, seeing a vision of the future, instead of doing as men now do, looking backwards into the past, and thus being infected by the mental ghosts of the past with its outworn and shaky ideals.

I am wondering how many of you have really got my idea? I believe however that most of you have seized it and I am glad; and I believe this because I see the light of understanding and sympathy in your eyes and showing in your faces.

Some people don't like to move mentally; it hurts them to change their ideas. They prefer to suck in ghosts with every mental breath that they breathe, rather than to breathe the golden sunshine, the golden light, of enduring truth which is so native to the human soul and appeals with an appeal which receives so quick and ready an answer in our hearts. These people make me think of a story that I read today of a Negro preacher, a story written by Mr. Irvin S. Cobb. I brought it over to the Temple to read to you this afternoon. I have never been able properly to tell a story, so instead of trying to tell you it, I am going to read it to you. If I told this story, you would laugh at me — you would not laugh at the story. So I prefer to read it. This story cleverly shows how disinclined a certain type of people are to change their ideas. Here is the story:

It would seem that down on a Georgia plantation an aged Negro preacher took for his text, on a certain Sunday morning, a passage out of the first chapter of the Book of *Genesis*. Warming to his theme, he gave his own version of the Creation. He then told how the earth and the heavens above the earth and the waters beneath had been fashioned from nothingness by the Divine Will within the span of a single week. By such stages he arrived at the beginning of the recorded history of our original Grandparent.

"Den come Adam!" he shouted, "Adam, he wuz de fust man. God made Adam out of mud. Yas, suh; jes grab a han'ful of mud an' squooze hit together an' dar wuz Mister Adam, all complete. But de mud wuz soft lak an' he wuz still damp. So God taken an' sot him up ag'inst de fence to dry, an' —"

From the rear of the meeting-house arose an interrupting voice: "Who made de fence?"

For not the fraction of a second did the pastor hesitate.

"Put dat fella out of dis church!" he ordered. "Put him out an' mek him stay out. Sich questions ez dat is would destroy all de theology in de world!"

Now, doesn't this neat little story cleverly illustrate one kind of the mental ghosts that I have been talking to you about? This story illustrates the kind of mental ghost, my Brothers, that infected men's minds so badly that they deluged the soil of some European battlefields during the Middle Ages with human blood: the kind of ghosts which built the torture chamber of the Middle Ages, and only the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace know how many human hearts were broken in those times, due to the mental infection caused by these ghosts of egoism, intolerance, and hate. Such ghosts as these are very dangerous, for they infect men's hearts and poison their minds, and thus lead to inhuman and despicable actions.

It won't do to say: "I don't care what a man believes, provided that he acts decently." I tell you that I do care a great deal what men believe, for what men believe is the cause of what they do and what they build or of what they destroy. I want men to be generous, kindly, uplooking, brotherly, open-hearted, open-minded, utterly incapable of raising a hand against a fellow human being. It matters a great deal to me what my brother humans believe; and I am going to try to change their beliefs as much as I can, not by instilling more mental ghosts into their minds, but by an appeal to their hearts, by an appeal to their intellect, not to believe merely as I do and to think merely as I do, but to think for themselves, to cast away the mental ghosts that they still harbor in their minds, and which are vampirizing the best life out of them — religious ghosts, scientific ghosts, ghosts of philosophy, social ghosts, all kinds of ghosts.

The amazing revolution that is taking place in scientific thought

today I look upon as one of the saving graces of our time. The scientists today — that is to say the greatest men of them, the leaders of them — are more truly religious than many professional religionists are who are all too often psychologized by ghosts of the type that the Negro preacher in the little story was psychologized by. These great-minded ultramodern scientific discoverers are beginning to sense the oneness of their own spirit with universal being. They sense the one cosmic life pulsing through all things both great and small. These great men of science are beginning to realize with both heart and mind that they are the children of the universe, entities inseparable from it because they are blood of its blood and bone of its bone and life of its life, so to speak; and in time they will reach the keen realization of the fundamental doctrine of theosophy, of the ancient wisdom, that in every human being, in fact in every entity, all that is in the boundless universe is and lives and works in every such component inseparable part of that Universe. The part cannot be different in essence from the whole.

This is an archaic theosophical teaching. I have spoken of it here from this platform on almost every Sunday afternoon when I have had the pleasure of speaking to you; and these modern, ultramodern, scientific thinkers and researchers are now themselves beginning to understand this sublime conception. It is truly a vision sublime. They are getting entirely new ideas of the structure of the universe and of the substance of the universe. The universe to them is becoming an entirely different thing to study from what it was conceived to be in the days of our fathers; and our scientists are enabled to do this because they are freeing themselves from the dominance of mental ghosts — the outworn beliefs and thoughts and ideas of the past.

I call your attention to the latest scientific discoveries and researches not so much as regards the deductions drawn from

these discoveries but more particularly as to what these discoveries and deductions point to. They are full of promise for the future. In most cases the fundamental ideas of them are very familiar to theosophists, teaching as we do the wisdom-religion of mankind, knowing as we do that every human being is an incarnate god, an imbodyed divinity, albeit feebly manifesting its transcendent powers through the mind, through the mere human brain. Yet from this divinity within each one of us comes all that is worthwhile in the human being, all that is enduring, all that lasts throughout time.

Why not ally yourselves with this divine entity within you? It means immortality for you! Do you get the idea? When you have so allied yourself self-consciously with your inner god then you are one of those sublime beings whom theosophists speak of as the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace, consciously and at will living from age to age; and I may point out to you that the traditions of all humanity tell us of the existence of these great men. But until that full alliance with your inner god comes, you can at least obtain some gleams, some glimmers, of the vision sublime, and gain the peace of heart and the quiet of the spirit which are a treasure greater than the contents of all earth's material treasure-houses. No one can take this treasure from you, no one can steal it away or destroy it. It will live in you and with you forever.

Such great men are the men who truly rule the world, whose ideas change civilizations. They can do this because they have seen the vision sublime and realize their oneness in faculty and in power with the cosmic life.

Professor Jorgensen of Copenhagen, in a recent address at the International Congress of Philosophy held in Oxford, England, this September stated that recent advances in the physical

sciences had brought about "radical changes in — or rather destruction of — current opinions about the world in two or three fundamental respects: in respect of the *structure* of the world, in respect of the *stuff* of the world, and — according to some thinkers — in respect of the *reality* of the world." This "destruction of current opinions" is an outstanding example in point of what I have been talking to you about concerning the overthrowing of mental ghosts with which our minds have been filled and which have misguided us, for all old opinions are ghosts — unless indeed such opinions belong to the class of thinking which is harmonious with nature's own inner processes.

How close does Professor Jorgensen in these remarks approach to our theosophical thought! Think over what his words mean: a complete rejection not merely of the scientific teachings of our fathers — mental ghosts that your children are too often being taught today, changed a bit it may be, but yet the same ghosts — but they mean an entirely new outlook on, and an entirely new insight into, the universe, and signify that the so-called material universe is but a sporadic phenomenon in the cosmic spaces, and that the great reality resides in the so-called emptiness of cosmic space. Do you get the idea? To us, to our physical sense apparatus, space is seemingly empty; but yet it is our theosophical teaching that space is packed full with living things, living entities, invisible to us, intangible by sense, but containing all the worthwhile part of the universe, in other words the invisible and spiritual realms of cosmic being.

The scientists now are not only questioning, but in large degree have changed their views regarding the stuff of the universe, and also their views as to how that universe is builded, in other words its structure; and they are even asking, as the ancient philosophers of Hindustan did many, many thousands of years ago: Is the physical world a reality, or an illusion? And their

answer is: illusion. It is mostly spaces, holes: a thing called matter built up of molecules, formed of atoms; and these atoms are most apparently empty spaces, little worlds with relatively as much distance between electron and electron in an atom as there is between planet and planet in our solar system. So where is your seemingly dense, compact, and everlasting material world? It is an illusion. Yet man, with his penetrating mind, with his intuitive spirit, with his inquisitive intellect, is slowly more and more penetrating behind the veil, drawing the veil away; and in doing so he is beginning to see the vision of reality — a vision so new to your Occident, yet so ancient to universal human thought.

Thank the immortal gods, therefore, that the ghosts of the past are dying. Let the dead past bury its dead, and let us turn to the golden sunlight of truth.

And now Sir Oliver Lodge, a great scientist indeed, has this to say:

We have concentrated too much upon matter, and attended too little to the possibilities of space. Already science is discovering that all activity, all energy, all spontaneity, is to be traced to the properties possessed by what we call empty space, and that the matter that appeals to our senses is a comparatively trivial interruption of its continuity, with a function purely demonstrative.

The atoms of matter show what is going on in space. They have no initiative of their own, are pushed hither and thither, and take the path of least resistance. All the genuine activity has hitherto eluded us. We have been studying pointer-readings, and are only now beginning to realize the immensity of the powers which move those pointers and bring about all the phenomena, some of which we are familiar with and others that so far only a few believe in.



The real fact is that we are in the midst of a spiritual world; that it dominates the material.

It constitutes the great and omnipresent reality, whose powers we are only beginning to realize, whose properties and functions exhaust all our admiration.

They might indeed be terrifying had we not been assured for our consolation that these tremendous energies are all controlled by a beneficent . . . power whose name is Love.

In that faith, we can face any destiny that may befall us in the infinite future.

Now, on the whole, these are really splendid words. They show a vision — a bit of that vision sublime of which I have spoken to you so often. But what does the deduction mean that we are compelled to draw from his words? It means that men have been ghost-believers, worshipers of ghosts, followers of dead things, of unreal things, and worst of all that men have been sacrificing on the altar of their hearts to what they thought was truth and which is turning out to be mental ghosts coming out of the past.

Therefore change your viewpoint. Get the new vision. That vision is already in you. All that prevents your seeing this vision of reality and getting the conviction of this natural truth is simply the false deductions, the scientific and religious and philosophical ghosts, mental ghosts, derived from the teachings and books of the last two or three generations. Reach out and seize the idea that you are fundamentally a spiritual entity, each one of you, for that idea is the truth; and once you have this idea, then live accordingly. Live accordingly, I say! In fact, once that idea comes home to your hearts and minds, you will long to live accordingly, and you will quickly find out what living accordingly will bring to you. It will bring the vision of truth to you. This vision of truth

will come quickly to you then, because your nature will have become harmoniously adjusted with the universe. There will be synchronous vibration, to use a popular expression, between you and the universe in which you live, and of which you are an integral and inseparable part. This synchronous vibration will produce the vision within you. Furthermore you will get powers.

Yes, I repeat it: powers. The same tempting bait with which you, my Brothers, have been tempted by every itinerant mystical or quasi-mystical lecturer on a public platform. But these powers that I speak of ye never can misuse, for they are cosmic powers: they are powers which will enable you to rise along the ladder of evolution more rapidly than otherwise ye could have gone. Ye will gain vision, clairvoyance of the spirit, ability to see behind the material veil into the very operations of natural being around you. A single abuse of these powers means loss of them, for abuse of these wondrous powers arises out of a selfish hunger for personal gain, and such self-seeking is constrictive and condenses the garments of the soul around the soul, thus making the veils of selfhood thicker than they were before; and these spiritual powers come only — can come only — when the nature of the aspirant expands and opens to the rays of the god within, and these rays are in fact the fundamental energies which produce faculty and power. I hope that you understand this.

You will also gain the faculty of spiritual clairaudience. I have spoken of these matters to you before, and I desire briefly to repeat them again today. It is properly called spiritual clairaudience, because having this faculty ye will be able to hear with the inner ear things at a far distance — or close at hand — as the case may be. This power also ye never can abuse, because a single attempt to abuse it, a single attempt to misuse it, will mean loss of it, for such abuse is a gratification of a hunger for personal selfish gain, and that again means constriction and brings about

the conditions that I have just spoken of; and ye can get this power only by expanding and opening your being as in the preceding case. I choose my words carefully because I am trying to present a clear-cut picture to your minds.

Other powers: powers for instance enabling you to leave your physical encasement, the body, and to go with your self-consciousness and your will to other parts of the earth. Yes, and even to other planets of our solar system, and it may be also to Father Sun; and much more than this, you may win also the ability to enter into the invisible realms and be in them and cognise in them as a self-conscious entity. But if you abuse this power, it means loss of it in its turn. As a matter of fact, you cannot really abuse it, for in the attempt to abuse it ye shall lose it; for such an attempt to abuse means a gathering of selfish veils around yourself, which is constriction, binding, closing in, shutting up; and this power can come only from expansion of consciousness, from self-forgetfulness, from an opening and broadening of the inner being — becoming cosmic or quasi-cosmic, in other words. Do you get the idea?

A question:

If I asked a man to tell me how I could reach Chicago, and he said to me: "Oh, take any road you wish, whichever appeals to you most," I would think either that he did not have the information I wished, or that there was no such city. But we hear would-be teachers nowadays frequently give the same advice when asked to be shown the road to wisdom, to truth. "Follow any teacher, study any philosophy," they say, "whatever pleases you most; it is not necessary to follow any particular one."

Question: Is not this a tacit acknowledgment on their part that they do not believe there is one fundamental truth in the

universe, and that all we can do is to make the best of a bad job?

A great many people think along the line of the preliminary observations to this question, and I am convinced that they are utterly wrong. I also would say that I have found this idea to be a very common one, and there actually are men and women today who pride themselves on having this notion, and think that it is a duty to propagandize it, saying to others: "Oh, do anything you like. Follow any path. All roads lead to Rome. All roads lead to Chicago."

I think the reason why this idea is so popular is because it is so plausible and easy to understand. But plausibility and ease in understanding an idea are no proof of its worth. I do not believe in this idea. I do not see anything in it that is helpful, that is really worthwhile, or that shows even ordinary reflection or common good sense. For my part, I know perfectly well that there is always a better road than the one that any man may be following, and that in a general way we may say that there is also always a best.

Yes, I think that the questioner is quite right in supposing that such an idea is a tacit acknowledgment that the people who utter this idea disbelieve in any fundamental truth in the universe and also disbelieve that there is a pathway by which that truth may be reached. If you are asked by some passing tourist: "I beg your pardon. Will you kindly tell me the shortest road to San Diego?" would you say in answer: "Oh, take any road, any road will lead there"? You would be misleading him. If a person comes to me and says, and I feel the pathetic plea of his heart: "Can you help me? My heart wearies of the world, of its sadness, of its pain. I have suffered. I want peace." And if I were to answer that man: "Surely, study anything you like in order to gain peace; any study

will lead you to its acquirement," I would not merely be lying to him, but betraying my trust as a teacher.

There is a path to wisdom, my Brothers, which is also a path to peace and a path to truth. Does anyone doubt it? When you hear the babel of voices around you, and your ears are afflicted at every street corner with leather-lunged proclamations and declamations and acclamations, and all promising an easy path to achievement, what are you going to do? Are you going to listen to every voice and follow each one after the other and thus achieve naught but a running of circles around yourself? You would be very foolish if you did this. On the contrary I tell you: look within, look into your own heart and your heart will tell you that there is a secret way to peace and to wisdom and to truth.

Now, my Brothers, I can show you that path. As a theosophical teacher I can give you the same answer that theosophical teachers have always given: "Come to me, all ye who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest and wisdom and peace."

I will show you the pathway leading to wisdom, to inner happiness, and to achievement; but I cannot tread that pathway for you, I can merely point out where that path lies, and show you how to begin to tread it. You yourself must reach that path and thereafter must tread it alone. So much I can do. Remember also that this is not my truth, it is the ancient wisdom-religion of mankind, formulated by the titanic seers of the human race, and of this wisdom I have given to you this afternoon but a tiny fragment.

I can do so much because I have studied, because I myself have been taught, and therefore I stand in duty bound to give to others what I myself have learned. Don't trust me merely because I tell you this, but trust your own intuition as to the truth of what I tell you. This is my first word to you: Don't trust me because I am I,

but take everything that I lay before you and examine it carefully and minutely. If you find it good, then hold to it until you discover a greater good. I can show you that wondrous path.

I will most emphatically not tell you that any philosophy is good enough, that any mental discipline is good enough! I am not a fool and I will not betray your confidence in acting in that wise. There is always a better road, better than the last road followed, and beyond the better there is always a still better and a best. I have found that road or pathway, and I can show you how you may find it. I can do no more. I cannot grow for the growing child; I cannot eat for my friend; I cannot understand for him. He himself must grow; he himself must eat; he himself must understand. But I can show him where he can find understanding, where he can learn how to grow, and I can point out to him the Master's table where the feast lies spread.

Now, in closing: Every human creature — every man, every woman — is, in the core of the core of his being, or her being, a divinity. In the Christian New Testament this is spoken of under the saying: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of the divine, and that the spirit of the divine dwelleth in you?" But theosophists give much more point and definiteness to this teaching. We learn that every one of us is in the inmost of his being a god. We live in a spiritual universe, composed of many inner realms, planes, spheres; and the physical sphere on which we are dwelling at present is but one inn on the journey of life, one resting-house; for, as the Christian New Testament again so truly and mystically says: "In my Father's house are many mansions." This inner god of you is all there is of you that is worth anything of enduring value. All the rest of you is composite and will ultimately decay.

You can become acquainted with yourself, with your spiritual self. "Man, know thyself," said the Greek god Apollo from his

Oracle at Delphi. There is a world of wisdom in this injunction. You can become acquainted with yourself, and thereafter enter into bliss unspeakable, you can learn how to gain and to use spiritual powers which will make you master of life and of death, and you can become a savior and a benefactor of your fellow men if you will.

To me my audiences always seem to be audiences of imbodyed divinities. I feel as if I were standing on Olympus, and talking to the gods, for I see not merely these human faces before me, but I sense also the inner spiritual glory shining through them. Oh, my Brothers, when you come to have the insight, to realize the feeling that when you look upon your fellow humans you see them as imbodyed gods, then you will have a peace of heart and mind which are beyond expression in words, and you will also feel your heavy responsibility as a teacher. Each one of you being an imbodyed god, my Brothers, why not ally yourselves with this deathless part of you? Why not enter into this beauty, into this sublimity, into this lofty life? You can do so if you will.

Ally yourself with the immanent Christ within your being, as the modern mystical Christian puts it; become the inner Buddha, as theosophists phrase it. But in any case, become one with the god within you — and then live grandly, live to benefit mankind. There is no such peace on earth, there is no such happiness, as the feeling of doing good to others. The very urge of the god within you impels you to do this; and for you who so act it will ultimately win you deathlessness, for you will then have allied yourselves self-consciously with the shining god at the core of your being.

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**Second Series: No. 13 (December 1, 1930)**

**THE MYSTICAL STORY OF JESUS**

(Lecture delivered October 5, 1930)

CONTENTS: The Christian New Testament and its imagined source of inspiration. — The Christian attitude towards people of past ages. — The prevailing uncertainty of the authorship of the Gospels. — Was Christianity only a religious hoax? — The so-called Apocryphal Gospels. — Was Jesus only a solar myth? — The meaning of the word Christos. — Were the peoples of ancient times forsaken by the great ones? — Insane warrings over the meanings of words. — There is an esoteric story about Jesus. — Many Jesuses in Jewish history. — Interpretation of the story of Jesus and Barabbas. — The Hebrew words *Bnei Yisrael* or "Sons of Israel." — Are you spiritually dying? — The fallacy of a modern school of materialistic philosophy. — Are theosophists unchristian? — Can the less become the greater? — An amazing misunderstanding of ancient esoteric teachings. — The heart of the sun is a cosmic divinity. — For those who await a "Coming Christ." — Behold the light on the mountains of the Mystic East.

I have the intention of briefly talking to you about Jesus! You may ask me: What do you know about him? And to that I could give a ready and perhaps satisfactory answer. But do you realize that it is only within recent years that such a question as this one has ever been asked with any degree of moderation of feeling? European people used to take the documents which form the Christian New Testament, these documentary books which we now know to be of varied value and of different type, and study



them with the idea that they were dictated by the Spirit of Almighty God, written with full inspiration of the Holy Ghost; and that the authorized English version or translation of them — and doubtless the other translations in other European tongues — were due to the plenary inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Hence it so happened that what each European reader found in these books composing the Christian New Testament was supposed by him to be indeed the word of God Almighty, infinitely accurate and truthful, and divinely given to the men of earth some two thousand years ago more or less; and that till the time of this divine gift the entire human race had been virtually uncared for spiritually, except for those more or less intuitive feelings and thoughts which were implanted by the almighty creative power in the human soul, in the human consciousness, and in the human mind.

Within a short time after the alleged crucifixion of the Master Jesus — at any rate from the time when the Christian scriptures began to have circulation in the Mediterranean world — and all through the Middle Ages and till nearly our own days — men quarreled and fought about the documents composing the Christian New Testament, not only with regard to just what these documents had to say, but about mere words and phrases, and also as regards their age, and as regards who wrote these various Christian scriptures; and even today nobody knows anything positive, real, and certain about them, although many clever and learned theories had been emitted and had been accepted as true because of utter lack of positive proof.

Now, consider what all this means. Men do not know the exact date when the four Gospels were written, nor the exact date when the Book of Acts was composed, nor the exact date when the various Epistles were written and sent forth, nor when the last Book called the Apocalypse was composed, supposedly by St. John

on the Isle of Patmos. Some humorous skeptics have said that John must have partaken rather freely of underdone lobster the evening before writing this Book, or of some other indigestible food, and that the result of this physiological state was the Apocalypse called the Book of Revelations. We may smile at this humorous and rather unkind criticism, but perhaps it has had its effect in destroying the hard dogmatic spirit, so unkind, so unbrotherly, which afflicted men so sorely till very recently.

Even today I say, nobody knows anything about the writers of these various scripts or scriptures as they are called. Nobody knows who wrote them; nobody knows when they were written; and furthermore nobody knows if the things recorded in these New Testament Books were true, or about the mystical aspirational feeling of those who wrote them down. Consider also what Christianity has been for nigh upon eighteen hundred years, a religion of vigorous dogmatic propaganda, a religion teaching certain very definite and strict doctrines of faith which one must believe at the peril of his supposedly immortal soul.

Now, in view of the almost complete darkness of ignorance enshrouding the origins and writers of these mystical scriptures, what are we to conclude therefrom? Was Christianity only a religious hoax, a cruel and diabolic hoax, perpetrated upon the entire Western world? Some people have said so. Theosophists do not teach anything like that; but nevertheless what our teaching is concerning these matters is very different indeed from what the orthodox theologians teach and have taught. For hundreds and hundreds of years it was almost forgotten except perhaps by the theological learned few that in the early days of Christianity, in the times of primitive Christianity, there were many more than the four Gospels which now are accepted as the canonical — several more than the one Book of Acts which now finds place in the accepted Christian New Testament — many more than the

Epistles which presently are found in the collection of writings called the New Testament. We know that at the very least there were something like 24 or 25 different Gospels which are now called apocryphal, also Epistles galore, and many Books of Acts — Gospels and Epistles and Acts of all kinds emitted and circulated by the various primitive or early Christian sects. They are called apocryphal or doubtful merely because they do not now belong to the present Canon of accepted scriptures, and yet scholars know full well that these so-called apocryphal writings were in their times considered canonical by those who accepted them and used them.

When did Jesus live? When was he born? Did he ever live in fact? Was he a myth? If so, was he a solar myth so called, a mere mythical figure which certain students and scholars of skeptical mind have supposed to be the true explanation of the figure of that sublime entity whose lineaments scholars dimly perceive on the horizons of primitive Christianity? The answers to those questions are still unfound and still occupy the attention of not a small army of scholars and students; but behind all the cloud of uncertainty and the dust of conflicting opinions, through all the ages since Jesus later called the Christ came and taught his fellow men, through all and behind all this we nevertheless discern the sublime figure of a great teacher — not the only great teacher in the annals of history, say theosophists, but nevertheless a grand and sublime teacher of men, his heart full of love and pity for erring mankind, and who passed his life upon earth in instilling elevating teachings into men's hearts and minds, and who finally passed away, according to the Gospel theory, by suffering the death penalty of crucifixion. Was he indeed crucified or was he not? Here again, while most scholars believe he was crucified, we are obliged to say "nobody really knows."

Who indeed was Jesus? Nobody really knows. There is not one

single, definite, conclusive, and proving answer to the questions that I have just placed before you — not a single answer which is known to be a certainty. Nevertheless, theosophists teach that there did indeed live, shortly before the beginning of what is now called the Christian era, a great seer and sage later called Jesus the Christos.

*Christos* is a Greek word which means one who has been anointed. This is a direct reference, a direct allusion, to what happened during the celebration of the ancient Mysteries. Unction or anointing was one of the acts performed during the working of the rites of those ancient Mysteries in the countries surrounding the Mediterranean Sea. The Hebrew word for an anointed one is *Mashiah*, meaning exactly the same thing as the Greek word Christos — the Anointed. It is of course well known that the Jews were even then expecting and still expect the coming of their Messiah, which is a common way of misspelling the Hebrew word *Mashiah*; and the mystical allusion here in this ancient Jewish belief is identical with the mystical and esoteric meaning that the word Christos contained when employed with an allusion to the rites of initiation.

Nevertheless the Jews: what have they to say about Jesus? As all the Occidental world knows they have not accepted him as their Messiah or Anointed; although, according to the story as it has come down to us in the Christian scriptures, Jesus was born a Jew, lived among the Jews, and in the Gospel according to Matthew we there find the legend coming from his own mouth, so it is stated, which proclaims: "I come but unto the lost sheep of the House of Israel." According to the general Christian idea, the Jewish Messiah Jesus came to his people and was rejected by them, and non-Jewish people, the gentiles, heard his message and accepted him and believed in him. This significant fact should arrest our attention, and give us pause for thought.

Don't you get the hint already from what I have said that there must be a profound mystical meaning and story behind all this welter of legend and tale and record? Was Jesus the only great seer and sage who has ever existed, who has ever taught and worked to save his fellow human beings from becoming bond slaves to selfishness and the destructive calls of the world of material existence? No! The annals of human history are full of the records of others, great ones, great sages and seers who came each one in his time and to his own people and taught a doctrine which however much it might have differed in form or in language, contained fundamentally the same identic message. Some of the names of these great ones are very familiar to you: I have often called your attention to them in connections similar to my present theme: Lao-tse and Confucius in China, Krishna and the Buddha in India, Zoroaster in Persia, and in the Greek lands Pythagoras and Empedocles and Plato and Apollonius of Tyana; and heaven knows how many more in other parts of the world.

Is it at all conceivable that the spiritual powers that be, which rule and inspire the universe and infill it with light and life, with guidance and intelligence, of which we human beings are inferior reflections, could exist as they most certainly do, and yet have left the entire human race from its first appearance on earth without spiritual guidance and without spiritual teaching until a certain Jewish boy was born some two thousand years ago? What a limited, insane, and therefore repulsive idea! The ancient doctrine of a god living in the core of the core of every human being tells us in vibrant notes a very different story, for our hearts and minds both, when we consult them apart from prejudices and misconception and miseducation, vibrate with instant sympathy to the theosophical doctrine of the divinity indwelling in the core of every being. How familiar this doctrine of the indwelling god is to our hearts! I tell you in all the

earnestness of my soul that in the heart of the heart of every one of you abides a living and inspiriting god, of which you as human beings are the feeble expressions — feebly manifesting the divine powers of the individual divinity within. What does even the Christian scripture say as to this point: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of the living divinity and that the spirit divine dwelleth within you?"

Jesus the Avatara is also said to have taught that every man could become like unto him, and as he did so could they also manifest forth the divine powers within. And instead of accepting this sublime teaching among others of the beautiful doctrines and teachings of spiritual Christianity, men have battled for dogmas, opinions, words, phrases, and theories, so that certain medieval battlefields of European countries flowed with human gore, shed because men quarreled insanely about the meanings of words. How could it be otherwise, my Brothers? Lose the spirit, and ye lose the vision, and in losing the vision ye lose hold of truth and compassion and peace and love and brotherhood.

It is to restore to men this vision sublime that The Theosophical Society in our present day was founded, being one of several objectives that we hold so dear to our hearts to achieve.

Theosophists say, and say truly, that we bring back to Christians the teaching of the Christ living within — or to put it otherwise, of the Buddha living within — each one of you, of the god within each one of you: truly a god living in the inmost of each one of you, for in each case it is a spark of the Divine, of the Most High, dwelling in you and above you, and it also is the very fountain of all your being. Therefore do theosophists say that there is a mystical, an inner and esoteric and true, story about Jesus, which is the true story of him and of his life, and this became esoteric only because it has been forgotten, lost sight of; and this is the story which theosophists study, not only on account of its being a

part of our training, but also because we look upon Jesus called the Christ as having been one of the theosophical teachers of his time. Our doctrines tell us of a long line of such teachers stretching far back into the dim mists of antiquity and reaching in inverse direction even to the present day — a long line of great seers and sages, each of whom had become one with his own inner divinity, with the god within, the immanent Christos, the inner Buddha; and having become so at one with the inner divinity, they knew all necessary knowledge because they saw it, and therefore could they teach, and teach the truth.

Yes, some two thousand years or more ago a great sage and seer did live, who in later times was called Jesus the Christ or "the Anointed." Jesus was a common name in the history of the Hebrews. There were many Jesuses among them. The name itself means "Savior" — one who saves or rescues whether by physical act or by spiritual and moral and intellectual teaching. There were many Jesuses in Jewish history, as I have already told you. Joshua and Jehoshua are two variants of the same name.

Let me now turn to an important aspect of the mystical story of Jesus which I think you will find interesting. You will doubtless remember one scene, as it is given in the Christian scriptures, told in all the four Gospels in various fashion, setting forth how, according to the Christian Gospel story, Jesus, after he was betrayed and when brought before Pilate, received the unconscious homage of that Roman official — "I see no fault in this man." But as it was the custom of that day, says the Christian narrative, to release a political prisoner to the Jews on the Feast of the Passover, Pilate is stated to have said to the accusers of Jesus: "Whom will ye that I release unto you, Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Christ?" And they said: "Barabbas."

Now, here is a very interesting and significant point of the

narrative. In some of the old manuscripts of the Christian New Testament the full name of the so-called robber Barabbas is given as Jesus Barabbas. As Jesus means Savior and Barabbas is a compound word which means "son of the father," when we remember that the name of the Christian Savior is given as Jesus and that he also is frequently alluded to in a vague way as the son of a divine father, we find not a little of interest in these mystically significant facts. Do you begin to get my meaning? Do you begin to see the esoteric or mystical light breaking into your minds? "Whom will ye that I release unto you: Jesus, son of the Father, or Jesus whom ye call the Anointed?" — We have here therefore two Jesuses — two saviors, because please remember that the word Jesus means "savior." Therefore: whom will ye (according to the esoteric rendering) that I shall release unto you for freedom, although having offended your man-made laws? Jesus, the son of the father — the inferior part of a human being — or Jesus the anointed of the divine spirit? And the legend states that the answer was: Barabbas. Give us the man Barabbas.

Let me now carry you on a little farther in our mystical story: the entire story of Jesus as given in the Christian New Testament is an esoteric or mystical tale setting forth in mystical form what took place in the initiation-chambers — initiation as you may know signifying the dying of the lower man, so that the higher nature of the neophyte could thereafter be released, and further that the postulant, when he had finished his three-days' initiation trial, might go forth 'anointed' or as one who had received the unction or anointing in the Mysteries.

They took Barabbas, the Jesus Barabbas, the lowest part of the man considered as a human being, and they "crucified" the divinity within — not a crucifixion according to the Roman way of punishing by hanging on a physical cross until death mercifully came; but the neophyte was taken and laid upon a cruciform



couch, a bed in the shape of a cross, and there he lay in a trance for three days and three nights, and thereafter arose as a Messiah, a Christos — both these words signifying the same thing — an anointed one. These terms are all esoteric terms, every one of them.

Jesus is stated to have said, according to the story in the Gospel, which story is current under the name the Gospel according to Matthew: "I come but unto the lost sheep of Israel." Do you know what this Hebrew word Israel means? It is more accurately written in the Hebrew *Yisrael*, a word derived from a Hebrew verbal root *Sarah*, which means "to rule," "to govern," "to command," and also by a connection of sense "to struggle to attain." Consequently, the phrase, the *Bnei Yisrael*, meaning "the sons of Israel," was a phrase used exactly in the same sense in which the Hindus spoke of the Aryas, meaning the noble, the elevated, the superior, the rulers, as contrasted with the Mlechchhas or inferiors or outcasts; and exactly in the same sense again in which the Greeks spoke of the *Aristoi*, the aristocrats — not meaning aristocrats in the modern social sense, but signifying men who were aristocrats in heart and mind, builded by natural evolution to be the better ones, the evolved ones, the superior, the grand men, no matter what their physical birth was; and just as the Hindus spoke of the Mlechchhas, so did the Greeks speak of the *Barbaroi*, barbarians. In a similar way did the Jews speak of all those who were not *Bnei Yisrael* as outsiders, or Gentiles, etc. Note also that the alleged statement of Jesus says that he came to teach the "lost sheep" of Israel, mystically signifying those by nature ready for and capable of esoteric training, but who had not yet received it, and therefore were wandering in the outer darkness of material life.

I don't want to burden your minds this afternoon with thoughts too recondite and difficult. Yet I am trying to make clear to you at

least something of the esoteric or mystical story of Jesus so that you will get at least some ideas of value and worth which you can take away with you, and think over, thus enabling you, if you should be interested in studying the Christian Testament in this newer light, to see something other in the story of Jesus than the mere exoteric words.

I tell you that the story of Jesus is a story of initiation, of what took place in the initiation chambers; and this fact accounts for the inconsistencies and the difficulties and the contradictions and the variations in the various scriptures and in the different manuscript-readings of those scriptures which still exist. This mystical and esoteric tale is a very interesting and a fascinating one, for it was in fact a tale told around the ideal figure of a great Seer and Sage who did indeed live as a man, but who, as a man, was quite different indeed from the esoteric or mystical or mystery-figure discerned as the Jesus of the scriptures. The Jesus of the scriptures is an ideal figure of one represented as having attained quasi-divinity by having passed through the initiatory rites then used in Palestine, and who because of this had become "a son of the spiritual Sun," a son of Father Sun.

We can say today in exactly the same way as hinted at a moment ago that men are divided into two classes: first, into those who are spiritually "dead" although alive in the body, the 'living dead' as Pythagoras neatly put it; and, second, into the sons of Israel — in other words, those who are the natural-born spiritual rulers of men, or who become such through initiation. Let us also remember that just as the Hindus and the Greeks spoke of themselves as being the "superior" men, the Aryas and the Aristocrats, doubtless partly from motives of racial pride, so the Hebrews in exactly the same way and doubtless from the same motives spoke of themselves generally as being the typical *Bnei Yisrael* — the sons of Israel, or the natural rulers or superiors of

other men. Such racial or national pride and prejudice is a psychological phenomenon that may be observed in the history of every distinct people or racial strain, and exists even today in the foolish and blind racial or national pride and prejudices with which we are all, alas, so well acquainted.

I have given you in the preceding observations, my Brothers, the foundations or key of the esoteric or mystical story of Jesus; and now let me ask the question: Who was Jesus as a matter of fact? A fortnight ago I spoke to you on this last theme, and I tried to answer briefly the question which I propounded: *Was Jesus man-god, great seer, or myth?* and in answer to my own question I told you that he was what theosophists call an avatara.

An avatara is an unusual event in human history. It is a case where a human being in certain unusual circumstances is spiritually linked straitly with one of the gods with whom the universe is filled full, and this human being thus steps down, to use a figure of speech borrowed from electrical practice, the divine flame of this divinity so that he — the divinity's human vehicle — may communicate it to his fellow human beings as spiritual and intellectual energy, and who therefore teaches, and teaches with the authority of a divine being. Such an entity was Jesus; but he was not by any means the only avatara who has ever lived. There have been many other avataras in the past history of the world, and there will be many more in the world's future history.

Is an avatara the same as the case of a human being who allies himself with his *own* inner god, with the *native* spiritual-divine essence within him? It is not, because the latter case produces what theosophists call a buddha — one who has attained through human birth, after human birth, after human birth, in the age-long battle of self-conquest and achievement, a status of quasi-

divinity, and who has verily thus become like a man-god walking the earth: one who has conquered through willpower and spiritual aspiration the Barabbas part of his being, and who therefore has become a much fuller expression of the divinity in the heart of each of us than the average man is.

Such is a buddha, but Jesus was not one. Jesus was an avatara; and for a fuller exposition of my meaning I refer you to the printed report of my lecture two Sundays ago. Nevertheless, Jesus also could truly be called a man-god or a god-man because he expressed through his human nature the cosmic divinity with which he was linked in the highest part of his constitution. So far as his physical body was concerned, he was born just as I was born, just as you were born, in the regular and usual way.

The part of the mystical story of Jesus which alludes to the virgin birth refers to one of the profound mystical teachings belonging to the same initiatory cycle that I have already spoken to you about this afternoon. This teaching regarding the virgin birth would be too deep a matter to go into at all adequately this afternoon, but I can say that it is strictly connected with the same esoteric or mystical scheme that I have spoken of; and, indeed, one or more of the oldest Christian manuscripts — the Greek writings from which the translated Christian scriptures of today come — plainly state that Joseph was the father of Jesus, thus doing away at a stroke with the wrong idea of the alleged physical virgin birth of the great Jewish avatara.

How much grander is the figure of Jesus as an avatara than is the orthodox idea about him! How gloriously human does that strange and sublime being become to us! How humanly divine becomes the sublime figure of Jesus the avatara — a man, but a man through whom coursed the electric fire and flame of a cosmic divinity, so that through the mind and consciousness and

even the body of the avatara Jesus his disciples and those around him who had the eyes to see it could feel and understand that they were in the very presence of a living spiritual fire, one of the living and self-conscious Fires which infill the universe. How suggestive and beautiful this mystical story is! It clothes the figure of Jesus with both spiritual grandeur and human sublimity, and furthermore sets Jesus forth as a grand exemplar or type which all other men can become themselves if they will but follow the pathway leading to the heart of the universe.

You men do not know what you have within you! Most men today are spiritually dead — alive in the body which after a while they will lay down, but during life they are spiritually dead: unmanifesting all the higher part of themselves, afraid even to become compassionate, afraid to give the heart generously in impersonal love, afraid to forgive, afraid to feel grandly. One of the noblest of the objectives of The Theosophical Society, based on one of the most important teachings of theosophy, is to awaken men to the spiritual reality in their souls, to tell them what they have within them, unmanifest, but nevertheless there — the living and self-conscious god dwelling within the core of the being of each one of you.

Where does your intelligence come from? Wherein is your mind rooted? How about the grand feelings which, according to the usual saying of men, flow from the heart? Look at the example of a man who is self-sacrificing. Pause in contemplation of the picture. Is it not a grand and inspiring thing to see? Such a man is self-forgetful to the point of gladly laying down his life for others if the call should come. Is that grand impulse ordinarily and materially human? Consider on the other hand the mad and frenzied rush in our great Occidental cities today, wherein every man is brushing aside his fellows in the frantic scramble for selfish material achievement. They are nearly all doing it, and this

accounts for the unholy and unbrotherly battle that we see waged everywhere. These last are not the men who move the world. The men who move the world are the men who think grandly, the men who feel sublimely, who set the example of self-forgetful service for others, and who are ready to live and die for a principle. This last is superhuman, indeed divine. Where does the impulse come from? It comes from the divinity within, within the human soul, and often manifests as an instinct that in that way only lie peace and happiness and the realization of true manhood.

Plato was right: it is ideas that rule the world, and ideas come from men, and they come from the great men; and the man who is spending all his energy and time and strength in the frantic scramble for material gains is the man who is losing all the best of his life. Part at least of every man's time should be given to high thought and to noble feeling. You are spiritually dying unless you do that. I mean thought and feeling along high and sublime lines. Otherwise, you are living merely the lives of human beasts engaged in a mad struggle for something that you cannot permanently clutch or keep with you when you die. When the time comes for you to draw up your legs in bed and say good-bye, you will realize that you have wasted a lifetime, that you have, to use the words of the Christians, "laid up no treasures in heaven" and that you leave earth-life poorer than when you came into it. You have deprived yourself of what you should have won; and I think that a man is hugely to be pitied whose heart has never been stirred by an impersonal thought, by a self-forgetful idea. I say with Pythagoras that such a man is one of the living dead.

Be the Christ within you — the Christ-spirit, the immanent Christ, that the mystical Christians of today sometimes speak of. Be the inner Buddha, the god within you, and you will have peace and happiness and you will gain moral strength and attain spiritual

power, and your fellow men will sense it all instinctively and know that they stand in the presence of a godlike man. These are the real things in life. All the rest is transitory. I don't say that a man should shun the world and flee into the wilderness — not at all. His duty is to remain in the world and to do a man's work, but to do it like a man. Therefore rise! Be superior! Lead, instead of being one of the dumb following sheep! Such was the teaching of Jesus the Christ; such was the teaching of Gautama the Buddha. It is also the teaching of all the great seers and sages of the ages: Be yourself, your inner self, your higher self, your divine self! And, as the Delphic Apollo put it, "Man, know thyself!" Know the god within you!

Do you think that this injunction merely means knowing your physical senses and body — that you have two eyes and a nose and a mouth and two ears and two hands and two legs more or less well attached to a trunk? Do you want to be mentally children? On the contrary, I want you to realize what you have locked up within you. You are the ones who won't let it come out. Each one of you is imprisoning his own higher self. All of us are doing it; only some of us, my Brothers, see the vision sublime, at least a few rays of it in the Mystic East, and have said: "I can rest no more in the grave wherein I have been lying supine; I will arise and go to the god within me, my Father, and there take myself, my heritage. I will be a Man."

It is so easy to do this. Do you know that it is easier by far than living the life which the majority of men are living today, every man fighting every other man and struggling against every other man? There is actually a school of materialistic philosophy existent today which says that it is this struggle which brings out strength. What it does bring out is hell! And the other road is so easy: mutual kindness, helpfulness, forgiveness, compassion towards each other, pitifulness, deliberately refusing to gain for

yourself if your fellow loses. This path is grand. And there are men by the millions who feel this and who in many cases act accordingly. It is the grand rule, the manly road, the road of peace and happiness, of growth and strength, and it takes manhood to follow it. Don't attempt it if you are weaklings. The weakling cannot do it — in the first place because he does not want to do it. If he did, he could begin doing it.

Do theosophists teach a doctrine which is unchristian? Yes, if by the word *Christian* you mean the old-fashioned theology, the old-fashioned teaching, of the medieval churches. But the teaching of Jesus is our teaching; the doctrine that he taught we also teach and we try to follow it. In that we may not always succeed. Theosophists are human, just like everybody else; but nevertheless we see the ideal and aspire towards it. We know that that ideal conceived as a path of thought and action can be followed; we therefore set our eyes on the mountains in the Mystic East over which we see the light shining, and thither we march. We rescue Christ from the grave of human hearts; and one of these days we will restore Christ to the Christian churches, and when we shall have done that, then we shall take a new step forwards.

"You are a most unchristian man," was said to me some time ago. I said: "Yes, thank you!" Because I knew just what the speaker had in mind when he spoke, and I added: "Yes, I am most decidedly not a Christian," because I knew what he meant by the word. But Jesus called the Christ was one of our own theosophical teachers, was one of the theosophists of his time, was one of the great seers and sages who come at cyclic intervals in human history, in order to teach and to guide their fellow men.

I desire the Christians to see and feel their living Christ. I desire to restore Christ to the churches from which he has been banned,



from which he has been driven. That is only a part of our work and a small part; but as far as it goes we are very sincere and earnest about it.

Listen to this kindly question that has been sent in to me:

I have read some of your lectures, *Questions We All Ask*, and although I am liberal in my views as an honest Christian, I cannot help hearing a note of great — even more than great, immeasurable — egoism in your philosophy. You make the statement, in substance, that men may become as our Lord Jesus Christ was on earth. [No, I have not said exactly that.] Do you really mean that, or is it said by way of encouragement? Let me tell you what is really in my heart. Since my boyhood, our Lord Jesus Christ has inspired me with all that is high and holy in my life; the idea of God himself, in the person of his Son, coming down to earth and sharing our sorrows, has been a constant help to me. But am I to supplant this holy awe for so great a being by an ambitious desire to climb to such an impossible height? Why, that would wreck my life. And how can a man, created by God, become God? Can the less become the greater?

Well now, how can you satisfactorily answer a man like the writer of this question? Usually the less does in time evolve into the greater. That is the meaning of growth. That is the meaning of evolution. But did not Jesus, my dear Brother Christian, tell you that you are a son of God, which means that you have a divine spark within you, and do you not understand that this divine spark is a god? Just as he was the manifestation of a divinity, and had this divinity working within and through him, so likewise can any good and sincere man manifest in ever larger measure the divinity within himself. Who then is the better Christian, I or my critic?

"Greater things than these shall ye do," said in substance Jesus. That is also what theosophists say. We say that greater things than he ever is reported to have done can be done, because there are no frontiers in rising spiritually along the ladder of life and becoming grander forever on the upward path. There have been imbodiments of beings on other planets who were so much superior to the Jesus of our planet that we can make no comparison between them. Such is one of our teachings. He was so very great and so very grand, so sublime an entity, only because we human beings are generally so imperfect.

I do not like to think of infinitude and boundless eternity as being in any wise, abstract or other, a Person or as taking upon itself a shape, human or other. All that seems to me to be infinitely wrong, an amazing misunderstanding of ancient esoteric, secret teachings, taught in the Mystery chambers; for we know that those ancient Mysteries existed: we know indeed that the mystery teachings were taught, and that they received the unqualified and unquestioning spiritual and intellectual homage of the greatest men of ancient days. We know that all the great thinkers and sages and seers of antiquity were taught in these wonderful mystery schools; and therefore do theosophists say that even so was it the case with him who later was called Jesus the Christ; and as I have already told you his crucifixion was but one phase of the initiatory ceremonies of the initiation chambers.

I would that I might describe this fully to you, so that you could see it all clearly. Let me however say this: the neophyte lay entranced for three days and nights, and during that period of time his inner being — his spirit-soul, or soul-spirit, call it what you will — was released from the chains of the body and went on its peregrinations through the entire solar system from planet to planet and from planet to sun, finally passing the very portals of Father Sun. Remember that according to the Ancient Wisdom the

heart of the heart of the sun is a cosmic divinity, the source of the glorious splendor and vitality which it is constantly pouring forth.

On the eve of the third day the spirit-soul or soul-spirit began to wing its way back to its personal encasement, and on the morning of the fourth day, more or less as regards the time, the neophyte arose from the cruciform couch or bed on which he had lain attached, roped to it but for safety's sake only, and arose a Master of Light, a Master of Life, a Christ, a Buddha, one who had received the holy and mystical unction, the anointing on the forehead. Thereafter he was a qualified and authorized spiritual teacher of men. He taught by the authority that belonged to him by natural right and by initiation, and he could say, as every such sage and seer has always said: I am the Way, I am the Life, I am the Light.

Everyone who had gone through these same wonderful experiences has said the same, and has truly spoken, my Brothers; and you, if you attain in the same way, will find that it will be not merely your right but your duty to teach, and that you will teach with authority because you will know — all the inner and higher part of your being will be awakened; intuition, wisdom, and knowledge instant, quick, certain, sure, and full, will infill your mind with the mysteries of the universe. You will see grandly; and hence this is called the vision sublime.

No, theosophist as I am, and unchristian as I am according to the orthodox view, I nevertheless believe myself to be a better Christian than many are, because I know who Jesus was, and a better Christian I do believe than this otherwise kindly Christian friend who holds to the old, orthodox beliefs which he neither really understands nor can interpret.

Look into the eyes of someone whom you dearly love with an impersonal love. Be very watchful as you look. Be also

impersonal; and you will see a great and holy mystery there. For, as the poet has truly said, the eyes are the windows of the soul — darkened windows it is true, dark and obscure because windows of flesh, but oh! anyone who has had this experience can see the flame of divinity there. You cannot see it, however, unless you look for it. It will be there; but you will not look for it unless your consciousness tells you that it is there.

Then turn from the one whom you love so dearly, and look into the eyes of someone else, and see the same sublime — what may I call it? — thing, entity, being, force, power, consciousness. Give to it any name you like — that wondrous, indescribable thing which every human being shows forth. Try it, and you will succeed just in proportion as you are impersonal, just in proportion as your mind is quiet and still — still as space; you will see it when the mind is at rest and the senses are at peace. You will there feel the living Buddha, the living Christ. The Christos in you will recognize the other Christos in the one whom you love, for they are of the same race and realm, breathe the same spiritual ether, and have the same consciousness; and hence recognition is instant.

What a vision! I am sorry for those who have no eyes to see, no ears to hear, no understanding heart to comprehend. What kind of men and women are they? They are, as Pythagoras said, the living dead, alive in the body but unmanifesting in all the other parts of them. Pity them, pity and forgive!

Are you open to suggestions? [Well, as I receive so many questions each week I think I am!] I would like to suggest that you get in touch with these people who talk about a "Coming Christ," and different incarnations of Jesus, and whose wife he was in other lives, and just explain to them that Jesus, being an avatara, never had a previous incarnation and never can have another one. You explained this very clearly in one of your

earlier lectures. I think you would be doing them a great kindness.

I am afraid that they would not think that I was "doing them a great kindness." But I have already done all this. I have already more than once tried to set forth what our theosophical teachings are with regard to the avatara doctrine, and every time when I speak to an audience like this, I feel that I am treading a very difficult way indeed. I look into your faces and I see the flame of understanding in some, and the pitiful look of mental fatigue in others' faces; and yet how can I make the matter clearer than in what I have already said? These good people who say that Jesus called the Christ in former lives was a woman, and once was the wife of him who in Roman times was called Julius Caesar, seem to me to wander wide from the avatara teaching.

An avatara has never had a previous birth on earth, cannot ever have a future life on earth, for the reasons which I have set forth two weeks ago, and which you will find published in one of the pamphlets called *Questions We All Ask*.

Read our books, come to our Temple of Peace, listen to me at least with kindness in trying to understand what I am endeavoring to say; and then, after that, after we have thought together a little while in that wise, then, if you like, come to me, or write to me, and I will do my best to show you the beginning of the path. This is a promise — *if*, mark you — if you understand me. I cannot show a blind man the road which may actually lie at his feet. But a man who has begun to see, in other words who has begun to feel and to understand, to him indeed I can show the beginning of the path, the path which will take him directly and rapidly to the mountains of the Mystic East of which I have spoken before, that Mystic East whence all light comes. *Ex oriente lux!* Light from the quarter of the rising sun, I will and can show you!

Now, friends, before we part today, I desire once more to recall your thought to the fact that I am speaking here to an audience of gods, gods imbodyed in human souls, in their turn imbodyed in encasements of human flesh; but each one of you in the inmost of the inmost of his being is a divine entity; and it is to this entity that I try always to make my appeal, by hint, by allusion, by a suggestion rather even than by direct word. It is this inner god within each one of you and of which you are the feeble expression that I desire to call to your attention again this afternoon: to tell you that you can become at one with this inner god of you — not one god in all of you, but meaning that each one of you in the highest part of his being is a divinity, a god; for the universe is filled full with gods, with cosmic spirits, with self-conscious, intelligent, and spiritually sentient entities, and this sublime fact accounts for the wondrous and bewildering variety that even the physical universe shows. The roots of that variety are in the inner worlds of nature, in the inner realms, and especially in these gods who verily are the roots of all beings and of all things. You are an audience of gods, and each one of you can show forth in more or less perfect fashion the divine powers within you if only you will to do it and grow to have the understanding of this ineffable verity.

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[Vol 2, No 14](#)  
[Contents](#)

**Second Series: No. 14 (December 8, 1930)**

**THE SECRET ANATOMY OF THE WORLD**

(Lecture delivered October 12, 1930)

CONTENTS: The ancient wisdom taught in the schools of the Mysteries. — The universe a living entity; its physical aspect but an outer shell. — Mythological account of the structure of the universe. — The interlocking of hierarchies. — Ancient astrology based on this hierarchical scheme. — The classes of angelic entities referred to by Dionysius the Areopagite. — A system of negative thinking leads nowhere. — Be not slaves of mere human authority. — Test before you accept. — Modern scientists and their other "dimensions of space." — If space is a container, what holds the container? — Dr. James Jeans and his theory of 'singular points' or hearts of nebulae. Theosophy enlarges upon this idea. — Do you know what your destiny is? — What do you mean by the spaces of space? — Does the human soul reincarnate only on earth? — Is it advantageous to reincarnate quickly? — Enter the chamber-temple within you! Listen to the whisperings of your divinity!

I am not a spiritual or psychical anatomist. I am not going to introduce you to a psychical dissecting table; nevertheless I am going to try to paint for you a wondrous picture, to try to draw aside a curtain, so that you may see and in seeing understand some of the ancient teachings of the esoteric Mystery schools of antiquity, those esoteric schools which in their time and in their places among the different races of men taught the old wisdom of antiquity, the wisdom-religion of mankind. This ancient wisdom is not based, as I have so often told you, on anyone's say-so: not based on the deceptive vision of so-called psychical clairvoyants,

but is actually rooted in the very structure and operations of the universe surrounding us, which is the same thing as saying cosmic being, and which has been put into human thought and language by the great Sages and Seers of past ages, by those men who through initiation learned, who were taught, how to send their percipient consciousness behind the veils of the outward seeming, behind the veils of the universe that seems so apparently real, and that surround us on all sides — the penetrating consciousness going deep, deeper, deeper still, into the very womb of being, and there seeing truth; and seizing it with the grip of spiritual and intellectual understanding, these great Sages and Seers brought back from this most marvelous of human adventures what they had discovered; put it into human formulated terms, and taught it as a sublime natural philosophy of truth in those ancient esoteric schools called the schools of the Mysteries.

They were very real, those old schools, and the greatest men of antiquity passed through them, were initiates in them, were taught in them; and you can read in the records of those old times which have come down to us of the present day, what those great men of the past publicly said and taught after they had left the initiation chambers. They put in human language for public dissemination as much as they dared — for the rules regarding secrecy were very strict — and their testimony is one, their witness is one; and it all runs to this end: that there is truth in the universe; that this truth can be known and taught; that it can be understood by anyone who will lead the life, undertake the training, and go through the period of trials to test his power of understanding, of vision, of assimilation, and his sense of responsibility. These great men of the past united in saying that the Mysteries taught men how to live nobly, how to die with a glad and fervent hope, how to lead and inspire their fellow men



in all the avocations of life; and they said further that initiation deprived death of all its seeming terrors, for it showed the neophyte that he was essentially an integral part, an inseparable portion, of the great cosmos, the great universe; that the universe is man's natural home; that in that universe he belongs; that never can he leave it; that he is its offspring: bone of its bone, blood of its blood, life of its life, being of its being, and therefore that man is an inseparable part of it, and consequently that everything that the infinite cosmos contains is in every man and can be had for the taking — if he knows how to take it! There is the difficulty — "if he knows how to take it."

Men don't know themselves. Most men don't even want to know themselves. They themselves are spiritually rooted in the universe; in fact essentially they are it; therefore the key to all this wondrous wisdom — lies where? In yourself. You are, each one of you, that sublime mystical pathway leading direct to the heart of the universe. There is no other path to tread in order to reach utter truth. No one else can tread that path for you. You cannot really learn and really know merely by what other men tell you. Other men may give you hints; they may inspire you; they may help; they may raise; they may encourage all that is true and real; but so far as the individual is concerned, he must tread that sublime pathway himself. Isn't it obvious? Can someone else understand for you? Can someone else learn for you? Can someone else grow for you? You must become before you can be; you must be before you can understand — and I mean self-consciously become, self-consciously be, before you can self-consciously understand.

Now, what is the structure or anatomy of the universe according to these ancient teachings? The old seers and sages taught that the universe is a living entity, that it is a vital organism — much in the same way as man's body is a vital organism: in other words

that the universe is a living thing, a living entity; and man with his life and his intelligence and his consciousness and all his power, all his thought and feeling and emotion, is but a reflection of the whole, working in him as an inseparable part of that all-encompassing whole. The part obviously partakes of what the whole is.

They taught, furthermore, that the gross physical universe, which our senses apprise us of — but oh! so slightly, because our physical senses are as yet so imperfect — they taught, I say, that this encompassing physical universe is but the outer shell, the body, the garment, the veil, of the greater universe — in other words they taught that there is a spiritual universe, of which the outer physical universe is the extremest exterior garment; and that between this spiritual root-universe and the exterior universe there were stages, planes, realms, parts, steps, degrees, from the highest of our own home-hierarchy downwards to the lowest stages or degrees of that home-hierarchy.

According to the usual mythological account of the structure of the universe as this account existed among the ancients, and especially among the peoples of Asia Minor, the universe was stated to consist of nine or ten heavens so called — usually of ten heavens so called, or spheres — named as follows, and counting from the most material or grossest upwards: first, the quadruplicate range of the four elements, comprising "Earth"; then the sphere of "Water"; then the sphere of "Air"; then the sphere of "Fire"; then the "heaven" or sphere of the Moon, then that of Mercury, then that of Venus, then that of the Sun, then that of Mars, then that of Jupiter, then that of Saturn; and then last, the Waters of Space, which cosmic ocean includes the sphere of the so-called fixed stars, and the limitless outer range of the cosmic hierarchy.

It will be noted that we have here a series of twelve, instead of the usual nine or ten, but this is to be understood as meaning that the first in the series is not only the lowest of any such hierarchical system, but also the highest or beginning of an inferior hierarchy descending in graded stages below, while the twelfth or last is not only the highest of any such hierarchy, but also is the link connecting the lowest of the succeeding or superior hierarchy ascending in a similar range of nine or ten included spheres or realms.

The same general system was known the world over, though its component elements were variously reckoned and often disguised under different names. There is a great deal in this hierarchical system as just outlined which the archaic wisdom of the ages called theosophy explains as being perfectly true and as an exact rendering of nature's hierarchical structure, although obviously, as the student can easily see, expressed in purely mythological form.

Furthermore, I might add that the powers and principles and influences of the respective planets, including the Sun and Moon, as they were outlined in such ancient mythological systems, are set forth in the hierarchic scheme that I have just outlined for you. Ancient astrology, which was so different from the modern tattered remnant that Europeans give the name of astrology to, was based on this hierarchical scheme or pattern as its fundamental conception. It is thus seen that the Sun and Moon and the five planets named, occupied an exceedingly important position in the building of the solar system. To each one was assigned an especial influence, and an especial power, and an especial constructive energy; and as all cooperated together, each one producing in action its own particular or characteristic energy, the resultant, according to the theme, was the solar system as it at present exists.

Lastly — and this is very important — each one of these nine or ten realms or spheres, whether solar or lunar or planetary or elemental, is the direct field of action of what it is customary to call a planetary spirit.

There is still another way of dividing the tenfold or ninefold or even twelvefold hierarchical system of the universe according to the mystical teaching prevalent among the nations of Asia Minor, and it is as follows, and we should remember while studying it that this system exercised the profoundest influence on all the nations surrounding the Mediterranean Sea, and was at the bottom of the highly mystical astrological systems of not only the Greeks and the Romans but of the Babylonians, Egyptians, Assyrians, and Persians likewise. This second manner of division runs as follows: The world was conceived of as consisting in its lowest parts of seven elemental substances, united with seven equivalent elemental energies, of which four only in each case were commonly spoken of, to wit: earth, water, air and fire, which together formed the realm or sphere stretching from the earth to the moon.

Beginning with the sphere or realm of the moon began the ten heavens so called, which were serially denominated as follows: the first or lowest was the sphere of the Moon, the next on the ascending scale was the sphere of Mercury, then the sphere of Venus, then the sphere or realm of the Sun, then the realm or sphere of Mars, then that of Jupiter, and then that of Saturn. Then followed the eighth or so-called fixed sphere, succeeded in its turn by the realm of the unseen stars, after which and still more distant came the tenth and last, called that of the surrounding waters of space. Beyond this again was what was sometimes spoken of as the crown, or the crown of light, which was the illimitable expanse of infinitude outside of our own home-

universe or galaxy.

A later school of mystical thinkers used this same serial hierarchy of the heavens and connected with each one of the ten its own class of spiritual beings, to which the following names were given, counting from the lowest to the highest — and in passing it may interest you to know that it is to this series of spiritual beings that St. Paul of the Christians referred when he spoke of the classes of angelic entities; and it was likewise to this same conception that the much later pseudo-Dionysius, commonly called Dionysius the Areopagite, referred in his work.

These ten classes of spiritual entities, according to this later school, were connected with the various so-called heavens as follows: the Angels with the sphere of the Moon; the Archangels with the sphere of Mercury; the Principalities with that of Venus; the Powers with that of the Sun; the Virtues with that of Mars; the Dominations with that of Jupiter; the Thrones with that of Saturn; the Cherubim with the Eighth Sphere; the Seraphim with the Ninth; and an indefinite class of still more sublime spiritual entities were supposed to reside in and to inspirit the Tenth Realm or Sphere.

It should be remembered, of course, that this system of interlocking and interblending worlds and energies is described in the mythological sense, and should so be understood, although of course the fundamental ideas are the same as the series of worlds and their respective inhabitants which theosophy teaches, but which theosophy teaches of in a much more scientific and consistent manner.

All the mystical ancients conjoined in saying that pure spirit, and *a fortiori* pure divinity, cannot act directly upon gross physical being; that there must be intermediate stages — steps, degrees, realms — stepping down, so to speak, the indwelling superior

cosmic powers; and that when these indwelling cosmic spiritual powers reach in their descent this outermost physical garment or veil of the series, which outermost garment we call our physical universe, these powers express themselves in this physical universe as the powers and elements and substances producing the enormous and entrancing variety of beings and entities and things which we sense all around us. A little thought will show you how consistent this structural scheme is with all that we know and with all that our intuitions intimate as being true.

Or, on the other hand, do you prefer to take a theoretic system which is now moribund, dying if not already dead, I mean the materialism of our forefathers, whose answer to every pertinent and inquiring question as given by its exponents was "We don't know!"? "What is energy?" "We don't know." "What is force?" "We don't know." "What is life?" "We don't know." "How large is the universe?" "We don't know." "Whence came man?" "We don't know." "How is it that our solar system is as it is and not otherwise?" "We don't know." "What produces the entrancing variety everywhere around us?" "We don't know." And so on endlessly. No, such a system of negative thinking will never satisfy man's aspiring heart and inquiring mind.

Give me the vision of the seer, the wisdom of the sage; for I will take that vision and that wisdom and test them by my own vision, and by the intelligence with which as a man I am endowed — test and prove, holding fast to that which is good and rejecting what my conscience tells me is untrue — a most excellent rule. Ask you, perhaps: "In following this rule is it not possible that I may reject a truth?" Of course it is; you may reject truth after truth after truth and be the poorer for it; but at least, my Brothers, ye will have acted like men, been conscientious with your own souls, trusted to your own spiritual vision, imperfect as it is; and in trusting to your own conscience and your intelligence and the

emotions of the higher part of your being, ye will give them exercise and they will grow greater with that exercise continuously, so that as time goes on, the cornerstone (to use the metaphor of the Christian New Testament) that the builders rejected will ye take again and understand it and fit it into its proper place.

As the great Buddha says: "Believe not anything that is told to you merely because it is told to you." Exercise the wondrous powers of your own inner being; give them exercise; and in so giving them exercise they will grow strong, stronger, continuously more strong, and greater vision in time thus will be yours, and also a greater power; and ye will grow greater in dignified manhood. Ye may reject a truth time and again, time and again, time and again; but the rule is a good one to follow. It is far better to follow this rule than to be dumb following slaves of some mere human authority.

It is I who tell you this with all the earnestness of my being precisely because I also know the enormous value of true authority. I know what a true teacher is and what he can give, paradoxical as this statement may sound with what I have just said; but it is fully consistent with what I have just said, as ye will realize if ye will pause a moment in thought. Be always willing to learn, but believe naught that your own conscience rejects. Your conscience is not infallible at all, it is fallible; but the greater man has a more visioning consciousness than the inferior man, and the still greater man more than the greater man, and the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace have immense power of consciousness and vision, and the gods still more than they.

But can ye tread the path of truth merely by believing what ye are told without investigation and earnest thought and without exercising the faculties which are inherent in your being? No, of

course not. Therefore I say: believe not at all anything ye are told unless it appeals to your conscience; and then, if it so appeals and you find it good, if you believe it to be true, hold to it against the world if need be. Be a man and recognize that there are teachers in the world, men who are greater than you. This fact will be one of the first things that you will learn by trusting the voice of your own conscience. Isn't this fact wonderful? It is a seeming paradox — a paradox indeed, and yet it is true.

It is obvious that some men know more than other men; therefore they who know more are the natural-born teachers of them who know less. But the man who is the pupil should himself grow through himself exercising the inherent powers of his being. This is one of the first injunctions of theosophy: examine, investigate, prove, test, and believe not at all anything that your conscience tells you is wrong. You are thus on the safe path, and very soon you will come to realize that there are indeed great teachers in the world, because you will feel growing within you, in your own heart, recognition of the fact that you yourself are learning. You will find by your intercourse with your fellow human beings that you in some strange and mysterious way are beginning to see things and to feel things that they apparently are incognizant of, and this will give you a hint, and following it you will voluntarily seek your teacher and find him. The teacher is always there, when the pupil is ready.

There is an ancient wisdom, my Brothers, the ancient wisdom that I have told you about. It is a marvelous system of doctrine. It tells us that the universe is not only a living organism, but that we physical human beings live in intimate connection, in intimate contact, with invisible spheres, with invisible and intangible realms, unknown to us only because our physical senses are so imperfectly evolved that we neither see them nor feel them nor hear them nor smell them nor taste them, nor cognize them



except by that much more highly evolved sensorium which men call the mind. These inner realms interpenetrate our physical sphere, permeate it, so that in our daily affairs, as we go about our duties, we actually pass through the dwellings, through the mountains, through the lakes, through the very beings mayhap, of the entities of and dwelling in these invisible realms. These invisible realms are built of matter just as this our physical world is, but of a more ethereal matter than ours is; but we cognize them not at all with our physical senses. The explanation is that it is all a matter of differing rates of vibration of substances. Pause a moment in thought over this. Think it over.

The ancients said that there are one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, degrees, planes, realms, stages, steps, ranging from high to low, or from low to high, according to the way you may count them; and that each more interior stage or degree or plane or realm is somewhat more ethereal than the realm immediately below it in the hierarchical scale, and all of them more ethereal than the physical realm in which we happen to live at the present time; and that these realms or stages ascend from the physical to the spiritual. And is the highest or spiritual realm the end? It is not. It is merely the beginning of a second ascending hierarchical ladder of life, so that the tenth or highest stage of any such hierarchy if you count upwards, or the first if you count downwards, is merely the most inferior stage or degree of another superior hierarchy itself ascending in ten stages or degrees; and so endlessly through the spaces of space.

Furthermore, the same rule applies in the opposite direction, that the lowest degree or stage of any hierarchy is the highest of an inferior hierarchy on the descending scale, and so on forever.

The world is filled full with gods, with gods and demigods, and beings who are even higher than what men call gods — all of

them spiritual beings, cosmic entities, call them by what name you may like; and we human beings are but one class of them, at the present time passing through this section or phase of a long evolutionary journey from inferior to better, from better to still better, and so on forever on the ascending arc of growth and development; and our temporary sojourn in this our physical world occurs only because we have reached here as we pass along that ascending arc. Further, this evolutionary path, said the teachers of this ancient wisdom, proceeds in cycles, spirals, each turn of the spiral bringing out new manifestations of the inherent life of the evolving entity.

Furthermore, these wise men taught — taught from what they themselves had experienced in the initiation chambers: taught not because someone else had instructed them, but because they had been on the mystical adventure to these interior realms; and because they had been there, and had seen, and felt, and contacted these realms, they *knew* and therefore could teach truth. How can a man really know anything at all which he himself has not been through?

They taught that these inner worlds are the worlds to which all the better part of man goes when he lays aside the physical body — into the interior realms and planes and spheres of the cosmic life. They taught that the journey after death was made upwards through these nine other planes or spheres, until the acme or top of the hierarchical ladder was reached; and then came the return journey downwards through the same planes, until the earth sphere was again entered upon, and thus a man was reborn, each time a little higher than before, let us hope — because there are certain cases of retrogression — with each new birth learning a little more and becoming somewhat more than he was before.

Now, hearken! Is this physical world of ours all there is of the

boundless universe? What sane man believes that? If you think so, then answer my questions! I won't be satisfied with a mere "I don't know." You will have to give me some consistent, logical, understandable reason for your belief. Why should the boundless spaces consist merely of one physical universe? Why should things be forever just as they are at present? Isn't it obvious that things are changing, are growing, and that the standard for infinity is not this physical universe that we so imperfectly understand? Remember that this physical universe itself is merely the outermost expression of the evolving lives with which the universe is filled, and which lives have reached their present type as we know them merely because they are passing through this one stage in the long, long journey of evolution.

You yourselves are imbodyed gods. Yes, the root of each one of you is a divine being; and your humanhood today is but a visible and imperfect manifestation in this world of gross substance of the powers and faculties that you have locked up within you. The real roots of things are in the invisible worlds; the real causes of all things lie there. Therefrom spring forth the entities that compose the variety of our physical world; and today you have your ultramodern scientific thinkers, and the greatest of them, talking more or less vaguely but intuitively about other dimensions of space, instead of which phrase "dimensions of space" theosophists, having the same idea although much more developed, talk about the superior worlds or realms or planes of space.

Your modern scientists have completely thrown over the materialism of your fathers. It is dead, gone, but not yet forgotten; and the minds of men today are still filled with the old materialistic ideas and teachings and theories of forty and fifty and a hundred years ago, and those ideas and theories are still taught in our schools, although it may be in a more or less

disguised form. Yet the great leaders of scientific thought, the great scientific discoverers and investigators, know that the materialism of our fathers is now dead. These great ultramodern scientists are teaching of invisible worlds; they are now talking about space very much as a theosophist talks about space, as being the habitat of consciousness, the habitat of mind. But to speak of it as mind is merely putting in a generalized form exactly what theosophists say when we talk about minds — in the plural — meaning gods, cosmic spirits, and invisible realms and worlds and spheres, the habitats and dwellings of these gods and cosmic spirits.

What is space? Can any one of you tell me what space is? Is it a mere container? Is it a mere emptiness which holds things? Will you tell me how emptiness can hold things? Think! How can emptiness hold things? If it is a container, what is that container? I repeat the question: what is the container? Furthermore, what contains the container? The conception, if we can dignify it by that name, reminds me of the story of the little boy who was asked one day by his teacher: "Johnny, can you give me an example of the use of the word *cowhide*" "*Umph . . . yes, sir. Cowhide* is the thing which keeps the cow together!" Space, therefore, is "the thing which keeps things together!" Isn't that wonderfully clear! But I don't think so. To the theosophist, space is the cosmic All. Theosophists don't dare further to define it, because we cannot; it is infinitude — infinitude lasting through eternity; it is boundless, frontierless; it is the ALL — it is what we, using one of our technical terms, call *parabrahman* — the Boundless, beginningless, endless. Furthermore, infinity, which is the same as eternity — for they both are one conceptually — is not mere emptiness, but is a plenum: it is an infinite Fullness, and merely seems empty to us because our physical eyes cannot interpret the vibrations emanating and flowing forth from the

worlds and spheres and realms with which space, so called, is packed full, and which actually forms space itself.

The ancients frequently spoke of cosmic space as "the waters" of space. "The spirit of God," says the Hebrew Bible, "the spirit of the *elohim*, of the gods, moved on the waters of space" — an esoteric expression simply meaning the vast Plenum or Fullness packed full with cosmic divinities and the worlds or spheres or realms in which they dwell; and our scientists, the biggest ones among them at least, today are teaching essentially the same thing in very different words, as witness Sir Oliver Lodge, and Professor Eddington and Dr. Jeans, and the great American physicist, Millikan, who has so marvelously developed the theory of the cosmic rays.

They speak of space now as being the real fountain from which everything else comes, say that worlds and suns and stars are but interruptions, as it were, of the fullness of space. Now we theosophists would consider this last term "interruptions" as wrong; we would say that any physical sphere or world is but a thickening or condensation of the substance with which space is filled — thickened and concreted around a heart, a central point. An ultramodern scientist, Dr. Sir James Jeans, is teaching essentially the same conception when he speaks of the nebulae which bestrew the violet dome of night as having at their hearts what he calls singular points, through which stream from another dimension (world, say theosophists) into this world, primal matter in its first physical stage or state; thus teaching in ultramodern scientific phraseology a tenet of the ancient wisdom-religion of mankind.

The singular points of Dr. Jeans theosophists call laya-centers — and it is an old teaching among us, ancient, archaic. Let me tell you something more: every globe that you see in space has as its

center, its heart, just such a singular point, to adopt the language of Jeans, the English astronomical physicist; and through this center of each such globe come into that globe the streams of entities, the river of living things, by which that globe is inhabited, all of them on their evolutionary pathway. They then enter into the atmosphere of any such globe, such as our earth, and find, if they be human entities, their habitats in the bodies of little children; and similarly so is it the case with the beasts and the vegetables, as well as the atomic entities of the mineral kingdom.

There are no solutions of continuity in space, either in inner and invisible space or in outward and visible space, my Brothers. The various ranges or planes or steps of the hierarchical ladder that I have spoken of melt, fade, into each other. There are no sharp breaks between any two of them. Theosophists talk of planes, but this is a mere word used in an attempt to communicate our thought easily to those who have not studied theosophy. The physical world grades off into the astral world, which grades off again into a world higher than it, the world which is superior to the astral world; and so it continues throughout the series of hierarchical steps which compose a universe such as our universe. Remember also that the boundless All is filled full with universes, some so much greater than ours that the utmost reach of our imagination cannot conceive of them.

The anatomy of space, of the world, is really the structure of the universe — a vast and self-contained organic entity filled with life, or more accurately lives, from the highest called the gods down to the least evolved which we humans call atoms, all combining to form an endless chain or hierarchy of living entities. You cannot leave the universe. Think what that means! You are at home in it vast — spaces are your home, indeed endless space is your spiritual habitat.

The powers that are locked up in you, of which you are incognizant, express themselves in you as inherent powers and faculties, such as intuition, understanding, intellect, love, compassion, forgiveness: all these and many others are in you and can be developed amazingly. The powers that you have as yet unevolved in you are very great and wonderful, and they are powers that usually you don't know anything about because the ordinary man has not evolved to the point where these powers are more than beginning very feebly to manifest themselves.

I hesitate to use certain convenient words freely, because these words have been so misused; but nevertheless I will now refer to a few: spiritual clairvoyance, spiritual clairaudience, power to make rain, power to see into the past and into the future, power to penetrate with your consciousness self-consciously into the very abysses of the atom on the one hand, and into the abysses of the spaces of our solar system on the other hand, and be at home and familiar there. Ah! you men don't know what you have locked up within you! You are bartering all the best in you for a mess of pottage! Self-satisfaction in the small and paltry things of physical existence blinds you and prevents your seeing with the vision of the spiritual eye. And so many men are wasting time in chasing the shadows and phantasms of material existence, mistaking these phantasms for the realities of life.

Immortal gods! I wonder how many of you have felt the stirring of some unwonted and strange consciousness within you — intuitions, intimations, of a new and grand developing faculty! "Know ye not that ye are the temple of the divine and that the very spirit of the divine dwelleth in you?" Don't you see that this word of truth from the Christian scripture means that each one of you is rooted in the divine part of the universe, in the higher part of the invisible spheres, in that part which is pure consciousness

and which men in their awful ignorance speak of as God and give to it a personal pronoun He, thus making it an exaggerated copy of their own physical apparatus of being?

You can ascend, if you will and if you are taught how to do it (and you can be taught how), along the stairway of your inner being, going constantly higher and more and more inwards, till you reach the very summit, the acme, the top, the flower, of the hierarchy of the cosmos of which you are children and thus partake of the very fountain of life and light and understanding — which is but another way of saying becoming at one with the spiritual universe. What a picture!

These, therefore, are some of the teachings of theosophy. You see how this picture of the structure of the world, consisting as it does of endless series of steps, of grades, gives you the key to wondrous mysteries. It also means that the following of this pathway inwards brings you ever more fully into the inner worlds, into the inner spheres, ever more and more closely to the spiritual roots of things. It is this wonderful pathway which is the evolutionary pathway that all entities follow, leading them into the causal elements and worlds, until finally the pilgrim returns as a fully evolved and self-conscious god — which you are even now in the heart of the heart of your inner being — to that divine spiritual sun of which you are immortal rays.

What a sublime destiny for men and for all things! Remember that men are merely one family of the vast host of evolving entities with which the universe is filled: gods above us, and we shall become gods; beasts below us who shall in time become men or at least humans; vegetation, the plants below the beasts, who will in time blossom forth as beasts; and the atoms, the chemical elements below the plants, which atomic elementals likewise are learning and evolving things on their upward



evolutionary journey. They too will in the distant aeons of the future become men and then become gods, a host of gods. And throughout endless eternity in the past, on all the worlds that have been and now are gone because they have lived and gone higher, this endless stream of advancing entities has been evolving; so that, as I have told you, the universe is filled full with gods, the evolved product of past eternities of growth.

Consider also the other direction of the evolutionary stream of lives: always new elemental beings coming into any one sphere and beginning their journey upwards with divinity as their destination, slowly preparing through the ages to attain self-conscious godhood for each, and destined, they too, to pass through the human stage. What a picture!

Give me the seer! Give me the thinker! Give me the man who can sense truth! I care not a snap of the fingers for the canons of the schools! Give me truth; and remember that essential truth is even now latent in the heart of each one of you. There you will find it, the most precious treasure that man can attain.

The universe is a vast and most wonderfully complex structure, yet so simply and shapely builded; its patterns are as clear, once you see the picture and understand it, as are the wonderful and delicate traceries of the snowflake on the pane of glass, so symmetrically and harmoniously builded.

When modern scientists talk of space, do they mean the same thing that you theosophists do when you use the phrase the spaces of space?

I don't think so, friends. But I will say, as I have said before this afternoon, that our greatest scientific researchers are coming with every ten-year period closer and closer to our archaic wisdom-religion; more and more are they drawing aside the veil

covering nature's recondite secrets; by their wonderful discoveries are they seeing ever more deeply into the heart of being. When the theosophist speaks of the spaces of space, he means what I have said to you this afternoon about the structure of the universe, referring especially to its invisible, interior realms and worlds.

I now turn to a somewhat different phase of my theme. You will get in life just what you want. Remember this, for it inshrines a profound teaching. If you want something, then long for it, work for it. You will get it in time. I pray that inspiration may be in your souls, so that you will place your goal of getting high; for if you long for the sty of the swine, if you desecrate your manhood, if you abandon your divine prerogative of free thinking and live on the mental husks that the "swine" do eat, ye shall go to the sty of the swine. This is a Christian figure of speech, but it conveys a profound truth. You will get in this and in the after-lives just what you have worked for, longed for, felt after — just what you thus builded yourselves to be. This is what theosophists call karma, *consequences*: "As ye sow, so will ye also reap." Build yourselves shapely and you shall reap shapeliness and beauty; build oppositely, build otherwise, and then may the immortal gods help you if they can! You yourselves are masters of your destiny: you have free will, power of choice, intelligence; you have divine faculties and powers just beginning to bloom within you. Use them properly and according to law, which means the symmetrical use according to the forces flowing from nature's heart, and then you will grow like the flowers and blossom into divinity. But misuse them and degrade them, and then down you will go, and here also you will get what you have made for yourselves — you will become what you have made yourselves to be. You will lie in the bed that you yourselves have made for yourselves. Such is the law of nature.

You are gods and can carve your own pathway; carve it then upwards. As you build so must you live in the house that you have builded. It behooves a man to think, and to take wise thought of what he thinks and feels and does, because by using his inherent powers and locked-up energies he will sow seeds of thought and emotion and he will reap, even as he has already reaped, what he sows — what he has in the past sowed into his being — as character. A glorious destiny awaits you if you follow the upward path; and I tell you that you have no time to lose in chasing the phantasms of the material world. Take them not for realities, for they are illusory and deceptive.

Is space substantial, or is it just mere emptiness? What is space, anyway?

I think that I have more or less fully answered this question today. Space is substantial; it is the cosmic fullness; it is everything; it is the ALL; space is infinitude; and the spaces of space are especially important to remember in this connection, for they are the inner worlds, the invisible worlds, the causal worlds, the roots of this outward world — which outward world is a mere garment, the mere skin, as it were, of the fruit; and the life of the fruit is in its seed.

Are human beings children of earth, or have they also links with the universe as a whole?

Yes, they have links with the universe as a whole; but why speak merely of links? You yourself are the universe. You cannot leave it; you are in it; you are its child; all that is in the universe is in you; and your present physical, exterior garment of flesh is merely one low phase of the infinite and eternal evolutionary journey that you are making. In future you will be gods; in past aeons you were atoms — life-atoms; and you are now merely bringing forth, unwrapping, unrolling, evolving in other words,

the faculties of space that were locked up in your interior and invisible parts.

Does the human soul reincarnate only on earth, or does it go to other planets?

So far as the *human* soul is concerned, it has rebirth only on this earth; but so far as another part of the inner constitution of man is concerned, this other part which we call the monad follows indeed a most wonderful adventure — mystical, wondrous, marvelous, almost indescribable; for it follows a pathway from planet to planet and from planet to the portals of Father Sun, before it retraces its journey earthwards. But the human soul as such, that feeble and unevolved entity, is a production of the higher part of man's constitution working together with his earth-surroundings, and therefore in one sense of the word the mere human soul is a child of earth.

Is it advantageous to reincarnate quickly, or is it more advantageous to the evolving soul to have a longer rest period between our births on earth?

This is such a simple question that I marvel a bit that any student of theosophy could ask it, and the questioner seems to be a theosophical student. Is it advantageous to a man to have very little sleep, or is it more advantageous to a man to sleep overmuch? Isn't the answer to the question obvious? The period of rest between earth-life and earth-life is a period of bliss, of sweet and inexpressibly beautiful dreaming, of rest and repose, of peace, of quiet. The human soul needs it badly; for what man or woman, my Brothers, can say "My life is a life of utter happiness"? Life on our material sphere, for almost all human beings, is a hard one, containing much pain, containing much sorrow and heartache, with much of disappointment and of thwarted hope. Alas! men help each other so slightly; but unfortunately such is

life on earth at the present time, in the present material phase of our existence; and the poor human soul needs its rest period, its period of consolation and solace and bliss and rest and peace. Therefore the answer to the question is that since Mother Nature cares for these things so very beautifully, it is much the best to leave it in her hands and not to try psychical experiments. Don't you think so? The soul must have sweet rest just as the body must have repose when it lays itself down to sleep in bed.

I may say in further answer to this last question that it is perhaps better for the human soul to have as long a rest period in the *Devachan*, as theosophists call it, in this state of bliss, as is possible. This *Devachan* is a time not merely of rest, as I have described it, but also of assimilation and of digestion of the experiences of the last life; and some of our experiences are very difficult to digest! I think that if men were more kindly to each other, a little gentler, a little more thoughtful, how much easier and how much better our common life would be. It really is easier to act in that way. It does seem to me that when I see a man do an unkindly act, or a woman so act, they are doing something which is repulsive in its ugliness. It is not beautiful to look at. A mean act is an abominable thing to observe; and a really fine, self-forgetful, high-minded, and noble action — a man rising above circumstances in self-forgetful action — is a beautiful thing to see. Where is the normal human heart that does not warm towards such a man? We instinctively feel the hero in him; and precisely where the difficulties are great, there does our admiration grow the more.

I shall now close our study together for this afternoon; but I desire to have a few words in private with you before I leave you. And when I say in private, I have in mind the figure of speech of the Christian writing which I give the sense of in the following words: "Go thou into thine inner chamber and there commune in

the silence with your inner god." I want to appeal to this living inner chamber in each one of you — to the heart of the heart of you, to the soul of the soul of you, to your inmost, to that strange chamber temple within you, wherein, if you listen carefully, you can hear the whisperings of divinity, of the divinity which fills that chamber full, for it is your own inner god. O my Brothers, enter into this chamber in your heart of hearts. Become one with your self, your divine self, the god within you!

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[Vol 2, No 15](#)  
[Contents](#)

**Second Series: No. 15 (December 15, 1930)**

**THE SECRET PHYSIOLOGY OF THE WORLD**

(Lecture delivered October 19, 1930)

CONTENTS: The term physiology as used by the Greeks. — The universe an organic entity. — "So many men on earth, so many gods in heaven." — The injunctions of the Delphic Oracle. — An understanding of the phrase "the spaces of space. — Energy or energies? — Passing the Gates of Death with a vision. — Truth is the heritage of all men. — The golden chain of the teachers of mankind. — Ultimately you are your own highest teacher. Thus speaks the true teacher. — Are the operations of the universe haphazard? — Henry Drummond and his *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*. — What are natural "laws"? — The illusions of the lower mind. — The spiritual ties of union in the universe. What are they really? — The Sparks of Eternity. — The island-universes of the ultramodern astronomers. — The encourager within your own heart. Trust it! Follow it! Be it!

The theme, friends, which I am going to talk about this afternoon, is entitled "The Secret Physiology of the World," using this word physiology in the sense of the ancient Greeks, as meaning the indwelling multitudes of lives which infill and inspire, which invigorate and endow, the universe with all that it contains and is — not merely the physical universe which our imperfect senses give us some impression of, but more particularly the inner universe — the spiritual universe of which our physical universe is but the outermost garment or veil. Physiology as thus understood means the science and the study of the vital powers and functions of the universe, just as physiology properly

understood in its human application means the study of the vital powers and functions of the human vehicle, the human body.

The universe is an organic entity, filled full with living beings, cosmic spirits, dhyān-chohans as theosophists say — call them by what name you will — and it is the manifestations and workings of these entities dwelling behind the veil of the outward seeming which produce the marvelous variety that we see around us everywhere and which astound our intellect and bewilder our understanding. So many men on earth, so many gods in heaven! Each human being is but the outermost expression of a divine entity, of an inner god, of a spiritual-divine being of which the human expression is an imperfect and feeble reflection — a faint and imperfect reproduction in human form of the spiritual powers within. So many men on earth, so many gods in the inner worlds.

This is the root-thought which was in the minds of all the great seers and sages of the ancient times when they taught their disciples, their pupils, their followers: Look within, O Man! For in thee lie all the mysteries of the universe! Seek to fathom thine own unfathomable essence, for that unfathomable essence is boundless space! Follow the pathway of thy spiritual self leading ever more within; and then all truth and wisdom, all that there is to know, and compassion and infinite impersonal love, will be thine! "Man, know thyself!" was the profound injunction of the Delphic Oracle.

Why? Because man is a microcosm, a little world, embracing within the compass of his whole constitution (not in the compass of his physical body or in that of his mere mind, but in the compass of his entire constitution) all the energies, powers, faculties, forces — everything in fact that boundless space contains. He is a child of the Universe, and therefore is



inseparable therefrom. Consequently, everything that is in boundless infinitude is in man, either in potency or in activity. You know doubtless what the old Hindu philosophers taught. They asked the question: "*Kas twam asi*" "Who art thou?" And the right answer came: "*Parabrahma*," "the Boundless."

In these words you have a hint of what is meant by the secret physiology of the world, using the word world in the sense of the boundless universe. That universe is filled full with spiritual beings, with ethereal beings, with astral beings, each class of such entities dwelling within its own appropriate sphere, each on its own appropriate plane; and each class of such entities having bodies — vehicles, garments, veils — fitted to, appropriate for, each such sphere or plane or world, just as we human beings on earth have bodies fitted to, and appropriate for, life here.

On last Sunday afternoon I tried to call your attention, friends, to what I call the Structure of the universe — the secret structure of the universe — showing how it consisted of hierarchies upon hierarchies of varying grades and of varying stages of ethereality, and all included and encompassed by, and filled full with, the life of a super-hierarchy, at the head of which super-hierarchy was a cosmic hierarch; and I tried to show furthermore that these aggregates of hierarchies are innumerable in boundless space; that they are incomputable, that they cannot be counted; that they bestrew the spaces of space like cosmic gems, like sparks of the indwelling spiritual fire; for space *per se* has no beginning and it has no ending.

When I speak of space I mean not only the extension of the physical universe, which is really but one plane, one world, one sphere; I mean by the spaces of space more particularly the inner worlds — astral, ethereal, others more ethereal, and then still more ethereal worlds, then spiritual worlds, then worlds divine.

Do we here reach an end? No. There are no endings of the cosmic structure anywhere except relative endings. The super-hierarchy that I have spoken of contains all the hierarchical aggregates that I have just briefly described, but it in its turn is attached, linked to, and interblended and interwoven with another still higher and grander cosmic hierarchy, thus beginning a new series of grades or steps or planes or spheres or worlds, stretching both "upwards" and "downwards" — and ever farther inwards.

These boundless spaces of space, my Brothers, are your home. You are all children of eternity, sons of infinitude; for the inmost of the inmost of you is beginningless; and the inmost of the inmost of you is therefore deathless. Show me where a thing begins, and I will show you a form of illusion, temporary, unenduring. Everything that has a beginning and an ending is a thing with form and shape, and therefore has neither permanency nor does it last. But do you imagine for an instant, my Brothers, that I am at present talking to you merely about physical things having shape? Show me where intelligence begins, where love begins and ends; where electricity begins, where even physical matter begins or ends; and still more so where spirit has its beginning and its finish and beyond which there is naught. These observations exemplify what I mean by the phrase "spaces of space." Please get this thought clearly in your minds: the spaces of space.

Now, what is the physiology of the spaces of space? What produces the vital functions, the vital powers, which indwell in these spaces of space, and which in the physical world produce the astounding variety that we see all around us: which produce the stellar host and all the circling orbs; produce here on earth every tiniest atom as it sings its way along its evolutionary path through life after life after life? It is energy — energies say theosophists; it is force — forces say theosophists; it is soul —

souls say theosophists; it is cosmic spirit — cosmic spirits say theosophists; and I call these cosmic spirits by the good old name gods — existing in hierarchies of gods, supergods, gods still higher; and in the other direction, demigods, heroes (to follow the Greek names for this ladder of life), then men on earth, then the beasts, then the plants, then the mineral kingdom, and those three kingdoms of the elementals — as theosophists call these elemental entities — which live beyond, and on, and within the last-named kingdom.

The world is filled full with energies, with forces, each one of them endowed with or, more accurately speaking, possessing by intrinsic right, its portion of intelligence, of will, and of consciousness. Can you limit the ranges of these three within the encompassing material substance of man's brain cells and say that they exist only there? What a lunatic idea! Were it so, how account for their existence there alone? How explain it? Men are conscious: men have wills: men have intelligence: simply because they are particles of a universe from which they are inseparable, and from which they draw all that they have and are. They are essentially that universe; they are merely one host of the multitudes of other beings expressing these inner faculties, these inner powers — the powers and energies of these inner and invisible worlds. So many men on earth, so many gods in heaven — in the inner worlds.

Indeed, men with every breath they draw, with every movement they make as they walk, as they work, pass through, literally, the dwellings, the entities, it may be the rivers, the woods, the oceans, the lakes, of the world just above ourselves in ethereality. We humans have no conscious cognizance of it. But do you think that our physical world is the only inhabited world in boundless infinitude? Do you think that it is the standard by which to judge the possibilities of boundless infinitude? What a lunatic idea! It is

a remnant of the old idea that the earth, *our* earth, our little earth, is the center of the universe created especially by God for man's habitat and that all the rest of boundless space, even physical space, is merely an embroidered decoration in the starry dome for the delectation and thoughtful meditation of man! Keep your medieval ideas, if you will; but to me, give me the instincts of my spirit! Give me those things which the inner eye, visioning, tells me I should follow, for it is these that I believe in and trust in; for I follow the promptings of the spirit within me and this enables me to see, and what I see, you can see it too.

Truth is for all men. All men have a power within them which can be self-consciously attained only by each man for himself. This is a power of consciousness; and as ye open yourself to this consciousness and pass the threshold of it into a more secret chamber of your inner being, you will see there a beauty, a vision of truth; and then after a time you will see another portal and you will realize that that other portal that now you begin to see is also within you, within your consciousness; and you will move towards it and open the new door, giving entrance into a world still more beautiful, still more sublime; and thus you can follow the path of the spiritual self, of the essential selfhood, of the divine selfhood within, ever more and more inwards. And that path of beauty and peace and achievement is endless; for it is *you* and you are the universe — each one of you.

Men and women are here on earth as a human host merely as pilgrims putting up for a while at this inn of earth, for the space of this short human life; and when ye leave it on the great adventure which begins with the coming of what men call death and so foolishly fear, ye will pass onwards, following the pathways of the universe to other destinies, all regulated entirely by what you have made yourself to be, by what use you have made of your faculties and powers here on earth; for ye will reap

what ye have sown. Ye are the makers of yourself; ye are the carvers of your own destiny. Make it a noble one! Make it sublime!

Yes, we as a human host are passing through earth-life now merely as one phase of our long, long journey through eternity. We shall come back here when the cycle upon which we are at present moving turns in its spiral course, and then we shall reincarnate on earth again in human bodies. But after death — O Death, mother of peace and bliss; O Death, the opener, the one giving the vision — after death ye shall enter into the Circulations of the universe; and if ye have wrought your lives aright on earth, ye shall be cognizant of what ye see as ye pass along.

The physiology of the universe is the physiology of an organism, of a living entity; and it is the gods, and the demigods, the semigods, the heroes, the incarnate human beings, the supergods, and other entities too innumerable even to speak of because I doubt if you could understand me — it is these which provide the motivating impulses moving the universe from within and giving it its countless functions and vital powers.

Ye are children of boundless space, children of eternity. We men as children of the universe are a part of its vital forces; we take a collaborating part in the divine cosmic labor; and the gods are not only our brothers and our parents, but we men are gods in our inmost, and are even at the present time taking an active although an unself-conscious part in the grand physiological work of the universe.

Clear out of your minds the old superstitions of your religious books, the old teachings of the religions that have misled the spirit of men! Within lies truth, nowhere else! As the Lord Buddha taught: "Believe not at all what you are told merely because you are told it"; but if your conscience tells you that it is

true, then hold to it, and hold to it with all the strength of your soul. Truth lies within, not without; nevertheless, that without is not yet you self-consciously, but will be.

Man is at present a god manifesting on earth in human flesh as he follows his age-long evolutionary pathway. In future periods of time he will evolve forth from himself, unwrap from himself — which is what evolution means — bring out from himself, what he is within — latent powers, latent faculties, what are now seeds of energy and intelligence and understanding — and thus he will then walk the earth as a man-god. That is your destiny. This divinity is even now within you. It is the very core of the core of your being, the very heart of the heart of you. It is within you and also above you.

Know yourself! I can tell you that one of the first instructions given to the student is: learn to know yourself so that you may know the universe of which you are an inseparable part. You can know what is outside only by the touchstone of yourself. Where is your understanding? Within. Where is your intuition? Within. Where is the power which makes you, you? Within. Where is the individuality which produces you as a man and which produces other men as men? Within. Where is your intellect? Within. Can't you see that you have everything within? So many men on earth, so many gods in heaven! This is a theme for you to think over. Oh, if men only knew what they are within!

One very important rule of nature or natural law regulating not only the structure — interior and exterior — of the universe, but also its physiology, is this: where there is one man, or one god, or one world, or one plane, or one sphere — it matters not at all what the unit may be — there is a higher, there is one superior to it, one still loftier; consequently beyond or above, within if you like, this unit, there exists a still nobler range of consciousness: a

sphere, a plane, a realm, a world, still more sublime; and so on through an endless chain of succeeding degrees or stages, each one of these realms and worlds and spheres being populated, as our earth is, with beings — intelligent, sentient, conscious, feeling. Therefore men can learn and do learn from those more evolved than they are. This is nature's first law, because learning is growing. Do you see the need therefore of the existence of teachers?

Even in ordinary humanity some men are more advanced than others, and consequently know more, feel more, see more: they are the natural teachers of those who know and feel less than they. Even in ordinary humanity it is so. There are always steps, degrees, grades, on the ladder of life, and this rule prevails also in the existence of men. And much greater than ordinary men, much farther evolved, much more cognizant of the existence of the inner worlds, are the great sages and seers of the human race — the Buddhas, the Christs, the great thinkers and leaders of men.

So also it is in the inner worlds themselves. The gods inspire, guide, and are constantly engaged in work, in labor, connected with the vitalizing and inspiriting of their respective spheres. The demigods are their children; and the demigods teach the heroes, to use the Greek hierarchical names; and the heroes are the leaders and teachers of average men; and men in their turn more or less consciously guide and teach the beasts. Do you understand me, my Brothers?

Within you is the fountain of all wisdom, and ultimately you are your own highest teacher and the carver of your own destiny. That is one truth. Nevertheless there exist in the world great teachers, whose sublime labor it is to help their fellow men. There is no contradiction between these two statements. To me it is childish when I hear a man declare: "I am an incarnate god and

need no teacher."

Ah! true, if that human being so speaking were indeed manifesting the divine powers within him; but such a speech proves the paucity of his spirit and the limited range of his visioning power. It takes greatness to understand greatness; it takes the vision of the spirit to be able to teach others of that vision. Can a man whose heart has no conception of greatness and whose soul does not swell with impersonal love for his fellow beings — can such a man teach others? No. But there are men who are very great indeed because highly evolved and they are the natural-born teachers of their fellows. Teaching is a necessary thing, because teaching means growing and this is nature's law.

The first lesson that the real teacher will give to his disciples is not "Follow me," but "Man, as you are rooted in the spiritual universe and are inseparable from it, in yourself is the fountain of all wisdom and light, of all peace and love, of all beauty and harmony. Follow this path to the Buddha within and above you. I," says the teacher, "will show you the way, for I have trodden it. I know the way." And the teacher gathers his pupils together as the bird will gather her young under her wings. He protects them, he guides them, he stimulates them, he fills them with intimations of spiritual and intellectual beauty, he points out to them the path, as he leads them on the forwards-going path, on the path of evolution. Thus does a true teacher act.

Men don't know what they have within them — indescribable beauty, power to become self-consciously at one with all nature's being; for you yourself as individuals traverse, pass through, because your constitution is in tune with and at one with, all the inner spheres: the realms and the worlds which we see not and feel not; and yet in some mystic and unexplainable way we sense that these surround us and permeate us. In every man's heart —



or shall I say his soul, or shall I say his mind? — there is a feeling of his oneness with all that is, and that all things are his, for he is they; that there are no insurmountable barriers beyond which he cannot pass; that boundless infinitude is his home, and that with every step that he takes forwards and inwards, he enters into more intimate associations with other classes of spiritual beings.

My first question, friends, is the following:

Are the operations that take place in the world and in the universe generally, haphazard, or are they consistent and purposive — having a purpose?

They are the latter, of course. Will you tell me, please, how the universe can be a lunatic universe? Do you see any signs of lunacy in it? How can it be haphazard? How can it be a merely fortuitous occurrence and running by chance? Where do you see in it any signs whatsoever of haphazard or fortuitous occurrences? On the contrary, everywhere prevails rigid law, so called: inflexible consecutiveness of movement from cause to effect, everything bound together in unbreakable bonds, and all betraying, especially to the inner seeing eye, a majestic plan, a sublime purpose. Is this therefore a lunatic universe? It seems to me that any thoughtful and really observant man who would free his mind from prejudices of merely human theory will have his answer written large around him and especially so within himself.

The theosophical philosophy teaches something diametrically contrary to this supposed idea of haphazard or fortuitous action. It teaches a universe which is an ensouled organism as man's body is ensouled; the ensouling energy, however, being rather a vast aggregate of consciousnesses comprising will and intelligence working all together as a harmonious organic unity, and the results of their operations which seem so inscrutable to

the unenlightened and uninstructed brain-mind of man, are the marvelous symmetry and harmony in the so-called laws which are the first thing that strike the thoughtful mind in studying the universe around us. Man himself is but one host of this incomprehensibly vast aggregate of other consciousnesses. If you are interested in a more detailed answer to this question, I refer you to other lectures which I have given here in this Temple of Peace, and these lectures you will find printed in the present series of pamphlets called *Questions We All Ask*.

Question Two:

Are the different parts of the solar system connected with each other by other than physical laws, or is gravitational attraction the only bond among them?

Some years ago there was written an interesting book by a Scottish author called Henry Drummond. This book was entitled *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*. I was a youth at the time when I read this book, and I said to myself even then: "It is a clever work; but why in the name of all that is holy didn't the author entitle it *Spiritual Law in the Natural World*" -- meaning by the term natural world what theosophists call the physical world. These so-called laws of nature which are talked so much about and which no one of the users of the term really understands, are merely the reflections in this physical world of spiritual energies and powers belonging to the entities of the inner and invisible spheres and realms, expressing themselves here. This physical universe, it should be remembered, is not the standard by which to gage infinity. Our physical universe is only one expression, one plane, one world, one sphere, of the spaces of space; and what men call the laws of the physical universe which surrounds us are merely the reflections, the expressions here, of the ethereal and spiritual vitalities and functions of the invisible and

indwelling divinities which thus make up what we may truly call the physiology of the universe. The title of the book by the Scottish author that I have named is what the ancient Greeks would have called a *hysteron proteron*, which I may anglicize by translating this phrase as 'the cart before the horse.'

But, do you see, at the time when this Scottish author wrote, men had come to a state of mind in which they had lost all faith in anything that they could not see or could not touch or could not hear or smell or taste — thus pinning their faith to the most deceptive things that men know, the reports of our physical senses. These physical senses are indeed the most deceiving organs that men have, valuable in their way as they certainly are; while, on the other hand, the most reliable and convincingly working elements of the human constitution were virtually lost sight of: intuition, understanding, freedom from brain-mind prejudices and fads; and worst of all there was a turning away from those finer spiritual senses, whether dwelling in brain or heart or both, which are whispering, whispering, whispering, intimations of truth all the time to him who has the hearing ear.

I pity, I pity indeed, the man or woman belonging to the class that the ancient Greek philosopher, Pythagoras, called the living dead — people living in the body indeed but practically dead to the voice of their indwelling spirit; who cannot feel instinctively and see intuitively that the great things are the things which belong to the inner life of man, and not at all to the physical senses.

Let me try briefly to illustrate this. A man returns home at night. He approaches his gate. He starts aside. "A serpent," he exclaims, "coiled in my path." But then he looks again, and he finds that the supposed serpent is but a coil of rope. Perhaps the same man approaching his house at eventide saw running over the grass of the hill in front of him "a rabbit with horns" as it seemed to him;

and he turns home and tells his family of "a rabbit with horns that I have seen this eventide." What he really saw were the long ears of the rabbit; but to him at the time they seemed to be horns. The supposed serpent in the path and the supposed horns of the hare were as unreal and non-existent as is the hair on an egg, but for the time being he was persuaded that he saw things which existed. It is thus that our minds are deceived, and we often hold to these delusions produced by our senses as being true, and we allow our judgment thereafter to be swayed by these illusions. These examples of illusion are drawn from the ancient Hindu writings concerning the nature of maya, illusion. It is our senses and the lower mind cooperating which produce illusion in our consciousness.

Listen, my friends: there is in each one of you an infallible guide, a touchstone of truth. It is yourself, your spiritual self, of which your animal or merely human self is a feeble and often deluding reflection. I appeal to my audience every time when I stand on this platform and speak, on every Sunday afternoon, to try to become at one with this spiritual self within you, for it is your inner god. There lie truth and wisdom and understanding and ineffable peace.

It is of course true that gravitational attraction is one bond uniting the various bodies of our solar system. There are also electrical and magnetic bonds, of course. But I can tell you that among the different members of the solar system, and similarly so as regards the other solar systems comprising our own home-universe — which is encompassed within the encircling zone of the galaxy, the Milky Way — there are other inner bonds or ties of union of many, many, many kinds: divine bonds, spiritual bonds, ethereal bonds — in fact, all the bonds of the inner and invisible worlds and realms and spheres. And it is these inner worlds and realms and spheres which compose the real universe

of which our physical universe exists merely as one plane or realm or sphere.

The very bonds of union that hold the solar systems of the various suns in systematic place, in order; the very bonds of union which hold our planets in their orbits as they cycle around their primary, our own day-star; the very bonds of union which keep the different solar systems of the galaxy combined together as our own home-universe: are just these invisible and spiritual-ethereal energies or forces of titanic power working in the invisible realms of universal invisible nature. Do you ask what they really are, these inner and invisible and governing energies and forces? I will tell you: they are the vitalities and wills and consciousnesses of cosmic entities all working harmoniously and consistently and continually together, in just the same way as man's physical body is kept to its shape and holds its individual form by his own vital and volitional and conscious essences. All the innumerable hosts of life-atoms which compose even man's physical frame are held together as a unity in the grip of the vitality and will and consciousness of the man, for he, the man, is the hierarch of his hierarchy, which last is the structure and fabric of his inner constitution. In just the same way are the invisible and interior worlds held together by, bound together by, encompassed by, and swimming in the ocean of the vitality and will and consciousness of the supreme hierarch of our own cosmic hierarchy.

When I say supreme hierarch, my Brothers, please remember very clearly that I have already told you in other lectures that these cosmic hierarchies are countless in number; they are innumerable; they fill infinitude full; and in our own theosophical phraseology, we call this countless host of stars with all their inner constitutional elements and energies by the beautiful name "the Sparks of Eternity." It is the vitality and will and consciousness, therefore, of the encompassing divine being

which includes within its constitution all that our universe is — both the inner and the outer parts of our universe; and it is this cosmic vitality, this cosmic will, this cosmic consciousness composing this encompassing divinity, which hold all things in order in the universe, which gives them place and retains them in harmonious adjustment, and which give us the beauty and the peace and the law so called which are so evident in the cosmic spaces.

The other universes that our ultramodern astronomers are beginning to tell us about, and which they call island-universes outside the bounds of our own galactic system, we may look upon as being a cellular aggregate — each such island-universe representing what we may call the Cosmic Cell in the body-aggregate of a cosmic super-hierarchy. A wondrous conception is this, enchanting the thought, elevating the understanding, and quickening our imagination as we ponder over the matter. Each such island-universe is a cosmic cell included in the encompassing vital individuality of this cosmic super-divinity. Paul of the Christians, who was an initiate, spoke truth when he remarked: "In it — such a divinity — we live, and move, and have our being." But just because boundless infinitude has no frontiers, has no beginning and no ending, therefore are these cosmic super-entities as numerous as, indeed vastly more numerous than, men are in their own human host.

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I regret that I have had to hold over for a number of Sundays some most interesting questions regarding man's reincarnations on earth. The short space of time still at my disposal will not permit me to answer them this afternoon. I will try to do so on another occasion; and next week on Sunday afternoon I hope to talk to you briefly and as best I may about the marvels of the

spiritual world which are the causes of the secret physiology of the universe, and likewise of the secret structure or anatomy of the universe. What a theme these three subjects of thought give to us, for our hours of quiet meditation: the pneumatics of space, the secret physiology of space, and the secret anatomy or structure of space!

Man in essence is a child of boundless infinitude, a god in human flesh feebly expressing the divine powers of his inner constitution, destined in the future to take his proper place on the azure seats of the gods in the council chambers of infinity! Man is a child of space, filled with powers which he understandeth not; no plaything, as he wrongly imagines, of the winds of chance, but truly the master of his destiny when once he understands and assumes his spiritual and essential rights and obligations. And do you know, my Brothers, that he cannot assume those rights until he knows his duties: for the quickest way by which to get one's rights is to be faithful to one's obligations, to one's duties. Do you know why? Because the performing of duties and obligations are spiritual and intellectual and moral exercises which make one strong.

A true man is a noble being. A true man is an inspiration: a child of eternity, destined to traverse eternity, so to speak, in the future, as a god, on his evolutionary way to passing into a super-god, then into a sublime hierarch, and thereafter going still higher. My Brothers, each one of you in the core of the core of your being is a divinity, which divinity is the source of all that makes you what you really are, the source of all that is worth while in your life. This inner divinity is the encourager in your heart, the stimulator of your soul; it is the one who gives you courage and peace, and who fills your heart with love, and your soul with understanding. Trust it! Follow it! Be it!

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Vol 2, No 16

Contents



**Second Series: No. 16 (December 22, 1930)**

**THE AZURE SEATS OF THE GODS**

(Lecture delivered October 26, 1930)

CONTENTS: Not the gods of the ancient mythologies. — Who are the gods? — From selfconscious god-sparks to self-conscious gods. — A mistake in early Christian thought. — From star to atom. — What are the azure seats of the gods? — The relation between men and gods. — The universe an endless ladder of life. — Our other selves, the gods. — Glimpses into the life of an atomic system. — The cosmic age of an atom. — Where do the gods dwell? — Mark Twain and his religion. — Extract from the biography of Mark Twain. — How account for the obvious imperfections in the universe? — Is true esoteric teaching ever given for a price? — The teacher's vow of personal poverty. — The basis of esoteric truth in The Theosophical Society. — You are an imbodyed flaming divinity!

On Sunday afternoon two weeks ago I spoke to you on a theme which I called 'The Secret Anatomy or Structure of the World, using the word world in the sense of universe, and on last Sunday afternoon I spoke to you on a somewhat similar theme which I called "The Secret Physiology of the World." In the first of these two lectures I tried to describe the structure and nature of the invisible and visible realms which the theosophist properly groups under the term universe, and in the second of these two lectures I attempted to portray for you a picture of the vital functions and powers inherent in the universe, and endeavored to show that these vital functions and powers were caused by and actually were the essences — comprising the intelligences and

will of a vast interblending and interlocking series of gods — existent in hierarchical systems; and this afternoon I am going to try to make another picture for you, mounting still higher along the ladder of life which forms the constitution of the universe; and my theme I have called "The Azure Seats of the Gods," comprising in this title what may otherwise be described as the pneumatology of the world — signifying by this term pneumatology a brief outline or sketch of the gods themselves, that is to say of the spiritual essences with which the universe is filled full: their origin, nature, and destiny.

I wonder, friends, what you think I may have in mind in beginning to talk to you upon my subject, "The Azure Seats of the Gods." Do you think I mean the gods of Greece and Rome, sitting in lofty Olympus on seats of azure marble? Or the gods of Hindustan, or the gods of the ancient Americas? No, I do not refer to the old pantheons of deities. But, nevertheless, I will say in passing that even those old pantheons were builded upon an ancient and esoteric wisdom which taught, under the guise of a public mythology, profound secrets of the structure and operations of the universe which surrounds us.

The entire human race has believed in gods, has believed in beings superior to men; the ancients all said that men are the children of these gods, and that from these superior beings, existent in the azure spaces, men draw all that in them is; and, furthermore, that men themselves, as children of the gods, are in their inmost essence divine beings linked forever with the boundless universe of which each human being, just as is the case with every other entity everywhere, is an inseparable part.

That is a sublime conception! It shows man's oneness with boundless infinitude. It shows us that out of the womb of the past comes the evolutionary life-stream, advancing slowly through the

ages with its innumerable hosts of growing, evolving, learning entities. It teaches us also that from unself-conscious god-sparks we become in time self-conscious gods, thereafter taking a self-conscious part in the cosmic labor. What a picture for our hours of quiet thought! How these ancient ideas dignify our humanity, ennoble our standing as men! How they inspirit our souls and inflame our minds with hope! For they show us clearly that, notwithstanding all our mistakes, notwithstanding the many, many times when we fall by the wayside, nevertheless always are we advancing steadily forwards — growing, learning, evolving! As I have so often told you before, evolution means the bringing out from within of what is latent within us.

We are essentially gods; we are divine beings in our inmost essence, children of the cosmic spirit which encompasseth us; inseparable therefrom, and growing from unself-conscious god-sparks — not yet self-consciously recognizing our unity, our oneness, our identity, with the cosmic life — into self-conscious realization of it. Even we as the human host — gods imbodyed in human flesh and but feebly expressing the divine forces within us — even we as the human host have our seats in the azure spaces of this earth-sphere.

One great mistake that the European peoples made after the downfall of Greece and Rome, from whose wisdom we inherited so greatly, was accepting the idea that mankind is distinct and separate from the universe in which mankind lives and moves and has its being. We are not separate, we in the universe are at one always, from eternity to eternity, with the boundless, encompassing life, which is our life — with the boundless encompassing intelligence which holds the stars in their courses and governs the movements of each tiniest atom. We are at one with the cosmic consciousness of which we are the offsprings.

Do you see what this implies and means? That all the boundless spaces of space are our home, our home! How vast a palace is therefore ours! How great a field for expansion! How sublime a destiny is ours! Therefore try to sense your oneness with the encompassing life, and live and be and grow and manifest through yourself what you have locked up within you. We are one with the universe — obviously, because we cannot leave it; its life is ours; its substances are ours; its energies are ours; its powers are ours; its forces are ours; its consciousness is ours; its destiny is ours. We are it. Every one of us is rooted therein — indeed, not only rooted therein, but verily it.

The azure seats of the gods, my Brothers, are the deathless selves within us. We are as deathless in our inmost as is the Boundless, for we are it; and it is only these composite bodies of atoms — borrowed each from others and all from each and each from all — these transitory and inadequate physical frames which can manifest but only in sorry measure the powers locked up within each one of us. Casting these away, we come to freedom, we come to a greater expansion of life, for then we enter into our own and exchange the mortal for the immortal: leave the personal for the impersonal, which is the deathless part of us; for we ourselves, each one in the inmost spiritual self abiding in the core of the core of us, are seated on the azure thrones — the azure seats of the gods — in each case, such azure throne being each god's own deathless essence, encompassed by the Boundless.

Is this difficult to understand? Nay, it is simple, easily comprehensible! Just open your hearts; forget your mental prejudices; forget misleading religious and scientific teachings of the past, both of which are moribund, dying if not dead, and come into your own! Be alive! Live! Be what is within you! Let the inwardly-living come out, and be true men! Then fear and horror and misery will pass from you as clothes outworn and unequal to

your grown stature. It is personality, which is limitation, which binds and cripples the spirit within. Free yourself from the imperfect and crippling personality and wander into the cosmic spaces! And verily, I say to you, take your seats — the azure thrones which belong to you as gods, as children of the universe, deathless in your inmost, as it is deathless in its inmost.

Remember that these azure seats are in each case the deathless spirit within you. You are seated in yourself; you are born from yourself; naught else brings you to birth. Your Self is your seat, your azure seat of power. For that self, as you follow it with the eye of the spirit ever more inwards into the inner worlds, is divine. You are all sons of the gods, who are beings greater than you now are: beings who have become gods from having been men, even as you, the present human host, will evolve forth the divinity within you, and hence in future cosmic aeons you will in your turns take your places as fully self-evolved cosmic deities. Assume then and even now the azure seats of power which are rightly yours and which exist in the boundless bosom of the spaces of space!

Yes, these cosmic spirits, which I call gods (it is as good a name as any other), these *dhyān-chohans*, if you like to use our own theosophical term — "Lords of Meditation" — were once men in far bygone aeons of cosmic time, in other universes which now have vanished and which gave place at their passing to their successors, at once their own children and yet reimpodiments of themselves. As man reimpodies himself in human flesh in life after life, so do the universes reimpody themselves as universes in cosmic aeon after cosmic aeon. Each such universe has its beginning, has its growth and flowering of power, has its decay, its passing, its death, its blissful rest; and then it comes forth again out of the womb of space and a new universe is thus born to enter upon a new cycle of evolutionary activity. And the

beings, the entities — hosts, incomputable multitudes of them — which filled those former universes with lives and intelligences and wills, and which were all beings having the same status as we men now have during one phase of our evolution, now have become gods, have evolved to be such; and we who are now men will blossom forth in future cosmic aeons as gods also.

When I speak of the spaces of space, and of the cosmic spaces, I mean more particularly the inner and invisible worlds, not merely the material extension of our physical universe; for our physical universe is but one section, as it were, one plane of the all-encompassing world-life; and above and beneath and around, in endless series, are the inner and invisible realms and spheres, each one filled as full with lives and energies and consciousness and wills as our own physical universe is.

Here on this earth we sense movement everywhere, and variety everywhere; and variety means individuality, it means endless hosts of processions of beings advancing forwards in all the grades of evolutionary progress. All are on their upward way, all are learning; those below us destined to pass through the human stage where we are now, and by that time we shall have left the human stage and shall have evolved forwards into human godhood or into godhood — not into *a* God, not into *one* God, but ourselves being *gods* and furnishing the motivating powers and vital functions which fill the universe full, so that it moves and expresses itself in ceaseless, all-various action, thus producing the universe that we see: the suns, the stars, the nebulae, the comets, the planets and the similar and minor hosts of entities that we know to exist even on our earth. The universe is an endless ladder of life!

This, in brief, was the esoteric teaching behind the ancient mythologies, the popular, degraded, and degenerate mythologies

of the ancient peoples; it was the mystery-teaching taught in the Mystery schools, where sages likewise taught the neophyte how to hasten his evolutionary pace, to quicken his progress, to evolve more rapidly. This teaching all centered around one fundamental rule of fact: forget yourself, if you will come into your self. Do you understand? The teaching of Jesus, the Syrian sage was exactly the same: "Give up thy life, if thou wouldst live." This means to give up the limited, personal, small, restricted self, and to live in the spiritual part of yourself, which is your real self, your spiritual self, your divine self, which is cosmic in its reaches and ranges of extension. In other words, it means to live as gods instead of as mere men — to live according to the god within you, which is not a god outside of you, but the god within you! When even the Christian spoke of men as being Sons of God, he uttered the same sublime idea; but alas, alas, the explanation of the idea had been lost!

O Brothers, to assume the azure seats of power is your future destiny. Some will do it more quickly than others, because their hearts are anhungered for truth and because already is stirring within them the resistless urge of almighty love: that love which breaks all bounds, which overleaps all barriers, because its very essence is cosmic; which causes us to forget ourselves and to live in the universal, to live in others and for others, for then when we have this conception and feel this urge, we realize that our brothers are we. What a sublime thought, and what a feeling of homecoming and of peace and of inexpressible rest does this teaching give to us!

The Delphic Oracle taught: *Gnothi seauton*, 'Know thyself!' For you, the self, the spiritual self, are essentially all that is; and the more you know of the spiritual self the more you enter into the very womb of cosmic being, the more you become what you are in your highest, what you are in your inmost; the more you

become self-consciously at one with divinity. Knowing your spiritual self, you know all things; you know all things with progressively increasing power and comprehension, because knowing your self means knowing the universe; for you are it and it is you; and this spiritual self, this wondrous marvel within, always incomprehensible because infinite — this self is for each one of you your own azure seat of power. Each one of you is sitting in his own azure seat with the universe beneath, above, around!

O my Brothers, do you understand this idea? It is so simple. Wash your minds clean of all the superstitions of the past! Try to understand this simple thought! It is a master key, a master-key opening all doors of wisdom and knowledge and power. Enter into the company of the gods, your other selves, so to speak, who have simply gone ahead of you in evolution, and that is why they are gods. We humans are trailing along the evolutionary pathway behind them; and behind us are trailing other hosts of beings, who even at present are beginning to look up to us as gods. Having this idea clearly in our minds, we clearly vision an endless procession of lives, each one of them destined in time to become a god, a cosmic spirit.

Do we not see the movements of the gods? Do we not hear them speak? Do we not see what they do? We do — but we recognize it not. Their existence is so vast and ours so small, their time periods are so great and ours so small, their spaces in which they live, filled with their vitalities and consciousness and wills, are so cosmically huge, that we with our limited perceptions know them not. That is all there is to it. Now look in the opposite direction into the life of an atomic system, and consider a moment what happens there. One only of our human seconds of time means, let us say, four quadrillion revolutions of an electron around its protonic sun-center — and this perhaps is the entire life cycle of



an atomic solar system! So, similarly, but in the other direction, one second of the time of the gods is to us a cosmic life period — the entire lifetime of our solar system. That is why we don't see them work; that is why we don't see them act; that is why we don't hear them speak: because they move in cosmic measures, and we cannot take it in. Our life is too small, too fretful, too fevered, too quick, too minute.

Perhaps the infinitesimal entities living on an electron revolving within an atom — let us say in one of the atoms composing my body — run through lifetime after lifetime after lifetime before I can even snap my finger; and that snap of the finger alone would be in time to such an atomic infinitesimal entity, short as it is to me and to you, a cosmic age. And to such an infinitesimal entity, my human consciousness — fretful and limited and small and human as it is compared with that of the gods — is a cosmic lifetime. Therefore am I to such an infinitesimal consciousness a *dhyān-chohan* as theosophists say, a "lord of meditation"; and such an infinitesimal atomic philosopher, perhaps calls me, with my small, human, fretful life, a lord of meditation, because it catches of my consciousness but an infinitesimal fraction during the time that it takes to snap my finger. Do you understand? The life period of such an infinitesimal consciousness is too small, too fretful, too fevered, too rapid, for it to take in even so quick an action as the snapping of a human's fingers.

The gods are; they live; it is their powers and energies, their vital functions, which form the physiology of the wonderful, mysterious, sublime universe in which we live and move and have our being and it is the incomprehensible love which fills their hearts, so to say, which we humans in our fevered existence sense dimly as the impersonal love in our own hearts.

Figure to yourself, if you like, a series of everlasting concentric

spheres of consciousness. You know of course what concentric spheres are — spheres within spheres, the greater including the less, but all having one common central point. Let us say that this central point is the deathless self. This deathless self begins its evolution, so far as any universe is concerned, as an unself-conscious god-spark, which in our symbolic figure is the center of the inmost of these concentric spheres. As this consciousness-center evolves and grows and learns and expands its consciousness little by little as the aeons pass, this center of self-consciousness expands to become at one with the next outermost of the concentric spheres; and in this next outermost sphere it therein lives for still other aeons as a still evolving or expanding consciousness. When it has finished its life course and learned all possible lessons there, through and by means of an expanding and growing understanding, it next reaches the third of the concentric spheres. Thus does this process of expanding consciousness continue until finally the consciousness-center reaches the sphere of consciousness which we humans call the human stage, and its then state of evolution as manifesting in a psycho-astral-physical vehicle we call man.

We are now as men through evolution expanding our understanding in what we may call the human ranges of consciousness; and this expansion of understanding will steadily continue until we shall have learned all the lessons that the human stage can teach to us, and then we shall work and function and have our being in the next wider concentric sphere of cosmic consciousness. And so do we continue ascending the ladder of life, or, in other words, passing over at long distant intervals of time to a larger concentric sphere until we finally reach divinity, implying the attainment of a consciousness including and enclosing a solar system. Does our evolution stop there? Not at all; for we shall continue our advance as self-

conscious entities continually to spheres still grander, so that our encompassing life-range will include numbers of solar systems.

Do you see, therefore, what this scheme of evolution means? It means that there are gods endlessly ahead of us, ever greater and more wonderful with each attainment of a wider range or sphere; and also that there are hosts, multitudes, of other consciousnesses trailing behind us in spheres of consciousness smaller than ours and through which we have passed. But each greater concentric sphere that is attained is the vitality, the consciousness, the will — the vital energy, the vital powers — of some cosmic entity who has preceded us, in whom all other smaller entities move and live and have their being. Just so do we now as humans live and move and have our being in the sphere of the vitality and consciousness and will of that one god or divinity who is just beyond or ahead of us; and that god in its turn lives in the vitality and consciousness and will of a super-god greater than it; and so on without break.

Examine the boundless spaces: there are no frontiers. Our vision halts; but where our vision halts, then thought leaps beyond our vision. Imagination in its turn overleaps thought; and at the outermost limits where imagination fails, the marvelous spiritual consciousness within us wings its flight beyond, and we instinctively recognize our intrinsic oneness with the Boundless.

Here let me introduce an appropriate question that has been sent in to me for answer.

In your lectures you talk a great deal about gods. Are there really such entities?

I have already told you about them and have tried briefly to explain who and what they are. If you don't like to accept what I have said, then what are you going to do? Are you going to be satisfied with the facile and meaningless answer "I don't know"?

Are you indeed? Not by a great deal! There is not living a man who is satisfied with the unsatisfactory answer "I don't know." There is an instinct in the human heart which whispers to every sane and normal man "You can know; for it is within yourself." Yes, the gods verily exist, and every intuitive and thoughtful man knows it perfectly well. He knows perfectly well that human intelligence and human consciousness and human will are not the only consciousness and intelligence and will in boundless space, in boundless time.

A similar question that I have been asked to answer by the same questioner is the following:

If so, what are they and where do they dwell?

They are what I have told you, and they dwell in the azure spaces of space — not merely in the physical universe, for that is not at all the idea, but in what are to us the invisible realms. Is your intelligence, is your love, is your spiritual power, is your will — are all these in your flesh and merely the products thereof? If so, how can men transfer their thoughts as constantly they do? How can so transitory and passing an aggregation of physical atoms as the physical body is produce the works of majesty and beauty and power which dignify and glorify human life? In your turn tell me how! The ancient wisdom today called theosophy teaches us that it is understanding that does all this; it is intellect, it is visioning, it is the creative power within us and working through the physical vehicle. The body is a mere changing form that dies, and that is not the same during two consecutive seconds of human time.

Think! Or, if you don't want to think, then be satisfied to repeat the rattletrap catch phrases of our fathers! Yes, the rattletrap scientific and religious catch phrases of our fathers that now are dead. The greatest ultramodern scientists today are beginning to teach what theosophists teach and have always taught: that mind

or consciousness is the fundamental essence of the universe, which theosophists say is not mind but minds, not consciousness but consciousnesses — in other words, gods! As between these ultramodern scientists and theosophists it seems to be largely a mere matter of phrasing: the idea apparently is the same.

And here is a third question from the same querent:

Do they live in the world as strangers, or are they integral parts of the universe?

They are integral parts of the universe. Without the gods the universe could not be. It is their life and will and consciousness which hold the universe together — together, and in order, and in place, and in harmony; and inversely it is also true to say that without the universe the gods could not be. They are fundamentally one. They are fundamentally the same, just as a man is. A man needs a body to work through, and that body in a sense is himself — his physical self: transitory, mortal, an atomic aggregate which passes, a mere changing shape. But is not that exactly what the universe is, physically speaking — transitory, mere shapes and forms of things, which come and go, when you take the cosmic view? Worlds come and go; but the universe as an entity lasteth forever, because the gods ensoul it.

I sometimes wonder what the religious feelings and beliefs may be of the kind friends who come here on Sunday afternoons. As I suppose you know, some men are afraid of their religion; others are ashamed of it; others think that they haven't any at all — and *that* asseveration I don't believe. Some people are like Mark Twain, who on his own testimony was scared stiff at his own religion. Perhaps you don't believe that statement? Well, I will read to you an extract from a letter that he once wrote to a member of this Society. This member asked him if he was a theosophist or interested in theosophy, and here, in part, is his

answer which I will read to you, written from a small place near Vienna, dated August 5, 1898. Here, then, is the extract from his reply to this theosophist:

No, I'm not leaning toward theosophy. I'm not leaning in any direction, I believe, but standing pretty straight in a petrified attitude. I have a religion, and a stubborn belief in it, but I have not found resemblances to it anywhere, and I shouldn't know how to label it if I should try. I have written it all out, but (between you and me) I dasn't stay in the same room with it during a thunderstorm. I shan't publish it — I've got better judgment. Yes, and more charity.

Sincerely yours, S. L. CLEMENS.

Perhaps he was wise in not publishing it. A man who, to use his own terms, "dasn't stay in the same room with" his religious beliefs during a thunderstorm, must be spiritually and mentally speaking in a rather precarious state of mind. Was he afraid of himself or afraid of his religious beliefs? The theosophist has no such fear. When the thunder rattles the windowpanes and the lightning flashes o'er land and sea, remember, my Brothers, that lightning and thunder are manifestations of the same life that is in you yourself. Understand it and love it and fear it not, for that love is you and you are it. Cast fear from your hearts, for fear is a delusion and a deceit and will unman you. Be great in the simplicity of your soul. Expand with the expanding love within you, and then fear will vanish. He who truly loves never fears.

I have here something else from Mark Twain, from his biography as published by Albert Bigelow Paine; and I desire to read this biographical extract to you, because it will neatly illustrate how people's religion sometimes makes them feel that they "dasn't stay in the same room with it during a thunderstorm." I think that Mark Twain himself wrote all of this. The extract as I have it is

entitled *Little Bessie Would Assist Providence*:

(It is dull, and I need wholesome excitements and distractions; so I will go lightly excursioning along the primrose path of theology.)

Little Bessie was nearly three years old. She was a good child, and not shallow, not frivolous, but meditative and thoughtful, and much given to thinking out the reasons of things and trying to make them harmonize with results. One day she said:

"Mama, why is there so much pain and sorrow and suffering? What is it all for?"

It was an easy question, and mama had no difficulty in answering it:

"It is for our good, my child. In His wisdom and mercy the Lord sends us these afflictions to discipline us and make us better."

"Is it *He* that sends them?"

"Yes."

"Does He send *all* of them, mama?"

"Yes, dear, all of them. None of them comes by accident; He alone sends them, and always out of love for us, and to make us better."

"Isn't it strange?"

"Strange? Why no, I have never thought of it in that way. I have never heard any one call it strange before. It has always seemed natural and right to me, and wise and most kindly and merciful."

"Who first thought of it like that, Mama? Was it you?"

"Oh no, child, I was taught it."

"Who taught you so, mama?"

"Why, really, I don't know — I can't remember. My mother, I suppose; or the preacher. But it's a thing that everybody knows."

"Well, anyway, it does seem strange. Did He give Billy Norris the typhus?"

"Yes."

"What for?"

"Why, to discipline him and make him good."

"But he died, mama, and so it couldn't make him good."

"Well, then, I suppose it was for some other reason. We know it was a good reason, whatever it was."

"What do you think it was, mama?"

"Oh, you ask too many questions! I think it was to discipline his parents."

"Well, then, it wasn't fair, mama. Why should *his* life be taken away for their sake, when he wasn't doing anything?"

"Oh, *I* don't know! I only know it was for a good and wise and merciful reason."

"What reason, mama?"

"I think — I think — well, it was a judgment; it was to punish them for some sin they had committed."

"But *he* was the one that was punished, mama. Was that right?"



"Certainly, certainly. He does nothing that isn't right and wise and merciful. You can't understand these things now, dear, but when you are grown up you will understand them, and then you will see that they are just and wise."

After a pause: "Did He make the roof fall in on the stranger that was trying to save the crippled old woman from the fire, mama?"

"Yes, my child, *Wait!* Don't ask me why, because I don't know. I only know it was to discipline some one, or be a judgment upon somebody, or to show His power."

"That drunken man that stuck a pitchfork into Mrs. Welch's baby when — "

"Never mind about it, you needn't go into particulars; it was to discipline the child — *that* much is certain, anyway."

"Mama, Mr. Burgess said in his sermon that billions of little creatures are sent into us to give us cholera, and typhoid, and lockjaw, and more than a thousand other sicknesses and — mama, does He send them?"

"Oh, certainly, child, certainly. Of course."

"What for?"

"Oh, to *discipline* us! Haven't I told you so, over and over again?"

"It's awful cruel, mama! And silly! and if I — "

"Hush, oh, *hush!* Do you want to bring the lightning?"

"You know the lightning *did* come last week, mama, and struck the new church, and burnt it down. Was it to discipline the church?"

(Wearily) "Oh, I suppose so."

"But it killed a hog that wasn't doing anything. Was it to discipline the hog, mama?"

"Dear child, don't you want to run out and play a while? If you would like to — "

"Mama, only think! Mr. Hollister says there isn't a bird, or fish, or reptile, or any other animal that hasn't got an enemy that Providence has sent to bite it and chase it and pester it and kill it and suck its blood and discipline it and make it good and religious. Is that true, mother — because if it is true why did Mr. Hollister laugh at it?"

"That Hollister is a scandalous person, and I don't want you to listen to anything he says."

"Why, mama, he is very interesting, and *I* think he tries to be good. He says the wasps catch spiders and cram them down into their nests in the ground — *alive*, mama! — and there they live and suffer days and days and days, and the hungry little wasps chewing their legs and gnawing into their bellies all the time, to make them good and religious and praise God for His infinite mercies. *I* think Mr. Hollister is just lovely, and ever so kind; for when I asked him if *he* would treat a spider like that he said he hoped to be damned if he would; and then he — *Dear* mama, have you fainted! I will run and bring help! Now *this* comes of staying in town this hot weather."

Now, that is the kind of religion that I do not believe in. Can you blame me? The bewildering variety that we see in the universe everywhere around us — the imperfections that we see everywhere, such as exist in us humans, or in the beasts, or in the plants, yea, even in the demigods and gods — for although they are divine they are imperfect as compared with boundless

infinite — these very imperfections, this infinite variety, that we see, prove the existence in the universe of hosts, multitudes, endless legions of growing, therefore imperfect, and evolving entities, which in their incomprehensible aggregate fill the universe full, and indeed are that universe. Don't you see what I mean? Nature's imperfections, so called, are a proof of the existence, activities, and operations in nature of multitudes of imperfect creatures, however high or however low they may be, just as man's imperfect handiworks are proofs of the imperfect thoughts that he thinks, and all the imperfect emotions he allows to sway his heart, as expressed in the acts for ill and for weal which he does.

The "good" and the "evil" in the world are a proof of imperfection, and therefore are a proof of the actual existence of imperfect but nevertheless evolving and growing hosts of beings like us humans. There, too, to the logical mind, when you think it over, is a perfect proof that the universe is filled full with thinking, sentient, conscious, living, willing, entities, in all grades, at all stages, and in all degrees of growth. Nature is the standing proof of this. On the other hand, the beauty that surrounds us, the marvelous harmony and symmetry of which we are conscious, the love which fills our breasts, the compassion and the pity which sway our souls, are proofs also of the striving of the divine flame within universal nature and therefore within us humans who are some of nature's children; and by these noble faculties of our being we recognize again our fundamental oneness with all that is.

Yes, my Brothers, we too are gods, imbodyed gods; and in time to come we shall take our seats self-consciously — those azure seats in the council chambers of infinitude — and there we shall sit and confabulate with the gods, our peers; and our vitality, our psycho-electric vitality and magnetism, will fill a certain portion of the

spaces of space, and in that vital essence of ours will live and move and have their being other hosts and armies of entities, inferior to us, even as and just exactly as we humans live and move and have our being in the vital magnetism of divine beings who have preceded us on the evolutionary path.

Here are two more questions that I promised I would answer this afternoon:

I am greatly interested to learn that you have an esoteric school where you give private advanced instruction. I am an earnest student of truth, but I cannot afford high fees. I once took a course in psychism which cost me fifty dollars, and learned nothing that I could not have gotten out of books. Do you give real secret instruction, and is the price per lesson or a lump sum for a complete course?

Merciful heavens! If the time should ever come when I as a theosophical teacher could fall so low as to take one penny for teaching a spiritual truth, I pray the gods immortal that I may then at once breathe my last and be annihilated utterly. But such a fate is impossible for any true theosophical teacher. Never a penny is taken in payment by any true teacher of theosophical truths. Truth is your right as human beings. You are as entitled to it as I or as any other. Therefore my answer is: Not one cent is ever taken for teaching the realities of the universe. I had liefer starve in the gutter, as H. P. Blavatsky said, than receive a penny in payment for teaching holy facts of esoteric occultism. I don't mean these remarks unkindly as regards those other people who do teach for a price; I am not desirous of casting mud upon them, indeed, I am not alluding to them. This question has been asked me and I am answering it, and I repeat: No true spiritual teacher ever charges one cent for his teachings. I have been sent to teach, and to this duty of teaching I have devoted my life.

Theosophists have indeed an Esoteric School where the more advanced instruction is given; but it is not given by favor nor is it ever boughten. Only when, due to my own training, my Brothers, I feel that I can entrust this holy treasure to another human heart, dare I pass it on; and then it is passed on freely. Yet I have no right to judge any other's ability or capacity in an offhand manner. Anyone has a right to apply to me. Ask, knock, and by the ancient law I am bound to open the doors. But by those same ancient laws, I am equally bound carefully to study, carefully to watch, the minds and hearts of applicants, and if the heart be not pure and the motive not good, with great kindness and gentleness the unprepared ones are allowed simply to leave us with such help as they may have received, and there our official relationship ends.

But to those who have been tested, who have been tried and found worthy, whose hearts have opened, whose minds have been lighted with the divine flame, they receive — and freely. I cannot speak at length of these matters in a public audience, as you will readily understand; but I have given you in hints the whole truth. There is a deep wisdom to be had, deeper even than the marvelous teachings which we give from our platforms and which you will find printed in our books.

But in order to receive this esoteric teaching, this deeper teaching, you must at least have studied somewhat, or at any rate be very intuitive: your hearts must have opened. This teaching is a passing on of light from mind to mind, from heart to heart. It is an opening of the doors within you, and when this happens then you yourself *see*. It is not for me to judge those who apply. I have no right to keep anyone out whose application is primarily honest. All I can do is to follow with great strictness and with rigid exactitude the straight and narrow line of action that the ages have laid down as the path of the teacher. That is all I can do.

But to those who come to me with open heart and eager mind, and whose spiritual perception is already somewhat unveiled, to them I say: "Come, my Brothers, come! The feast is spread on the Master's table. I can show you the way to travel in order to find that self, of which I have spoken, which leadeth you forever more and more inwards into the very heart of the universe; I can show you the way and how to put your feet upon that way, which is your self. I can show you how to find yourself, your divine self; but you yourself must tread that path, in other words develop your own spiritual selfhood." Isn't this rule obvious and proper and necessary?

But I repeat the truth: that no genuine spiritual teacher ever takes one cent for teaching the mysteries of the inner life whether of the universe or of man.

What objection is there to a teacher of occultism charging a fee? Are not our schoolteachers paid? How would the occult teacher make a living if he did not charge something?

How have they always lived? They work. H. P. Blavatsky, the foundress of the Theosophical Society in our age, in her spare time wrote articles for various magazines and newspapers, and from the meager income which she thus derived she lived and worked her entire life long and gave most of the little that she earned to the Society she so dearly loved. She founded the Theosophical Society — that great leonine heart; she gave her lifeblood to found it. It was her child; and her successors who followed her passed their lives in doing the work and building up that which was confided to their hands. The gifts that were given to them paid for their clothing, for their food; and even these gifts were in large part turned over to the Theosophical Society. But whether a pupil and follower gave one cent or gave thousands, it mattered not. The poor is as welcome at the Master's table as is

the billionaire — more so, perhaps — *perhaps*; it all depends upon the man or the woman.

The clergyman receives his stipend, the schoolteacher receives his or her salary; and so forth; but no theosophical teacher has a salary or stipend or allowance: never has had, and I hope never will have. What is given to him in order to keep him alive, to clothe him, to pay his traveling expenses on his lecture tours, that is what he lives on. If he has any time that he can take from his strenuous official activities, then he will write, or he may use his hands to work, in order to provide food for his mouth. It is so. Every theosophical teacher has taken an unbreakable vow of poverty, of personal poverty. He can of course hold millions and even billions for the Society — if we had them, which unfortunately we have not! — but he has no right to keep even one cent for himself alone.

Now, my brothers, before closing: The Theosophical Society was founded in 1875 in the United States by H. P. Blavatsky, who was sent by the masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace, in order to found the Theosophical Society in our age. From that original society, and after the passing of H. P. Blavatsky, there came into existence children-societies. Each one is now doing its own work; each one has its own officers and field of activity; but there is one distinctive feature — and this is said simply as a statement of fact, of truth, without wishing to cast the shadow of a slur on brother-theosophists — there is this distinctive feature between our Theosophical Society and others: ours is essentially based on esoteric truths and esoteric discipline. From the very beginning, throughout, it has been and is pervaded by a spirit of brotherly kindness, of love and compassion and of self-forgetful service for the world.

Furthermore, it is permeated with the spirit of the teaching of our

secret or esoteric school, so that even in our exoteric work this esoteric spirit is the life-blood, the coursing vitality, which has made The Theosophical Society, which I now have the high honor to direct, what it is. I fancy, therefore, that those who join The Theosophical Society do so because they feel that strange and mystical appeal, living in all human souls, and whispering to hearts anhungered for truth and to minds eager for more light, that there is Truth to be found — the basic truth of the Universe — of a spiritual and intellectual character; and that this Truth can be had. Verily, it can.

I call upon you, my Brothers, to remember the main *motif* of our study together this afternoon. It is, to remember and to realize that each one of you is an imbodyed, flaming divinity — an imbodyed flame of the cosmic soul, of the cosmic-spiritual fire; that each one of you has locked up within you, potencies, powers, faculties, energies, which you wit not of as a rule; and that these energies and faculties and powers and potencies can be cultivated wondrously; so that once you have taken the key and opened the door of yourself, your divine self within, you can pass over the threshold and see in the far distance — a distance not so much of time nor of space, but of growth — the gods on their azure seats in the council chambers of space. This is not poetry. I speak to you from my very heart of hearts. What I have said to you is truth.

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[Vol 2, No 17](#)

[Contents](#)



**Second Series: No. 17 (December 29, 1930)**

**OCCULTISM, MYSTICISM, AND SECRET SOCIETIES**

(Lecture delivered November 2, 1930)

CONTENTS: Is The Theosophical Society a secret society? — What is the purpose of a secret society? — The possession of wisdom brings heavy responsibility. — One great Esoteric School and one wisdom-teaching. — Occult societies and mystical societies are not exactly the same. — Who is the true occultist? — Mithraism a mystery-teaching. — The close run between Mithraism and Christianity. — The Mysteries of Eleusis and Samothrace. — Have the various religious-philosophical societies of today a historical ancestry? — Claims made by the modern Rosicrucians as an organization. — The final test of a teaching: universality. — How can I find the society inspired by the most advanced Masters? — Have not all theosophical societies the same teachings? — One great Brotherhood of the Masters of Wisdom. — Why have not the scientists "discovered" the Masters? — A misapprehension as regards the Theosophical World-Congress to be held at Point Loma, 1931. Will any theosophists be excluded?

Is The Theosophical Society a secret society with bars raised against those who apply in sincerity and honesty of heart? It is not. Anyone may join The Theosophical Society who will accept the fundamental prerequisite, in fact the only prerequisite — an earnest and honest belief in universal brotherhood. Membership is open to every race of men, to every age after adulthood; and anyone who applies honestly can become an F.T.S. — Fellow of The Theosophical Society. You may ask: Then why is it that some of your teachings are spoken of as secret, as esoteric, as being

such that you, a theosophical lecturer, cannot refer to them in public? Yes, that is true also.

We have in fact a secret society — it is not a branch of The Theosophical Society at all, but an esoteric body of students who are engaged in the study of the deeper teachings of theosophy and who undertake to lead a noble life. Into this Esoteric Section can enter, will enter, may enter, my friends, only those who give the right knock. Now, this restriction — the right asking, the right knocking at the Temple door, so to speak — is not a bar raised arbitrarily against anyone; it is not something placed in order to trip unwary feet, but it fills a need which has existed throughout all the ages of past time. In every land, among all races of men, and, as I have said, in every age, there have been secret associations of men who gathered together for a deeper, closer study of the wondrous mysteries of the universe which surrounds us; and only those could enter these secret societies or associations who had proved themselves worthy, well qualified to bear the responsibilities, and also who were earnest and honest; for in the higher grades of this Esoteric Section of ours, those who have proved that they are true to truth, loyal to loyalty, feal to fealty, honest in honesty, these who have thus proved themselves to have these qualifications, are taught the most wondrous secrets of the universe — not solely how that universe is builded and constructed and what its inner carpentry is, but also taught regarding the powers which infill this universe, which inspirit it, which invigorate it, which make it in fact what it is; they are taught about these powers, and also taught how to evoke from within the recesses of their own being the same spiritual and intellectual faculties and powers — in other words, wisdom and knowledge are put into their hands, because they have proved themselves spiritually and intellectually and morally worthy of the charge, and of the heavy moral responsibility which this

charge implies.

You see thus that the restrictions spoken of are called for because of the present feeble character of human nature itself — feeble, failing, imperfect, only partly evolved, and therefore subject to temptation, and subject to failing. No spiritual teacher will ever give to another human being a truth implicating power unless he knows that that other human being has proved himself worthy and well qualified, capable of carrying the burden of wisdom and knowledge and responsibility; but once that the neophyte has proved himself worthy and well qualified, then by natural right all the wisdom and knowledge about the universe that can be given to him belong to him as a human being. It is his; therefore it is potentially yours also. It is the same principle arising in prudence and experience which causes the chemist to lock the doors of the laboratory, so that cranks and criminals, thieves and children, may not enter in and perhaps with unwitting mind and careless hand scatter the seeds of disease, or wreak havoc on their fellow men.

Men of the Occident don't know what they have lying within them, as I tell you on every Sunday when I speak to you from this platform. You have powers latent within you as men which, if you knew how to control and direct them, could wreck the monuments of the greatest city of the world and by a single effort of the spiritual will cause them to vanish into impalpable dust, and thus could bring devastation and death to your fellow human beings. Is power like that to be placed in unskilled and above all in immoral minds and hands? This is the reason for the bar, for the restriction, that I have spoken of, and this bar is simply the door of the Temple itself: that is, your Temple. This Temple belongs to humanity, to every son and daughter of man. But you must prove yourself worthy to enter into it, and having proved yourself worthy, then all that can be taught therein is yours by

right.

There have existed secret societies in all ages, among all races of men everywhere, from the pole to the equator, from the equator to the other pole. There have been great men in the past, there are great men in the present, there will be great men in the future, who have known and who will know how to unlock the powers locked up within themselves. They have been initiated; they have been taught in the esoteric schools of the past. In every case, these great men are the saviors of mankind — those bright and flaming intelligences, children of the human race, whose records we may even now see written large in the annals of history. All ages have known them; all races have produced them. They all belong to the one great Esoteric School, the greatest spiritual school that the earth has ever produced; and we call these great ones of the human race, the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace.

How many times have I recited a few of their names to you from this platform: the great Buddha, Krishna, Sankaracharya, in India; Lao-tse, Chuang-tse, Confucius, in China; Jesus the Syrian sage; Pythagoras, Empedocles, Apollonius of Tyana, as instances of Greeks; and in other lands similar individuals of whom only a name remains to us at present, such as Quetzalcoatl, and Manco Capac — and many, many more. All these great men taught one fundamental doctrine. The language conveying this sublime doctrine may have been in many cases different; the mere system of teaching the doctrine may have varied; but that fundamental doctrine was the same everywhere, and its fundamental principles were identic. Do you know why? Because each one of these great men had been initiated; had been taught in that greatest of esoteric spiritual schools, how to take leave of the physical vehicle and to pass with all his percipient faculties behind the veil of the outward seeming, and thus to glean

knowledge and wisdom of nature's inner workings at first hand. Doing this they saw; seeing this they knew, because they had been there and had *become*. Thus it was that they all taught the same wisdom-teaching.

This great adventure will also be yours, my Brothers, in good time. It is your own for the taking. But in order to take, you must be, you must prove yourself; and in order to pass the examinations you must study and train yourself; and there is no examination and no conquest so difficult as that of self. Self-control, self-conquest, self-victory — a victory over the personal self, so that the immortal god within you may shine forth in resplendent wonder, in its native glory. Then you are fit to carry the heavy burden of responsibility; then you are fit to wield the scepter of power and to dart the thunderbolt, to use the old figure of speech. Then you can truly lead; then you can truly guide — because you see; because you have been there, and therefore know.

Mystical societies, occult societies, have existed — and the average of men in the Occident think that these two kinds of societies are exactly the same. They are not. The occultist is one who studies at first hand those parts of nature which are hid, not seen — the unseen, the invisible — those parts of nature which so many men in their foolish blindness deny the existence of, so that they turn away from the straight and narrow path, which always is more or less a lonely path, but which leads to glory unspeakable, to mastery first over self, your self, nature's child, and then later over nature's inner forces and powers; because when you have passed the examinations, when you have passed the portals of initiation, then you become at *one* with spiritual nature, and nature's inner forces and powers you find to be in yourself. Oh! do you get that thought? It means becoming at one with the spiritual essence of your being, with your own inner

god! And this is no mere figure of speech. Each one of you is the feeble reflection, the feeble expression, of a bright and flaming divinity within you and above you.

Initiation is naught but a becoming at one with your own inner god, your own spiritual being, and this means expanding your consciousness, your inner powers, so that they take cosmic extent, gain cosmic reaches. Being at one with the spiritual essence of things, you live there and breathe its atmosphere and become a very god in flesh. Just as Jesus the Syrian sage said: "I and my Father are one" — referring here to his own inner god. When you become at one with your own inner god — in other words, become at one with the divine essence working through you and giving you intelligence and love and power and vision — you have allied yourself with the divinity within you, and thus you become a god among men, literally.

The great ones of the past of whom I have spoken, have done just that; and smaller men do it in less degree; and these smaller ones, these smaller sons of men, are they whom we call geniuses.

My Brothers, in past ages, when the currents of material life ran less strong than they do today, when men's minds in those former ages were turned more to the things which endure, to the things of the spirit, to the things which last — I mean to the energies and feelings and thoughts within you, which bring you hope and make you live grandly and die grandly — in those past ages it was thought to be man's loftiest objective to become more than man, more than an ordinary human. In order to become more than an ordinary human, a man whose heart was anhungered for truth and whose soul was quickened with an intuition of great spiritual values, entered upon the path of the ancient mystery-teaching. He gave up his life in order to find Life; he broke the bonds of personal existence — limited, restricted, constricted — so that his

soul might expand into its native cosmic essence. That is what the Mysteries of the ancient days in their higher degrees did for the men who were capable and strong enough to undertake the tests and pass them successfully.

Now, this study and investigation of the secret laws of our great parent, Mother Nature, of which we are all children, is called Occultism. It also involves the highest form of spiritual self-dedication. You cannot ever reach an end of this study and investigation, because Mother Nature herself, in her wondrous and illimitable fields of existence, is endless. So this means, as you at once may see, that behind every veil which now confronts you and blinds you, you can pass into a greater light — only to find another veil beyond, behind which, by greater growth still, you may go; and so on forever. What a sublime hope! Endless growth, endless expansion, undying vision! It is a blessed thought that we gain it all by our own efforts alone!

How that fact appeals to a true man — the sense of victory over self first, and then over the complex and wandering forces of nature around us, in order to help others. Because, don't you see, when you try to help yourself alone and to gain for yourself alone, and to live for yourself alone, you cannot go farther than a certain boundary which is the sphere of your limited personality? But when you live to help others, your consciousness is constantly expanding to take these others in, in other words moving always steadily outwards with the expansion of one's life and sympathies; and besides that you are in the current of the advancing river of progress, evolving, and all nature is with you, carrying you along with itself.

Brotherhood is based on nature's fundamental law that no entity lives unto itself absolutely. It cannot; in trying to violate this fundamental law it perishes in time. But when we live unto

others than our own self, we expand constantly. Our consciousness reaches forever and forever more outwards to greater spaces and finds its play in ever wider and grander fields. Living unto others is the way to grow great. This is not vapid sentimentality — it enunciates the first law of being.

Of mystical societies there have been many indeed; and they are graded exactly according to the men who composed them. The idea of mysticism as contrasted with occultism is this: within every human being there is an interior light, man's infallible guide; and consequently, in order to know truth, every human being must consult this light within himself where truth abides in fullness. As the great Buddha said in substance: "Trust not the words of any other man, however fine they may be, merely because that other man has received the plaudits of mankind." Trust the spirit within you, trust your own conscience, although it is fallible because as yet imperfectly developed; it is, nevertheless, your final guide, the unwavering arbiter within yourself, because your conscience is a more or less complete shining of the interior light that I have just spoken of.

You see, therefore, from what I have just said, the difference that lies between occultism and mysticism. Every true occultist is a true mystic, and similarly every true mystic is an occultist; but the genuine occultist in addition to being a mystic is one who has been initiated by those whom he knows to be teachers or by his own especial teacher; so that his knowledge and course of life depend not only from the interior light that I have spoken of, but also flow from the grand science that he has been taught by those still greater than himself — his teachers or his teacher.

Do you think that because I have spoken so earnestly of the great help and of the great beauty of the inner light, do you think that because I speak of this to my audience on every occasion when I



address them, that I forget the need of genuine teachers? O my Brothers, not at all. Men need both. On the one hand, men need guides and helpers, instructors; but, on the other hand, they also need to look within themselves and to become at one with the interior light. There is no contradiction at all between these two statements. If a man shows me the way at the time when the night is dark and my feet stumble in the path, should I accept, as Victor Hugo nobly says, "the authority of the torches"? Of course! Gladly do I accept the guiding hand. But for all that, when my feet are placed upon the way, shall I abandon my first prerogative as a spiritual entity manifesting as a human being — shall I abandon my independent judgment? Never! For following my interior light is the beginning of the growth within me, which light may be called the voice of my inner god, and this light increaseth in power and brilliance with every new lifetime, every new reincarnation, on earth.

Both the interior light and genuine teachers are needed by men. Men need teachers, genuine spiritual teachers; but also must they learn to look within themselves, learn to stand on their own feet and in time to be their own guides, just as little children learn to walk; and we are all little children, when you think of it, by comparison — in comparison with the surrounding great mystery of the universe which even the greatest god cannot fully plumb; for were he able to plumb it to the deepest deep, to the uttermost end, then he would find a frontier at that uttermost end and no further advancement would be possible. But there is no such uttermost end, there is no such frontier. There is always a grander and a greater world to explore, always something nobler beyond, something higher and more beautiful still, deeper, and more lofty. Therefore both are required — teachers and the noble self-confidence arising out of this inner light — and this self-confidence is not the vain self-confidence of the foolish, but the

noble self-confidence arising from one's increasing sense of union with the inner spiritual light. When you have the latter, then you see the vision sublime, and you are approaching a stage in your growth in which you will be near to confabulating with the gods who fill the universe full and of whom we humans are the children.

O my Brothers, think of your divine ancestry! Think of the spiritual powers within you, of which you have intimations at times, and alas! from which all too frequently you turn away, because your minds are filled full with the patter of the schools and with the passing fads and fancies of the day. Listen to the voice of humanity enduring through the ages, recurrent in every age, insistent at all times in our consciousness, ringing out when civilization brings forth the greatest men — rather than listening only to the teachings of the schools, which teachings change with every twenty-five years or so. Exchange not your spiritual birthright for the passing fads and fancies of a day. Listen to the mystic voice of humanity. It says: "Man, know thyself. Within thee there is a divine being, the source of all that makes you great, deathless; which gives you hope and peace and which fills your heart with almighty love; which is also the source of your intellect, of your intelligence — which is the source of all that you are." This is an ancient teaching; it is the teaching of all illuminated mankind. It varies never and not at all.

One of the greatest of the esoteric schools among the Greeks and later among the Romans was that of the Mithraists. They had a wonderful teaching! It has been called a religious belief or religion. Yes, so it was; but it was also a mystery-teaching, a teaching of one of the Mystery schools. Do you know that Mithraism drove Christianity so hard at one time that the scales were so evenly balanced that a feather's weight in the Mithraic scale would have changed the course of history? Christianity

prevailed only because it was easier to accept on belief. Do you get the thought?

The nations surrounding the Mediterranean Sea at that time were, spiritually speaking, running on a downgrade: an era of spiritual and intellectual obscuration had come upon men; and the grand old teachings of the Mystery schools had been largely forgotten, and the races that then lived around the Mediterranean could hardly understand those teachings; and the time finally came when they preferred to believe on faith rather than to think. That is why Christianity prevailed. Mithraism at one time was predominant in court, in the army, in the navy, among the people, indeed, everywhere; but it required thinking, it required study, it required something more than easy belief; and speaking in a strange paradox, it was its greatness which was its weakness — it was too great for a degenerate people to understand it.

Consider the *Eleusinia*, as another type of esoteric society, commonly called the Mysteries of Eleusis; consider also the Mysteries of Samothrace. Concerning these Mystery schools, the greatest men of Greece and Rome have told us — concerning these two great schools — that in them a man was taught how grandly to live, and when his time comes how grandly to die, filled with the fervent hope that he was on his way to join the gods — not in body, but in essence — preceding a return here on earth among men.

Yes, in all countries there were esoteric schools, and in the greatest of these esoteric or secret schools they taught occultism, the secret teaching of the things that are hid, not apparent, secret, such as the structure of the universe around us; such as the kind and nature and quality and circumstances of the spiritual beings who fill the universe full; such, again, as man's origin and destiny

— spiritual, psychical, physical.

Therefore, every theosophist who is something more than a mere Fellow of The Theosophical Society is either a mystic or an occultist, or both, usually both; but they who belong to our Esoteric School, of which I have spoken to you briefly, they are both indeed. No matter how often they may temporarily fall from their best, no matter how often their feet may stumble on the pathway, they at least are sincerely trying; and when they stumble or should they stumble, up they rise again and take a new step forwards on the path towards those distant hills of the Mystic East, over which they see the sunrise every morning, inwardly.

There is truth in the universe, my Brothers; it can be had. This truth is not my truth, nor is it your truth; it is ours. You have a right to it and I have a right to it. But as a theosophical teacher I cannot give it unless I know that I transfer this most precious of treasures into worthy hands.

Some people don't like to believe certain things. Tell a man that he is a god and probably he will look at you and blink. Tell him that he is — well, a mere human, and he will think you are quite some chap! It is a strange twist of human psychology that men sometimes — and women too — like to think that they are admired for their faults! It is quite understandable, however. We excuse ourselves if others admire us for our failings, you see. But tell a man that he is an incarnate divinity, and he is not quite sure whether you are in earnest or not. He wants to find out for himself first and that is right, it is just as it ought to be. But this inclination to disbelieve also has its unfortunate side. Some people are a little too prudent sometimes; and yet I hate to say that, because I am continually urging prudence upon you: Be careful; don't accept every one who comes along and says "I am a

teacher. Follow me." My message to you is to look within yourself. That is what it is my duty to tell you; and only if your own conscience leaps in instant recognition that what you hear is truth, then trust me.

Our theosophical truths are very wonderful, and so appealing that a great many of the various religio-philosophical societies that exist today, and which claim to have a secret teaching (I have not spoken of these societies by name because it would sound as if I were casting slurs on people, and heaven knows I don't want to do that!) have taken over a great many of our theosophical teachings which they have adopted as their own, and in consequence in certain cases make claims for a wondrous historical ancestry of their own. Well, the claim is true, so far as the teachings that they have borrowed from us are concerned; but I have grave doubts of such societies having an archaic ancestry in any other respect. Now please understand that I don't want to point my finger here or my finger there and say that the W-ites have taken some of our teachings and claim to be a true secret society coming down from past ages. I don't like unfriendly suggestions of that kind, and yet what can I do? As a theosophical teacher I am sworn to tell the truth as far as I know that truth, and I am equally bound to hide nothing if it is true. Or again, I refrain from pointing in another direction, saying that the X-ites have done the same thing. I will however make one exception, because there is a certain foundation in this case for claims of historical ancestry extending beyond a generation or two.

The exception that I refer to is the Rosicrucians. About Rosicrucianism in recent years we have been hearing a good deal. I have no doubt that there are splendid and unusual people among them — earnest and devoted and sincere; and yet, do you know, friends, that I am of the opinion that a large number of the doctrines that they promulgate have been taken from the

theosophical teachings. That taking of our teachings is all right. It is fine. No true theosophist would object to it. The theosophical teachings belong to mankind. But this is what I personally am doubtful about: the claim made by any organization which adopts teachings that the organization so adopting is a brotherhood or society that has come down through the ages. The theosophical teachings so adopted have indeed come down through the ages, but their subordination to certain Christian teachings belonging to the Rosicrucian body, or the rather curious twisting of our Theosophical teachings in order to make them accord with certain mystical, medieval, quasi-Christian teachings, which are in their presentation relatively modern although quite mystical, in some instances, does not seem to me to prove that the proponents thereof possess a glorious spiritual ancestry *as an organization*.

About the middle of the fifteenth century there lived a German of strong mystical bent who was called Christian Rosenkreuz. This name may be rendered as Christian Rosy Cross. Whether this name Rosenkreuz was a name which was adopted, as I believe it was, is a matter which I leave to you. He claimed to have been on a pilgrimage in the East and to have brought back from the Orient the teachings which he is alleged to have given out with great care. To a certain degree the teachings that I have read and which are stated as having come from Christian Rosenkreuz are quite theosophical, both in tone and in content, but enunciated or expressed in a peculiar and hardly genuinely theosophical form. I may merely add in conclusion that there are a number of associations calling themselves Rosicrucians which, as far as I can gather, don't seem to agree among themselves.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as every student of European history knows, there came into existence quite a number of so-called Hermetic societies which, however, probably

did not use that name: these were societies having a mystical and so-called occultistic trend; and they all made rather large claims as concerns a mystical and historic ancestry; and as far as I have been able to study these claims, they were based on small foundations of fact.

I will give you what seems to me to be the only proper test by which to prove any such claim. It is an infallible test: Are the teachings of any individual or of any organization — are they, or are they not — universal? If they are, you may safely trust them. This is an infallible test. Does the Theosophical Movement, for instance, propagate teachings which ring as true today as they rang true when the first human protoplasts walked the earth and as they will ring true twenty billions of years hence, or as they will ring true even today to the inhabitants of other planets revolving around other suns? In other words, if the teaching is universal and applies to all times and to all entities everywhere — if it is based on natural fact — then it is true. You can trust it.

I would not accept any theosophical teaching which was based otherwise. I have tested them all. I have found that every one is based on nature herself. They explain all religious philosophies and all philosophical religions. They are as true to the Hindu as to the Occidental; they are as true to the Chinaman as to the Aztec; they are universal, appealing to all men; and they have existed in all ages. There is the test: universality. Any society which works under the influence of restrictive teachings and which limits even slightly the flow of spiritual life by concentrating it around and from any human spiritual figure of history as chiefest, may be doing excellent service in certain lines, and never would I throw a speck of mud, but as a theosophical teacher I am bound to tell you that the theosophical philosophy is based on nature's own operations, in other words on truth — not limited to Christianity, not limited to Buddhism, not limited to Hinduism, not limited to

Greece or to Rome, or limited to anything. Prove this statement by your own study. Investigate, study, test. The work of proof lies with you.

The following is the first question that I have to answer this afternoon:

A friend is a fellow of an esoteric society which he says dates back to ancient Egypt. Apparently this society teaches about the same things as do the theosophists. Do other occult societies have Masters like the theosophists? If so, how can interested students know which society has the most advanced Masters, for I understand there are various degrees of Masters?

Well, there are various degrees of initiated men, and these Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace are just that — men who have evolved forth the Buddha within, the Christ within, the god within them, evolved it out, so that they stand as expressions thereof.

I don't know whether I should tell you without circumlocution what my candid opinion is regarding any society which claims to date back to ancient Egypt. I might hurt somebody's feelings, and I don't want to do that.

I will apply here the test that I have already spoken of: Are the teachings of the society mentioned universal? Have they the mahatma touch, have they the mahatmic atmosphere, behind and within them? (Do you understand me? Theosophists call these great Masters mahatmas.) Are the teachings universal? Do they appeal to all? Are they the same in all ages? Do they touch your heart and quicken your understanding?

Any society which puts forth, which teaches, a body of doctrine which does these things, probably has our Theosophical Masters



behind it in some degree at least. And when the further question is asked: "How is one to find a society having the most advanced Masters?" I would answer: The society which is the most universal, which is the kindest, which teaches doctrines that appeal to all — doctrines that appeal not merely to the brain-mind, but which touch the heart, which quicken the understanding, which awaken the intuition, which make men feel their essential human dignity.

This idea of Masters behind societies was generally unheard of until H. P. Blavatsky, the foundress of the Theosophical Society in our modern times, taught it. You have thus your answer, my Brothers. I do not care to go into this question more deeply. If any society wishes to claim that it has great seers and sages behind it, all I can say is, the heavens bless you, my Brothers. If you really believe it, then prove it by your lives. I don't care to dispute your claim. My duty is to aid, to help, to stimulate decency in men, to evoke kindness and brotherhood in human hearts; yes, and to teach.

Now, I will tell you just what I think: there is on earth today a band or association of great sages and seers, wise men, highly evolved human beings, whom we call Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace. They founded the Theosophical Society in our modern times, and it is but a rebirth in our day of other theosophical societies that they had founded in other ages. They founded the Theosophical Society through the messenger whom they sent forth to found it — H. P. Blavatsky, — and entrusted to her care as teacher the grand old doctrines of the wisdom-religion of mankind — doctrines which are universal, appealing both to heart and mind, elevating, encouraging, giving hope and light and peace.

I am speaking as a theosophical teacher. I am not aware of any

other body of Masters whatsoever. Our Masters may work through societies other than The Theosophical Society. Why not? If the opportunity to work for human betterment is a good one in any other society — if there are in any other society, no matter what its name may be, or in any church, great and lofty-minded men, who are fit vehicles to receive the blessing of the spiritual life flowing from this grand Brotherhood of our Masters — then most assuredly do I believe that our Masters work through such lofty men. They may be Christians, they may be Buddhists, they may be Hindus, they may be Freethinkers, they may be atheists, heaven knows what! The Masters live to benefit the human race; and although the Theosophical Society is their own child and they watch over it, although they do not guide it, nevertheless, being the exemplars of human compassion, love, and pity, being the exemplars of the divine flame of intelligence which infills the universe, if they see men and women leading a beautiful life in human organizations other than the Theosophical Society, most assuredly is our Masters' influence felt among such men and women too. Our Masters live to benefit mankind. So you see the question lacks a certain amount of reflection (and I don't mean this unkindly), for it is in fact rather foolish to ask where the most advanced Masters may be found.

Do you realize, my Brothers, that every one of you in your inner being is a mahatma, is yourself an unevolved Master? Think over it. Remember that evolution is simply the unfolding of this inner greatness, the expansion of your inner, latent, native powers and faculties; and mastery or mastership is but one grand step higher than ordinary humanity. Beyond the stage that our theosophical Masters have attained stretches the endless stair of life, ever upwards; and that is the stair that in future ages you also will climb.

I am a fellow of a few years' standing in another Theosophical

Society, and in fairness I wish to say that you seem in every lecture to throw some new light on the teachings. I cannot understand how it is that you teach things that appeal to me as true but not to be found in our books. Is the reason because your teachings are esoteric? Are not all theosophical societies supposed to have the same teachings, and do not all these teachings come from the same Masters?

It is true that all the teachings given forth by my predecessors have been in essence esoteric; and in that fact lies their wonderful appeal. Furthermore, when the Theosophical Society — which must not be confused with the Theosophical Movement, which has existed in every age — was founded in our own age, in 1875, in New York, then indeed there was but one body of teaching; and it could truthfully be said that all theosophists believed in and accepted that one body of teaching. But, my Brothers, the Theosophical Society is simply an association of human beings; and after the death of the great founder, H. P. Blavatsky, the Theosophical Society separated into different children-societies — a misfortune which I am in part now laboring to undo in my work for theosophical fraternization and reunification. In some of these theosophical societies certain teachings have been promulgated, propaganded, and printed which the Fellows of these later theosophical societies apparently believe in.

I will say this much, my friends, that The Theosophical Society which I have the high honor to lead and the heavy responsibility of guiding holds fast and without change to those original teachings brought from the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace by H. P. Blavatsky. These teachings we retain in their pristine purity, although this does not mean in any wise that we are mere dogmatic formalists or bibliolaters. We are the exact contrary of this. These sublime teachings can be and have been

developed by us. They can be and have been elaborated by us. They can be and have been explained by us. But as a body of teachings they are those same original teachings from which we have not varied. If you will remember that theosophy is a promulgation in human formulation of the structure and operations of the universe both spiritual and material, you will see that they comprise the sum total of all possible human knowledge far beyond the complete grasp of any human being, and that consequently development of them, elaboration of them, and explanation of them, is not only a logical necessity, but is a course of action that follows as naturally as one step follows another step forwards. I think, therefore, that in stating these facts, the question is properly answered.

There are, therefore, these later theosophical societies teaching other doctrines which their proponents consider to be theosophical, but which I do not accept because I cannot accept them; but nevertheless I have no word of scorn for any other theosophist, and no unkindly thought towards any other theosophist. If these other theosophists are satisfied and happy with what they have and promulgate, then it is my duty to see if I cannot bring even a greater peace to their hearts and a larger light to their minds than those which now they have. That is my duty as a theosophical teacher.

Here is an odd question:

If there are such superhumans as you theosophists call Masters, how comes it that our great scientists who have discovered even the electron cannot find these Masters?

[*Laughing*] Excuse me, please. I think the reason for this question is because the questioner supposes that the great scientists are looking for the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace in their test tubes, and in their apparatuses of experiment, and it is

hardly reasonable to expect to find human beings there. Do you want to know where our Masters are? They are in fact everywhere. Their home is the world. Wherever human need is greatest, there are they. Wherever human suffering is most poignant, there they are. Their main seat at the present time is in more than one of the inaccessible places of the lofty tableland of Bodyul (Tibet); but they have their branch associations elsewhere on earth also. Nevertheless, because they gather and hold their special meetings in these particular localities does not mean that they continually stay there and leave them not at all. I tell you that wherever human need is greatest, there they are.

If our scientists used their intuition as grandly as some of them use their brain-minds, they would then indeed know where the great ones are; more, they would feel their actual presence. What an interesting thing am I going to tell you now! In the laboratories of work of three of our greatest ultramodern scientists, in three places that I have in mind, some of the great brothers have been present although invisible to the physical eye, watching the experiments in progress, stimulating the intuition of the researchers and inspiring illuminating thoughts, placing an inspiring hand, as it were, on the brain of the researchers — giving light, stimulating thought, and suggesting new ways and methods of work.

The questioner asks: "Why haven't the experimenters found your mahatmas?" My answer is: Let them look for the Masters where the Masters are, if they will; they will then see them perhaps, they will then feel them perhaps; then they will know. Yes, the greatest of ultramodern scientific discoveries, and even more important than the discoveries, the greatest of the scientific deductions of recent times, are derivable directly from the influence flowing from the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace, enlightening the brain of the researchers, so that they had

hunches, so that they had grand and illuminating thoughts, so that they had a vision. Then the discovery was made, and the deductions were drawn from that discovery. Wherever human need is great, there the Masters are. And I should perhaps add that help is given in this invisible and silent way in all cases where the discoveries to be made and the deductions to be drawn from such discoveries will inure to produce a more spiritual view of the universe and to the amelioration of human relations; for, as I have told you, the Masters live but to benefit all mankind.

One more question:

I notice that from the Theosophical World-Congress to be held at Point Loma in 1931 you seem to propose to exclude as delegates the followers of a teacher who has a large following of theosophists and who is also the head Bishop of a Theosophical Church. Since it is proclaimed that The Theosophical Society is broad enough to include persons of all shades of religious belief, why should any theosophists be excluded from this theosophical universal Congress?

A very good question, but it is one which is based on a misapprehension of the facts. In the first place, it is by no means to be a universal Congress. We are going to send out invitations to the heads only of all the different Theosophical Societies whose addresses we can procure, extending an invitation in the name of brotherhood and peace, and on the ground of those of our theosophical teachings which are common to all of us, to come to Point Loma in August 1931, and thus to meet here together as brothers, and to show to the world that at least in fundamental feeling and in fundamental theosophical teaching we are essentially one body of workers for humanity. If I can assemble these theosophical heads, once get them together with me, so that we can talk together amicably and in peace, I think that more will

be done to reunite the different branches of the Theosophical Society than anything else that has been achieved since the melancholy event of the disruption of the Theosophical Society which I have mentioned this afternoon.

I have no intention, and our officers likewise have no intention, of excluding any theosophist who comes as a duly accredited delegate from some Theosophical Society. As this is to be a Theosophical Congress alone, one who calls himself a Bishop merely will not be invited to come. But if he comes as a theosophical delegate it will matter not at all whether he be pope, bishop, priest, parson, or what else: if he comes as a Theosophist he will be welcome, but welcome because he comes as a Theosophist and not as a prince, priest, or peasant. Our gathering is to be a small congress of theosophists with a specific theosophic purpose in view. In some future year I hope to call a universal pan-theosophical congress; but to this especial congress or gathering of August 12th, next year, we shall invite only the heads of the different Theosophical Societies and a few duly accredited delegates from more or less independent theosophical societies who are not sufficiently closely organized to have a responsible or official head.

I don't exactly know how the unfortunate misunderstanding arose to which the questioner refers. We have no intention of excluding any duly accredited theosophical head. I have said very plainly, and have constantly repeated it, that this meeting of August 12, 1931, is to be a Congress of theosophists, and only the theosophical heads will be invited to attend at this particular gathering. Would it be wrong to suggest that perhaps some people who do not favor this plan of ours or who have misunderstood this plan of ours have circulated this unfortunate rumor of exclusion? Our officers and I have tried to be quite specific as regards these matters, and it is difficult for me to understand how

our words could have been twisted into meaning that we have the intention of excluding any duly accredited theosophical delegate.

Yes, and continuing my answer to the question, The Theosophical Society is broad enough to include as members, persons of all shades of religious belief or of none, but this inclusion in our membership rests on a specific ground, which is this: that the applicant for Fellowship, or the Fellow, look deep into his own belief, that he plumb the deepest depth of his own religious or philosophical conviction, solely for the purpose that he may find our universal theosophy there. He will find it there if he examine carefully enough and look deeply enough. The only prerequisite to joining us is a belief in universal brotherhood. It may be argued that the churches also teach universal brotherhood — at least that they do teach it in our day; probably they do as a theory and I presume that they try to practice it. We Theosophists try to practice it; we don't say that we are perfect in our practice, for we are human; but I do say that theosophists really *try* to practice what we preach.

The Theosophical Society admits to Fellowship anyone who accepts the principle of universal brotherhood, no matter what the applicant's belief may be, no matter what the color of his skin, no matter what his caste — in fact, anyone, any human being, who accepts in principle the teaching of universal brotherhood is welcome as a Fellow of The Theosophical Society. But it is obvious to anyone who has studied our doctrines that the theosophical meaning of brotherhood is a deeper one than the ordinary dictionary sense of this word.

Our teaching of brotherhood means this: that every entity everywhere — not only human beings, but every entity anywhere — whether in far-off Sirius or in Betelgeuze, or within and without the galaxy: every entity dwelling on every electron in



every atom as well as every divinity — is an inseparable part of the cosmic spirit, and therefore is a spiritual ray of the boundless ocean of conscious life which infills and inspirits the universe. Consequently, we and they are all essentially united, and brotherly feeling is not only a duty, but becomes a joy. Brotherhood — meaning the essential spiritual oneness of everything that is — is nature's fundamental principle, fundamental law; and the man whose heart is filled with this conception is already beginning to feel stirring within him that marvelous and inspiring sense of complete oneness with the universal cosmic life.

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[Vol 2, No 18](#)  
[Contents](#)

**Second Series: No. 18 (January 5, 1931)**

**ELEMENTALS AND NATURE-SPIRITS**

(Lecture delivered November 9, 1930)

CONTENTS: The laughter of the gods. — To understand all is to forgive all. — Lives between the human being and the atom. — Whence come the multitudinous impulses in nature? — What are elementals really? — Journeying through universes. Is there an end to this journey? — We were once elementals. — Immortality means crystallized imperfection. — The inspiring vision that theosophy gives. — Teachings of the medieval Philosophers of Fire. — Can fairies be photographed? — How can one gain actual knowledge of the elemental worlds? — Bulwer Lytton's description of elementals. — There can be only one occultism. — Can Eastern occultism and modern science ever unite? — What is the first step on the path of occultism? — A question about J. Krishnamurti. — There is a divinity sleeping in the heart of your heart!

QUESTION: "Do you think the gods ever tire of laughing at us humans?"

Do *you* think so? I think that they are laughing all the time in a quiet, silent way, very much as we humans smile at the antics of the beasts — the antics of the dog, of the sheep, at the queer movements of the worm, at the buzzing mosquito, and the fugitive fly. We laugh and ponder and wonder at this mysterious universe of ours, in which such multitudes of animate beings exist — and all so apparently different as among themselves. We think that we understand a little about them, because they evoke in us a sense of humor and we laugh at them. Now, how about the antics that we humans play on the stage of life — you, I, all

human beings; thinking our little thoughts, solving our problems, seeming to us so difficult, so profound, that at times it appears to us as if the fate of the entire universe depended upon the solution of these problems that we strive to arrive at?

I think that the gods are laughing at us all the time; and their quiet laughter takes the form of the gentle rain and of the sunshine and of the rays from the stars and of the painted heavens at chill morn and at dewy eve; so that we sense that the gods are filled with their own silent and universal understanding of nature's laws, which understanding is so wonderful and so majestic, because it is not disturbed by passion, because it is not fevered, because it is not hurried; it is like the silent and gentle laughter of a kindly heart, shedding its balm on us — on *us*. We human beings are full of pranks. And why shouldn't we be? I don't offer this query by way of explanation; but merely ask the question: Why shouldn't we be? Why shouldn't the dog, or the horse, or the cow, or the mosquito, or the eel, or the rat, or the rabbit, do each one its own particular work in the station of life which it has attained at the present time in its advance along the evolutionary pathway? The gods laugh at us indeed — not unkindly; but nevertheless they laugh at us in the majestic silences, much as we laugh at the antics of the beasts beneath us.

The gods understand. They have been where we now are. They were men, or beings equivalent to human beings, in some far past cosmic age — in some solar system, which is now vanished, mayhap, out of even the recollection of the gods themselves. Comprehension is understanding, and genuine understanding is always kindly. It is the heart which does not understand which judges, and judges unfairly. The French have a proverb derived from Montaigne; they say: *Tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner* — "to understand all is to forgive all." This by no means implies an approval of things which are wrong; but it does mean that

with the understanding heart we can see behind the veil, behind the crust of circumstance, behind the shell of conditions, which covers the causes and reasons of things; and thus seeing with an understanding heart, we can forgive. Forgiveness, however, is something entirely different from condoning. We can forgive a fellow human creature for his faults, for his so-called sins, for the injury that he does to us or to others. We do not condone, for condoning wrong means that one becomes *particeps criminis* — a partner in the crime, a participator in the wrongdoing; but forgiveness is divine.

The gods laugh at us because they understand us; for they have been where we now are, much as we have been little children. We forgive the little children, we forgive the little child its faults and its pranks, but we ourselves do not do as the little children do. And therefore I say in answer to this question: yes, the gods laugh quietly at us all the time and in the immense silence.

But how about those other vast hordes, classes, families, hosts, armies of entities not so progressed as the gods, which fill universal being full, and which undertake the smaller tasks in the cosmic work, even as mankind undertakes its own tasks: I mean those beings between us humans on the one hand and the so-called insensate atom on the other — elementals, nature-spirits, nature-sprites, gnomes, elves, kobolds, goblins, fairies, call them what you like. These names are indeed but names — names that our ancestors gave to these hosts of imperfectly developed entities. Don't be frightened at a mere name: try to get the thought, to understand the idea. Nature is full of impulses of all kinds, high and low, good and bad, peaceful and otherwise, gentle and violent, kindly and malignant. Whence do these impulses come? Where do they arise? They proceed from animate entities. Obviously an incomputable number of these impulses are imperfect; and the proof is that we see the work of imperfection

all around us. It is abundantly true that we see grandeur; that we see sublimity; that we see glory; that we see relatively perfect work; we also see such accuracy in nature's operations and structure that it astounds us; but we likewise see imperfection — what men call evil, inharmony.

Whence does all this welter of conflicting impulses come? Whence do these things that we see, arise? Yes, I ask it again: whence? They are indeed there, and our minds are fully cognizant of their existence.

Now, the only source of disharmony, of imperfection, of evil-doing, of inability to produce perfect results, *that human beings know of*, is in human beings; yet we see these same imperfections outside of us; and too many of us say — for we cheat ourselves with words and say — that they "just are." Have they no cause? Of course they have; and we are cheating ourselves with words if we conclude otherwise. They have causes; and it is obvious that imperfection arises only from an imperfect source, *i. e.*, in imperfect beings. These imperfectly evolved beings have their places in the boundless scheme of things just as we humans have, just as the gods have, just as the super-gods have, and at the other end of the scale, just as the atoms have. Because these entities are imperfect, therefore their works are imperfect.

A generalizing term we may call these imperfectly evolved entities by, is sprites or nature spirits; but I like the good old theosophical term, *elementals*, which means beings who are beginning a course of evolutionary growth, and who therefore are in the elemental states of their growth. How did they come into our universe? How did *we* come here? We are here; they are here. Is it not obvious that there is a cause for these things that we have spoken of? Human beings on earth — are they the only infinite, quasi-intelligent, quasi-intellectual, thinking, conscious

entities in boundless infinitude? Consider that the beasts, the plants, yes, and as the theosophist says, even the minerals, are all possessed each in its own degree of life, of animation, of a certain portion of an intellectual essence: for the cosmic soul permeates all things as an ocean of life; the cosmic life permeates all things as the cosmic soul; and all things and all entities everywhere are but the children of this cosmic life-consciousness; and as our earth is not the only seat or dwelling place of sentient and animate beings — which supposition is transparently absurd — therefore consciousnesses and lives and animate beings exist in families, races, in hordes, in armies, in incomputable multitudes, everywhere.

An elemental, my Brothers, is a being who has entered our universe on the lowest plane or in the lowest world, or degree, or step, of that universe, on the rising stairway of life, and this stairway of life begins in any universe at the lowest stage of that universe, and ends for that universe in that universe's highest stage — its own cosmic spirit. Our universe is not the only one in infinitude. Boundless space is filled with innumerable universes. You cannot count them, so numerous are they. Our universe is only one of them. Infinitude is filled with them. And these universes interpenetrate each other, the rivers of living beings flowing from one universe into some other universe and backwards in the waves of life as they sweep through boundless space. Mark you, friends, when I speak of boundless infinitude I do not mean only this physical universe, which is but one cross section, so to speak, of infinite space. I mean particularly those inner, those invisible, worlds of which our outward physical universe is the mere exterior garment or body.

All these universes are packed full with lives, some of these lives being very high, and some very low, but all are evolving, all are growing and learning entities. When any entity passes from one

universe into the next universe on its forward evolutionary march, it enters that next universe in the next universe's lowest degree or world or plane or stage; and that entity thus entering theosophists call an elemental in and for that universe, because it is then in the elements of things; and it is destined to grow in that universe which it has just entered, gaining experience, unfolding its inner powers, throwing forth what is within it as the growing tree does, and as the bud brings forth the flower — bringing out from within, as the ages pass, ever more and more of the powers locked up within itself. Thus the elemental passes from the elemental stage through all the realms of being as it rises along the stairway of life, passing through the human stage, becoming superhuman, quasi-divine — a quasi-god, — then becoming a god. And does the stairway end there? Is the evolutionary journey then complete? Is there an impassable barrier beyond which it cannot go? Do all things there stop in crystallized and utter perfection?

Nay! The evolving entity that we have in our mind's eye simply passes out of that universe — the universe into which it had previously entered and into which it has attained divinity, and passes out only to enter into a superior universe. That other superior universe may be entirely unseen, but it is there.

So did we humans first enter this present universe. We, in the beginning of our evolutionary journey in our present universe, entered this present universe as elementals therein, and we have grown through all the stages upwards until at present we are human beings; and we are still growing, still evolving, still pressing forwards. Do you know what evolution really is? I have often told you: evolution is bringing out what is within, unfolding the latent powers locked up within the deathless center which every human is at the core of the core of himself. Infinitude lies there, deathlessness lies there, and therefore the pathway of

growth is endless and beginningless.

The way by which to grow is to shed the personal in order to become impersonal. Do you understand? To shed, to cast aside, the limited in order to expand. How can the chick leave the egg without breaking its shell? How can the inner man expand without breaking the shell of the lower selfhood? How can the god within manifest itself — that god in each one of you, your own divine consciousness — until the imperfect, the small, the constricted, the personal in other words, has been surpassed, overpassed, left behind, abandoned, cast aside? It is in impersonality that lies immortality; in personality lies death. Therefore expand, grow, evolve, become what you are within! The gods call to us constantly — not in human words, but in those soundless symbols transmitted to us along the inner ethers which man's heart and soul interpret as spiritual instinct, aspiration, love, self-forgetfulness; and the whole import of what these voiceless messages are, is: "Come up higher!"

We humans too were elementals once; and of course when I say we, I don't mean the present evolved human being, because that would be absurd; but I mean that we in far bygone periods of cosmic time were elementals beginning our evolutionary growth in this our present home-universe.

Now, mark, my friends, what I shall now say to you: there is a deduction, a very important one, that I am going to ask you now to draw; and be not affrighted at it. All evolution is change; all change in evolution is growth, expansion. You cannot become something better than what you are now without leaving this present behind.

Consequently, as this law applies as much to the spiritual and psychical realms as it does to the physical and astral, we draw the following deduction: There is no immortal soul in man. Do you



understand? I thank the gods that it is so! Because, if there were a genuinely immortal soul in me, that soul could never grow, because it could not change; I should be forever in crystallized imperfection because, if I changed in one atom, and by one iota, immortality would instantly vanish, because I should have become something else by the degree of that change for betterment; and evolution which is change is uninterrupted and continuous and has proceeded throughout eternity. Do you now understand the idea? This is the heart of the explanation of the teaching of the Lord Gautama the Buddha — who was the very incarnation of love and wisdom on earth because manifesting the powers of a divinity, his own inner god, his own inner dhyani, as theosophists say, the celestial entity of which he was the human expression or vehicle. And Jesus the Syrian sage and avatara said exactly the same in substance when he taught: "I and my Father are one."

There are worlds in boundless space, there are universes in the boundless reaches of infinitude, in which the lowest grade of beings, the elementals of such world or universe, are higher in their own courses of life than those entities whom we humans call gods — and take this conception alone as an instance of the inspiring vision that theosophy gives: so grand, so great, so wide-reaching is the theosophical teaching. All beings are interwoven together, all beings are interlinked together. There are only relative high and low; for the forces which course through us all and inspire us all and guide us all and make us all what we are, are fundamentally the same. Is it not obvious?

We change from age to age, growing always greater. Do we remain forever the same? No. We change from age to age, and this is evolutionary growth! I know not a more spirit-killing teaching in the philosophical or religious history of the globe than the teaching that man has one immortal soul which was at one

time created and which thereafter is destined to endure thus for aye. This is crystallized immortality in imperfection, with no genuine growth towards a change in spiritual and cosmic values, and therefore possessing no prospect of cosmic hope! What wonder is it that men therefore ask themselves: "What is the use of trying? What is the use of trying to become something nobler than what I am?" I do not say this unkindly, my Brothers, but I stand here as a theosophical teacher; and it is my duty to teach what I myself have been taught as best I can. "Thus have I received; thus must I pass it on."

Growth is eternal; evolution is without beginning, and it is endless. We pass through all the mansions of life, as the ages of eternity slowly stream by into the limitless ocean of the past. But we go steadily along, marching into an ever greater grandeur — into ever greater light. It is because of this fact that so many of the occultist and mystical societies of the world have proclaimed: "Our aim is to gain a greater light. Light, more light!"

The teaching that I have given to you is simple; anyone can understand it who thinks over it honestly. It has been taught in all ages, in all races of men, and taught by the giants in intellect possessing the deepest spiritual vision of the human race. Consult the literatures of mankind and you will see that I tell you truth. The great visionaries have seen it, the great teachers taught it, and all inferior men have been comforted by it.

These beings which fill universal nature full in all their incomputable hosts have been called by different races of men by different and varying names. But you can always tell to which class or race of these beings a particular title appertains, because the attributes of such beings are usually described by the title-name. In the medieval times in European countries the Philosophers of Fire, as they were called, taught about four

classes of elemental beings, as respectively belonging to the element of fire, and to the element of air, to the element of water, and to the element of earth — these four elements not being the fire and the air and the water and the earth of our physical world alone, but these four names were words used technically; and the names of the inhabitants of these four so-called elements respectively were the salamanders, the sylphs, the undines, and the gnomes. Often these four classes of inhabitants were called by the generic term fairies. And the instinct of humanity throughout countless ages has produced its manifold stories and legends about the fairies so called.

I was reading the other day about a theosophical writer, who is a Fellow, I believe, of some other Theosophical Society than ours and who, I believe, has claimed to have photographed fairies; and these photographs were described as showing fairies clad, more or less, in medieval European costume. And I said to myself, how accommodating those fairies are! Why should they be dressed in costumes of the humans of European medieval days, unless perhaps they are described as so clad because medieval writers depict them as wearing the clothing and costumes of their own medieval periods? Why should fairies retain medieval costume? Why should they not be dressed in top hats and swallow-tail coats, or in sweaters and puttees, or again in hoop skirts, crinolines, and bustles? Possibly five hundred years from now some other speculative writer will photograph with some etheric instrument of that future age — or think he does — pictures of entities clad as we at present are, and say: "Here! See my pictures of fairies!" It should seem obvious that one can photograph only that which can be photographed, and which the photographic plate chemically prepared can entrap as an image borne to it on the wings of material light.

Whether we call these entities nature sprites or nature spirits, or

call them elementals as we theosophists do, or call them *devas* or *devatas* as the Hindus do, or call them by some other name, or call them *daimonia* as the Greeks and Romans did, or speak of them as elves and kobolds, or sylphs and undines, or fairies, or whatnot, as medieval Europeans have done — the mere name matters not at all. Let us get the truth about them, as to what they are, where they dwell, how they came into their dwelling places, how long they are going to stay there, when they will leave, and what their purpose in dwelling there is. All this is knowing something about them indeed.

You can get all this by proper study. An easier way is by cultivating certain faculties which every human being has latent within him. These faculties can be cultivated. The first rule leading to success in such cultivation of faculty is given in the answer to the inevitable question: "For what art thou doing this? Is it in order to benefit mankind, in order to help the world of which you are an inseparable part, or is it for some selfish or quasi-selfish purpose of your own?"

Selfishness is an infallible bar in gaining knowledge in occultism. You cannot join the angels, to speak in Christian terms, unless your own being has become angelic. You cannot confabulate with the gods, unless you yourself have become godlike and can breathe that sublime ether where they sit on their azure seats of power — their own spiritual selfhood. The nature spirits, the elementals, cannot confabulate with men until they have become like men. In order to come into touch with the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace — our elder brothers — you must become at least somewhat like unto them. Then all that they have is yours for the asking. Such is the law, and it is just, and it is comforting.

Be self-forgetful, be kindly, keep your heart filled with impersonal

love, forgive, and then you will get the vision, because you will have become unselfishly selfless — which means impersonal. There will then be no veils blinding you. Your mind will not be filled with the fevered thoughts of your own daily wishes for personal gain; but your mind will have expanded *pari passu* with your heart, so that heart and mind will take in and embrace others than your limited, personal, restricted self. Do you understand this? The secret lies in expansion! You must grow and expand in order to gain knowledge of what lies over the horizon! There is the secret of impersonal growth and it is the secret of gaining both knowledge and power.

Yes, these nature spirits, or by whatever name you choose to call them, have been written about by romancers of all times; they have been written about by philosophers and religionists; their existence and their nature have been taught in the esoteric Mystery schools of ancient times. Some of these beings are inexpressibly beautiful; others are horrible. Some are friendly, and some are malignant to men. But all have their places in the universal scheme of things. What is poison, for instance, to human flesh, may be like the elixir of life to other entities. Poisons can cure as well as kill. Therefore judge not because some classes of these invisible entities are unfriendly to us men. They also have their place in the scheme of things, even as we humans have. They too are growing and learning entities on their upward way.

There is nothing at all so dangerous to the explorer in these invisible realms as fear. Fear is fatal. You must be beyond fear; you must replace fear with love. He whose heart is filled with impersonal love fears never. Then you are safe. And you cannot love if your whole being is personalized, if it is constricted, if it is selfish. Love and it are opposite poles. Therefore love impersonally; and an excellent practice, in order to cultivate this

sublime power, this grand occult power which can move even the hills, is to learn to forgive your fellows. If you bear even a grudge, then you poison your own life-stream. Therefore, for your own protection, hate not; for you yourself, the hater will be the first to suffer.

I tell you, my Brothers, that ethics are based on nature's fundamental laws. Ethics are not mere conventions. And when I speak of ethics, I don't mean any one human being's particular idea of what ethics are, but the grand moral principles of human conduct which the ages have proved and found to be grand.

Bulwer Lytton, the author of *Zanoni*, makes the wise Mejnour say to Glyndon:

"Now in space there are millions of beings, not literally spiritual, for they have all, like the animalculae unseen by the naked eye, certain forms of matter, though matter so delicate. . . . Yet, in truth, these races differ most widely . . . *some of surpassing wisdom, some of horrible malignity; some hostile as fiends to men, others, settle as messengers between earth and heaven.*"

And why should these entities not have these different and varying types of character? How about us human beings? Are all human beings perfect? Don't we humans show these same virtues and these same vices? Is it not true that some men hate and are as malignant as fiends to their brothers? Is it not true that other human beings are like gods on earth, and that to be in their presence is a blessing? Kindliness and love and wisdom radiate from them like rays from the sun.

H. P. Blavatsky, the great founder of the Theosophical Society in our own age, comments upon this extract from *Zanoni*:

Such is the insufficient sketch of Elemental Beings void of

Divine Spirit, given by one whom many with reason believed to know more than he was prepared to admit in the face of an incredulous public. We have underlined the few lines *than which nothing can be more graphically descriptive*. An Initiate, having a personal knowledge of these creatures, could do no better.

But these elemental beings are far inferior to man. Man stands midway along the stairway of life, or the pathway of evolving entities, between the gods on the one hand, and these beings beneath him on the other hand. And yet, could we (which is impossible — but could we) eliminate them from the universe, take them out from the Universe, then the universe would fall to pieces and crumble into impalpable cosmic dust, because these minor beings, these growing entities below man, are the elemental spirits of nature, what theosophists call the elementals, and in very truth they form the material fabric and structure of the universe. They surround us always: we pass without knowing it through the various grades of ether and substance in which they live and dwell and have their being; we breathe them in and exhale them again; they are in our flesh, in the air we breathe, they are in the water, in the earth, in the plants, in the spaces. They are everywhere; and they are with human beings and with the gods, the grand cosmic workers; they have their places in the cosmic work just as men have and just as the gods have. They all help to the same cosmic ends; and that is why they are here. They have their inevitable places, and they are growing and evolving entities just as we humans are growing and evolving entities; they will grow and evolve and finally become men, but then we humans shall have grown to become gods.

Forget it not: we once in far bygone aeons were just such nature sprites or elementals. But even then — just as it is at present — locked up within each one of us then existing as an elemental

being, there was the inner god, unable to express itself as yet because the vehicle was so imperfect, even as the vehicle now in us human beings is too imperfect for a full manifestation of the splendor of the inner divinity; but nevertheless the inner god was always there as the spiritual point, the vital and central point of consciousness; and let us not forget also that these gods themselves are growing, changing, advancing, evolving.

There is no death, there is no death anywhere; there is but composition and dissolution. And it is between these two continuously interchanging states of endless life that we learn; it is by means of these two processes that we grow. It is thus that the child becomes the man, changing, passing, from childhood to manhood: the child was, and then is not, but the man succeeds him. No entity anywhere at any time remains changeless, for this would be an immortality in crystallized imperfection, and the idea is both horrible and repulsive because it is flagrantly untrue.

Yes, the elementals are everywhere about us. The blood which flows in my body is driven by their power, guided, however, by my automatic mental action — the vegetative part of my mental constitution. I am born of the elementals; they have born me this body, and I have been the grand architect of this body of mine through my overshadowing soul; and these elemental workers have followed the impress which my vitality has given to them and have builded for me the temple, the physical temple of flesh, in which I live. To them I am a god, just as to us human beings the gods seem so grand. And yet in the realms of the divine, the gods who inhabit these realms are but imperfect entities compared with other superior spheres inhabited by entities still more sublime.

The elementals are growing beings, learning entities, evolving elemental souls, passing through phase after phase of existence in



innumerable embodiments succeeding each other throughout countless time. I pray you understand this idea. It is as simple as it is grand, and it is a wonderful key; it is a key to many great mysteries.

I have some questions here, which I have been requested to answer. I will do so briefly.

There is a school of theosophists developing a western occultism. I have noticed that you never mention western occultism but seem to confine yourself exclusively to Tibetan or Hindu occultism. Why should not the West develop a system of occultism of its own, a union of Eastern esotericism with the proved discoveries of modern science? This, I believe, is the object of the school I refer to. Why should it not be supported as a progressive step in theosophy?

Why not? But nevertheless the statement as regards myself is not true. Often have I spoken of the great occultists of the West. But it is an absurdity to suppose that there can be an Eastern occultism, and a Western occultism, and a Northern occultism, and a Southern occultism. Occultism is simply the science of the things which are hid. You cannot have an Eastern chemistry, and a Western chemistry, and a Northern chemistry, and a Southern chemistry. Chemistry is chemistry, however much schools which teach chemistry may differ from each other. It is an absurdity to talk about the occultism of the West except in so far as the literatures treat the fundamental subject differently from the manner in which Orientals have treated the occultism of the East. Occultism is the science of the things that are hid, that are unseen; and no true occultist exists except he who has been initiated. Mystics exist — many of them — without having passed through the initiatory rites; and there have been many grand mystics; mysticisms of many kinds exist, according to the

temperament of the writer or the thinker or the feeler. But there is but one occultism — the science of things unseen.

Therefore teaching the occultism of any people, whether of the East or of the West, whether of the North or of the South, is teaching universal occultism; and merely to consult the literatures of Oriental writers on occultism or Western writers on occultism is merely an exercise in literary instruction, and that exercise is a good thing to follow; but nevertheless there are not two or three or more kinds of occultism. There cannot be. If so, then genuine occultism would be untrue. It is the science and elucidation of the things which are hid, unseen, and which comprise, as I have told you on other occasions from this platform, the structure and operations of the universe in which we and all the hosts of entities visible and invisible live and move and have our being; and this explanation means especially of the invisible universe — the illimitable ranges along the endless stairway of life which obviously our imperfect physical eyes cannot see, and which our imperfectly developed brain-mind finds it so difficult to understand.

So far as a union of Eastern esotericism with the proved discoveries of modern science is concerned, I lectured from this platform some few years ago, for some six months or more, on that very subject; and these lectures have been printed in a book (*Theosophy and Modern Science*; republished as [Man in Evolution](#)) which anyone of you can read.

The next question that I have been asked to answer this afternoon is the following:

I consider myself practically a theosophist —

He has a good opinion of himself. I *try* to be a theosophist.

— although as yet I have joined no Theosophical Society. I

admire the loftiness of the thought in your lectures, but notice that you stress mostly selflessness and do not give much attention to branches of occultism that interest many theosophists. In another Theosophical Society, they also claim to teach selflessness but in addition give interesting information regarding occult powers. Do you not think that more people would join your Society if you would do the same?

It is quite possible that we should gain members more quickly, but I am inclined to think that I don't want that kind of inquirers to predominate in our membership. The Theosophical Society is constantly teaching the wisdom of the gods; and I call upon every genuine heart and thinking mind to join with us in our sublime work. Come then, and help us! I can show you the way leading to your own inner god; but if any one of you comes thinking that you are going to gain powers for yourself merely in order to put it over on your fellows, then I pray to you to keep out. Cleanse your hearts, my Brothers; then when this is done, come, and both my hands will be ready to take yours. "A clean mind, a pure heart, an unveiled spiritual perception" — even the beginning of these three sublime virtues will entitle you to all the wisdom of the gods, given to you progressively as you grow.

So far as occultism goes, I have talked about that sublime subject on many, many different occasions. I teach it. Teaching is part of my theosophical duty; but the more secret things of occultism that I teach are kept well secret. I will tell you this: self-advertisement for the mere end of gaining adherents puts those who thus advertise their wares — where? The man, the organization, the society, which has something valuable to give is soon discovered by those who are hungry for the truth that can be found there. Inquirers soon discover it. They discover where it is; and thither they go. Any human being believing in the only prerequisite to

fellowship in The Theosophical Society, which sole prerequisite is an honest belief in universal brotherhood, is cordially invited to join us.

Theosophists have no dogmas. You don't have to believe any thing on blind faith. I tell you that fact on every Sunday when I speak to you, and if anything I say to you at any time seems to you to be wrong, reject it — and thus be an honest man. In doing so you are at least exercising your powers of spiritual judgment; and even though you make a mistake, as it is probable that you will, nevertheless in continuing that spiritual exercise you will grow spiritually. We in The Theosophical Society are not teachers of blind faith.

Some theosophists say that we should develop our powers and become adepts, while others say we should simply be unselfish and work for humanity and that the powers will come of themselves. If we develop our powers and thereby come closer to the great Masters, will not unselfishness follow as a logical sequence?

No! The mere developing of powers is easy, very easy; and it is precisely the thing that the *chela*, the disciple, the pupil, is taught *not* to do — taught not to try to develop powers when he takes his first steps on the path of occultism. The magicians of the African deserts, the voodoo doctors, the barbarians of the earth, can easily teach you, for instance, how to hypnotize. This is not at all difficult to do. But why do you want to learn hypnotism? To gain for yourself some selfish advantage or to satisfy the selfish craving for power. Do you think that any true spiritual teacher would teach such things as that? The teacher's duty is to bring light, peace, help, consolation, to broken hearts and to souls afire with the hunger for truth. As regards powers, these will come in good time, and they will be the spiritual powers; and the spiritual

powers are the grandest and most potent of all, and they will come only when you shall have learned to use them wisely and unselfishly. They cannot be used otherwise.

No, you cannot approach the *asrama*, the seat of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace, merely by developing your powers. The only way to reach them is, as I have told you before, by becoming like unto them. Will ye reach the gods? Then become godlike. If ye wish to be disciples of the great Masters of Wisdom and Peace, then become like unto them; and if the wish to do this is in your heart, you will be shown the way. The Masters are waiting and ready; but they accept as disciples only those who can understand what they teach (is it not obvious?), and who can bear the burden of the responsibilities which accompany conferred knowledge and developed powers. Powers then will come to you — spiritual powers, intellectual powers, psychical powers, even physical powers; but no spiritual teacher will ever teach you how to develop your powers, except on spiritual and moral and intellectual grounds and after long and arduous tests safely passed through, because unless you are ready, spiritually and intellectually prepared, he would be putting an engine of destruction into your hands, and you, the receiver, would be the first victim of the fatal gift.

Men in general do not arm lunatics — who, alas! are among us — and send them out to wreak havoc in the world. We do not put poisons and explosives in the hands of little children and then send them forth to play. Such likewise is the principle of prudence and wisdom which lies in the laws of occult training. But be like unto the Masters, my Brothers, and you will find them, because in very fact they will come to you. And then in time your powers will develop as easily and naturally as the flower grows. This is a promise; it is a statement of exact and literal truth. Too often has it been supposed that putting power into unprepared

hands is the way by which to reach the gods. The idea is all wrong. No human being can gain spiritual powers until he has proved that he is prepared to use them aright; and if any human being has a contrary idea it is because he is either thoughtless or evil-minded.

The following is a question, friends, which I was very doubtful about answering. I will read it:

I was formerly a member of the Theosophical Society of which Annie Besant is the head, but now am a follower of our revered teacher, J. Krishnamurti, who has shown us the true path to enlightenment. Many of my former comrades are criticizing our teacher, J. Krishnamurti, as having departed from theosophy. As I suppose you have no prejudices in this matter, I wish to ask your opinion as to whether it is reasonable to do this, seeing that the two leaders of Mrs. Besant's society — Mrs. Besant herself and Bishop Leadbeater — endorsed our teacher, J. Krishnamurti, as the incarnation of a world-soul, and they themselves accepted him as their teacher? If they have changed their minds, do we have to do the same? Should we not follow the world-teacher in preference? So far as I know, although both are of course very advanced theosophists, they do not claim to be world-teachers.

I answer this question with extreme reluctance. It is not really my business to deal with the internal affairs of some other Theosophical Society; and furthermore, Mrs. Besant, Mr. Leadbeater, and Mr. Krishnamurti are not members of ours and have naught to do with us. They are leading spirits in another Theosophical Society, and I have no doubt that all three are trying to do their best, and I suppose that they do what they think is right; and had I known from whom this question came, I should have returned the question and have suggested that the matter be

placed before Mrs. Besant or Mr. Leadbeater or Mr. Krishnamurti.

Of course it seems that the querent, the questioner, thinks that Mr. Krishnamurti is a world-teacher. I do not think that he is. I think that Mr. Krishnamurti is a well-meaning, kindly-hearted young man. I see no signs at all of his being a world-teacher or any other sign that would induce me to think that he is approaching that sublime state. I see in him and in his teachings neither the profound wisdom, nor the intellectual penetration, nor — and this perhaps is the real test — the esoteric knowledge. But this of course is *my* opinion. I have no doubt that Mr. Krishnamurti is a most excellent young man trying to do what he thinks is right; and if any have found help in following his teachings — simple and, in a way, only a moderately successful rehash of some of the teachings of the Hindu Upanishads — then I am glad of it for their sakes; and I wish Mr. Krishnamurti well as long as he continues in his efforts to help others.

As regards Mrs. Besant's and Mr. Leadbeater's former and present opinion of their protege, I have naught to say. That is their affair alone and it is for them to give any answer that they may please to this question. It is not my business. I could, of course, tell you what I think; but what good would that be to you? However, perhaps as the question has been asked of me, as a theosophical teacher it is my duty to make a few further comments, and therefore I will go a little farther and say: my heart has ached because of the troubled situation of brother-theosophists in that Society. I would give anything if I could bring help to them. I have already extended my right hand in genuine fellowship, and it is still outstretched. I have received heartfelt responses from many individuals, although not from all; and I am encouraged.

But the troubles of these other theosophists in their own Society are their own affair, and they must find a way out for themselves.

If I can give any help at any time, and in any way, I shall be heart-happy to do so. I cannot do more than that. They have brought forth teachings other than the original teachings of the founders of the Theosophical Society, and if those who accept these new teachings find them good and are satisfied, then I have naught to say to them on that score. But how can I bring help to a man who won't accept it? I feel that I cannot answer at greater length this question as to whether members of Mrs. Besant's Society should follow her or should follow Mr. Krishnamurti, her one-time protege. That is a question which I feel it would be improper for me even to try to answer.

My Brothers, before closing I want to tell you something that I bring to your attention on every Sunday afternoon when we meet here together: it is a recalling to your mind and to your heart of your divine ancestry. You as human beings sit before me as human beings; but looking beyond and behind the veil of flesh, I can see the sublime lineaments of a god in each one of you. I can sense the divinity sleeping in the heart of your heart; and I feel, as I stand here and speak to you, that I am addressing an audience of the gods as it were in highest Olympus, seated on their azure seats of power, these azure seats being for each one of them his own divine selfhood. Men, you are gods feebly expressing through your imperfect human vehicle, through your imperfectly evolved humanity, the divine powers and faculties in you.

Oh! if I could implant this seed of thought and feeling in your hearts and minds, so that it would take root and grow there and thus change your lives, I should feel that I, a man, had done a god's work — the work of a god! But the god within me appeals to the god within you, and urges me to tell you: Man, know thyself, thy inner divine self, for it is one with boundless infinitude, of which you are, each one of you, an inseparable part.

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Vol 2, No 19

Contents

**Second Series: No. 19 (January 12, 1931)**

**MYSTERIES OF SLEEP AND DEATH**

(Lecture delivered November 23, 1930)

CONTENTS: Sleep and death are brothers. — Every awakening is a new incarnation. — The essential difference between sleep and death. Death is a fulfillment of spiritual yearnings. — What causes dreams? — Dreams of the *post-mortem* period. — The marvel of the growing child. — Does an extra-cosmic God create your destiny? — Where do our inner powers come from? — Death is a time of assimilation. — What speakers on psychism say. — An explanation of the varying quality of dreams. — The length of the devachanic period. — What about the utter materialist? — A word about suicide. — Leonhard Euler, the Swiss mathematician, on "Sleep and Death." — Do you need proof of the strength of your inner god? — Katherine Tingley's Invocation: "O My Divinity!" — Did a world-soul use the body of H. P. Blavatsky as an instrument? — The divine labor of the Masters of Wisdom. — Have the fiery courage of the god in your heart of hearts!

Sleep and death! For how many ages have men thought over these two, these two interruptions of human consciousness: one so obvious, sleep, that we all are cognizant of it and yet pause in wonder when we think of it; and the other, death, an apparent utter cessation of consciousness, presenting a problem, so some say, that no human spirit has ever solved. And they say this untruly and unwisely; for I tell you, my Brothers, that each one of you, given the right key, can solve all the mysteries of sleep and therefore of death, because sleep and death are psycho-physical brothers. *Hypnos kai thanatos adelphoi*, said the ancient Greeks:

"Sleep and death are brothers." It is true. Exactly the same succession of events takes place in death that ensues when we lay ourselves in bed at night and drop off into that wonderland of consciousness we call sleep; and when we awaken rested, composed, refreshed, reinvigorated, and ready for the fray and problems of the daily life again, we find that we are the identical persons that we were before the sleep began. In Sleep we have a break of consciousness; in death also there is a break of consciousness. In sleep we have dreams, or a greater or less unconsciousness; and in death we have dreams — blissful, wondrous, spiritual — or blank unconsciousness. As we awaken from sleep, so do we return to earth again in the next reincarnation in order to take up the tasks of our karmic life in a new human body.

Here then is one difference between sleep and death, but a difference of circumstance and by no means of kind: after sleep we return to the same body; after death we take upon ourselves a new body. We incarnate, we reincarnate, every day when we wake from sleep; because what has passed, what has happened to us, what has ensued, while the physical body is asleep, is identical, but of very short term, with what takes place, with what ensues, with what happens, when and after we die.

Death is an absolute sleep, a perfect sleep, a perfect rest; sleep is an incomplete death, an imperfect death, and often troubled with fevered and uneasy dreams on account of the imperfection of the conscious entity — call it soul, if you like — which the human ego is. Death and sleep are brothers. What happens in sleep takes place in death — but perfectly so. What happens in death and after death, takes place when we sleep — but imperfectly so. We incarnate anew every time when we awake, because awaking means that the entity which temporarily has left the body during sleep — the brain-mind, the astral-physical consciousness —

returns into that body, incarnates itself anew, and thus the body awakens with the psychical fire again invigorating the blood and the tissues and the nerves. Sleep and death are brothers.

Death has no real terrors. There is no death, if by that term we mean a perfect and complete, an utter and absolute, cessation of all that is. Examine yourselves, examine your consciousness, examine your feelings, examine your thoughts, look into your own self, test it, and you will find that what I tell you is true. Have you ever feared in going to your bed and in lying down and in losing consciousness? No. It is so natural; it is so happy an occurrence; it is so restful. Nature rests and the tired brain reposes; and the inner constitution, the soul if you like so to call it, is temporarily withdrawn during the sleeping period into the higher consciousness of the human being — the ray, so to speak, is absorbed back into the inner spiritual sun.

Just exactly the same thing takes place at death; but in death the worn-out garment is cast aside; the repose also is long, utterly beautiful, utterly blissful, filled with glorious and magnificent dreams, and with hopes unrealized which now are realized in the consciousness of the spiritual being. This dreaming condition is a panorama of the fulfillment of all our noblest hopes and of all our dreams of unrealized spiritual yearnings. It is a fulfillment of them all in glory and bliss and perfect completion and plenitude.

Why do we dream when we sleep? Is it the reflex action of the molecules of the cortex of the brain, or an automatic reaction of the nervous system of the body? Explanations such as these that have been given at various times contain each one its own small modicum of truth. But all such explanations describe merely the bare physical mechanisms of the thing. Behind the mechanism there is a mechanic, so to speak. Dreaming is a withdrawal of the self-consciousness, and it is this which produces sleep; and, on the

other hand, it is the greater, the perfect, the absolute, withdrawal of the same self-consciousness, of the thinking and self-conscious entity leaving the body — casting it aside as a worn-out garment — that brings about death: yes, and this is the case even in the death which comes as the sequel of disease, or which comes as the sequel of accident or of violence. The mechanisms in all cases are the same.

We dream when we sleep because of the thoughts that we have had, and the emotions that we have experienced, and the deeds that we have done during the waking day tiring the brain. Similarly we dream when we die; but our dreams in this case are not at all distorted by the influences of the psycho-physical part of us, as always takes place in the dreams of mere sleep; but the body being cast off at death and the astral part being left behind to decompose in the astral realms, the spiritual nature is finally freed and thereafter feels no terrestrial influences more. The soul has now returned to its own spiritual source; it has withdrawn into the bosom of the spiritual part of the human being, into the part much higher than the human soul is; and there the soul, purified of all material yearnings, rests in its own sphere, in perfect peace, in perfect bliss, dreaming dreams of all the deeds that it longed to do and could not do; seeing the accomplishment in its consciousness of all the nobler acts that it wanted to achieve in the life last past and that it could not or did not achieve — dreams of spiritual beauty, dreams of spiritual happiness, dreams of spiritual peace, dreams of unspeakable reality; because these dreams of the *post-mortem* period, being spiritual dreams, are more intensely vivid, more intensely real, to the experiencing consciousness than is our original consciousness in the physical body when awake.

This physical body of ours interferes with our perception of reality, and dims and tarnishes our vision and nobler feelings. It

beclouds the consciousness; it weighs it down; it distorts both thought and feeling. In physical life the passions of all kinds have their play in all their fevered heat; but after death all that is left behind; there is then nothing at all to interfere with the utter bliss of the disembodied entity, which is now freed.

Death and sleep are brothers. Nay, more, they are one, and only called brothers because they are two aspects, so to say, of the same thing — the spiritual and the physical — two phases, two manifestations, of the same thing, which is consciousness.

Pause a moment in thought: A little child is born. Its faculties at birth are undeveloped. It shows but little more actual intelligence when born than does the young of the beast. But as the days fly by, as the weeks become the months and the months the years, we see a great wonder taking place before our eyes. We see the growth of self-consciousness; we see a marvelous and yet familiar fire of understanding in the eye of the little one; we begin to see the self-consciousness of the supernal light of spirit. The inner faculties, including the mind, are beginning to show themselves; and this process continues until adulthood is reached, and the man is then in the plenitude of his powers for that life so far as evolution has brought them forth.

But where do these inner powers come from? Don't let your minds be psychologized by the ideas of the materialism of the past, which have been abandoned by the leading thinkers today, scientific and other. Where do these powers come from that the child shows? I repeat. We see intellect inscribing works of genius which shake the hearts of men, giving birth to all the beautiful things which ornament human life — we know and love the poet, the seer, the philosopher, the religious teacher, producing all the wonders that the genius of man brings forth — and I ask you again, where do they come from? Furthermore, in following the

same line of thought, why is it that some men are so great, and others less great and others less great still? And above those who are so great are the nobler scattered few — the noblest flowers of the human race, the titanic intellects and spiritual seers of humanity. Again I ask you: where do these powers come from?

Did a God create a man so, according to the old outworn theory, predestinating one child to the hovel of misery, and predestinating some other child to be born in the palace of the prince; predestinating one child to be a genius, and some other man to live his life long hungering for self-expression and unable to bring forth what is within him from lack of power to self-express the faculties of the inner god? Will you believe that — that some God, some extracosmic God, created men so? Then you belong to the past ages, you are a Medievalist in mind, and before you stand the unsolvable problems of cosmic and human responsibility and justice.

Theosophists say that these inner powers in a man were developed in other former lives on earth, lives lived in the past; so that when the reincarnating ego comes back to earth on its cyclical pilgrimage around the spheres, spheres inner and spheres outer, it comes back as a treasure-house of talents, talents and genius laid up in the treasure-house of itself: faculty, power, both being the fruits of human experience, such experience as you are gaining even now every day. The reincarnating ego comes back rested, reposed, from its *Devachan*, as theosophists call it, from the "heaven world," if you like the phrase better; and it comes back rested, having assimilated the spiritual experience which it had garnered to itself, to its consciousness, in these wondrous and vivid "dreams" of the devachan. The *post-mortem* period is a period of spiritual and intellectual digestion, of assimilation of the experiences acquired during the life just closed or previously closed. So also is sleep a period of

assimilation, and the rebuilding of the tired entity which sleeps. This is a brief outline of the close similarity, indeed identity, of death and sleep.

Death and sleep are essentially one. Sleep is an incomplete and imperfect death. Death is a complete and perfect sleep. Consider: consciousness, relative immobility on the bed, then lack of consciousness, followed by dreams, or perhaps unconsciousness. Death is an absolute sleep, a perfect sleep, in which the enshrouding body and the inferior part of the inner constitution of man have been cast aside as so much deadweight enclosing the fiery consciousness of the spiritual part of man's constitution. Otherwise, the two processes respectively of death and of sleep are identic. Sleep and death are one process expressing itself in two phases of manifestation.

You hear a great deal sometimes from so-called speakers on psychism (and I desire to use no words that may hurt or wound anyone) about what happens after death or during sleep. What they tell you is, practically all of it, fragments of misunderstood teachings of the old religions of the Orient — grand old religions as they even yet are, wonderful when you have the key to them, but easily misunderstood and therefore misinterpreted by those who possess not the keys to open their real meaning.

As a matter of fact, when a man sleeps — lays himself down on his bed and drops off, as people say, into unconsciousness — the astral body of him, the link between the physical body and the next superior part of his inner constitution, slowly oozes from the physical body and remains outside of it, but always very close to the physical body and attached to that physical body by astral-vital bonds of union; and when this vacating of the physical body is imperfect and not complete, then dreams, and usually evil dreams, trouble the sleeping brain. Dreams themselves may be



dreams of beauty, they may be dreams of horror, they may be intermediate between the two, or they may be trifling dreams, and it is common to speak of evil dreams and good dreams; but whatever the type of dream may be, all varieties of dream depend upon, first, the life that the man leads generally, and second, upon what the man has last thought and last felt and last done before he fell asleep. Just so is the case of the devachan, the heaven world, after death, except that in the case of the devachan only dreams of spiritual beauty take place. If the man during his life has had lofty aspirations, has aspired towards, has yearned and hoped and labored for, lofty and beautiful things, and has been unable to translate these yearnings and aspirations into action, then all his devachanic dreams are sublime; for his spiritual consciousness is at work in a most vivid and real way, running over the gamut of all the things that it longed to do and hoped to do and could not do but now is doing — in thought-consciousness, which men call dreams.

He who was a musician on earth, in the devachan weaves in thought music of indescribable beauty; the poet in the devachan makes poems which are spiritually unearthly in their splendor; the philosopher, due to his spiritual faculty of going behind the veil of the outward seeming, when in the devachanic state goes into the very womb of being in thought. In all cases, the entity in the devachan, in the heaven world, dreams his beautiful dreams exactly according to the way he lived in the last life, and according to the thoughts of grandeur and beauty and unrealized splendor that he had when last living in the body.

Contrariwise, those who have led an ignoble existence, whose physical lifetime had been brightened by no thought of beauty or of impersonality or of self-forgetfulness, and who had no yearnings at all of a lofty kind — what is there for such death-sleeping entities to dream of? Little indeed. And therefore their

*post-mortem* state is one of almost complete unconsciousness, because during the life last passed they built up no treasury of aspiration, of love, of hope, of yearning for sublime things; and consequently the mind rests in unconsciousness, for it has no seeds in itself producing dreams of beauty and splendor.

Thirdly, the man who is intermediate between one of noble soul and one of ignoble soul has a devachanic or heaven-world state which is indeed one of dreams, but of dreams much less vivid, much less clear, slight, vague; and his rest period in the devachan is short. Do you understand the idea? It is easily understood.

The man who is noble in heart and in intellect, who cannot find an outlet on earth for the expression of his inner faculties, lives long in the devachan or heaven world after his decease, because in that devachan he finds an expansive expression of all the best parts of his inner constitution, of his psycho-spiritual being; and his stay in the devachan or heaven world may be for several thousands of years. On the other hand, the utter materialist, the man of base, ignoble existence, has after death a period of almost complete unconsciousness, and, furthermore, at its completion returns to take up a body in a worse condition of physical existence than the one he previously was in. Such a man had his chances of improvement, spiritually and mentally and morally, in the last life, and either ignored those chances or neglected them. He failed to pass the examinations of life in his last incarnation on earth, and thus by nature's laws is demoted to a lower state of human existence.

You see, therefore, that man cannot trifle with nature's laws. Man makes himself to be exactly what he becomes: what he wills, what he desires, what he instinctively turns to, he will obtain. If his desires and yearnings are sublime and lofty, he proceeds steadily forward in evolution from good to better; but if he neglects his

chances and lives a gross life involved in physical appetites and yearnings, he returns to the same thing in his next incarnation, but on a lower grade than he had before, and his pathway is downwards — unless, indeed, he reforms his character and begins to climb anew.

Yes, keep the thought in your mind, my Brothers, that sleep and death are one — not two, but one. Remember that when you lie down to sleep on your bed you die a little death. This will cast out fear from your hearts when you realize its truth. Death will thus become familiar to you. The thought of death will become friendly; and when your time comes to die you will die gladly and you will die with a will. I repeat that death and sleep are one. Sleep is an imperfect, incomplete death; and death is an absolute, perfect, complete sleep; but sleep and death are essentially one process of change.

Remember that you are a child of infinitude, each one of you, inseparable from the boundless universe in which we all live and move and have our being; remember that you are well taken care of by almighty nature's laws, which brought you here, which will take you out from this life, and which will infallibly guide you on your way. Trust yourself then to death in happy confidence; die with a strong and happy will; die with gladness when your time comes; be not afraid. Mock at the phantom of death — mock at the old hideous specter which the fearful imagination of ignorance wove in the hearts and minds of men. Mock at that specter, that evil thing of the imagination! Cast it out! Remember that you are well taken care of.

What ye will receive either in life or in death, and how ye will receive it, lies wholly in your own control. Have you dealt well and wisely with the talents — to use the metaphor of the Christian New Testament — that have been entrusted to your hands? Have

ye fought a good fight? Have you been faithful to your charge? Have you been clean in life and decent in thought? Angels, indeed, the teachers do not expect men to be; but men can at least realize that they are men — expressions in physical body of an inner, divine being, the inner god of each one of us. As ye live, as ye think, as ye feel, and further as ye act correspondingly, so will be your sleep — either the sleep at night or the sleep of that longer period which men call death. When ye rest — in the body or out of the body — ye will dream in either case, digesting, assimilating, and building into yourself as character what you have made yourself to be. Every man is the maker of himself — for man is his own parent. Naught else rules your destiny, naught else guides your evolution.

Ye are gods feebly manifesting your transcendent divine powers through bodies of flesh. Live accordingly, and receive the guerdon of the gods when ye die. Be not afraid.

I tell you, my Brothers, that when one who has studied our wondrous theosophical teachings receives the light, it becomes his duty to pass that light on to others, to awaken others, to give them what he himself has received. No true theosophist will ever tell you to believe anything merely because some lecturer says so, or because the theosophical leader says so, or because it is written in our books. Never! Every true theosophical lecturer will tell his audience: This is the teaching of the ancient wisdom-religion of mankind today called theosophy. The great seers of the ages have tested it, have proved it, have sent their percipient consciousness behind the veil of the outward seeming and seeing, have known, and knowing have brought back what they themselves learned, and thereafter have taught.

Therefore test the teaching yourselves. Prove it yourselves. Don't take anything on mere faith. If anything that is ever said to you in

a theosophical lecture hall appeals to you as wrong, then reject it with all the strength of your being; and if anything is ever said in a theosophical lecture hall that appeals to you as truth, then be true men and hold to that truth with a will and with courage. Have the courage of your convictions and proclaim them, and thus help us Theosophists to pass on the glad tidings that we have received in common. You may make mistakes in following this splendid rule of spiritual and intellectual independence; but even if you should make a mistake or indeed many mistakes, nevertheless you will be exercising your own faculties and inner powers; and this exercise will give them strength, and in time you will gain a clearer vision as you live.

In order to round out the thought regarding death, do not for a moment imagine that the theosophist ever teaches or approves of self-murder, commonly called suicide. This is always wrong, because it is immoral and cowardly. The fate of the suicide is a sad one, indeed a terrible one, and it is good and right that the truth concerning suicide be told. The suicide willfully cuts short the life that nature, or as theosophists say, that karma, intended to be longer, and he has thus placed himself in a *post-mortem* condition in which he must live and suffer greatly until the term of his lifetime, had he lived on earth, is closed. The fate of the suicide is an awful one. I have elaborated this matter on other occasions, in other lectures, to which I now refer you.

Leonhard Euler, who died in 1783, a very famous Swiss mathematician and a very remarkable man, who was unusually intuitive in some ways, wrote the following, which I have extracted and which I will now read to you:

Sleep furnishes something like an example (prefiguration) of the state of the soul after death, as the union of soul and body is then in a great measure interrupted; yet the soul ceases not

from activity, being employed in the production of dreams. These are usually disturbed by the remaining influence which the senses exercise; and we know by experience that the more this influence is suspended, which is the case in profound sleep, the more regular and connected are our dreams. Thus, after death we shall find ourselves in a more perfect state of dreaming which nothing shall be able to decompose. It will consist of representations and reasonings perfectly sustained.

This is one of the most remarkable passages concerning sleep and death that I have ever found in a European writer. An initiate into the Mysteries could not have written more to the point and with greater effect. Euler is perfectly right. Our dreams are the more vivid, the more real, to the consciousness just in proportion as the inferior part of us, the body and the astral-vital parts, are utterly quiescent. When this lower part of the human constitution is cast off in death, then the spiritual consciousness expands over its own fields of activity, which are the cosmos, the universe; and the psychomental part, commonly called the soul, is withdrawn into the bosom of this spiritual part and rests there in its devachan of blissful, peaceful dream.

And now a few words: When a man while alive on earth can ally himself with his own inner god, with the divine entity at the very root of his being, then he dreams no more but becomes divinely self-conscious — becomes godlike in his consciousness; for then his consciousness takes cosmic sweep, expands to embrace the solar system and even beyond; and though living on earth he walks among his fellows as a god-man. This not only can be done but has often been done, and done again and again; and the great titanic seers and intellects, the great spiritual visionaries of the human race, were just such god-men: the Buddha, Sankaracharya, Jesus the Syrian, Lao-tse, Krishna, Pythagoras — oh! a host of them — were such god-men; some were greater than

others, but all, each one of them, in greater or less degree, had become at one with his own inner god, with what the modern mystical Christian calls his immanent Christ, the Christ dwelling within him: theosophists say the inner god.

There is one inner god for each human being. This inner god is your own divine essence, for a human being is composite; he is not just soul and body. Examine yourselves; examine your own instincts; examine your intuitions. Have you no intimations of things which are beyond your ordinary human understanding — sudden and wonderful flashes of light? Have you not at least in some degree the vision? Cannot you see, even though it be only at times? It is the light from above, from within — from within and above you, from your own inner god, which produces these wonderful moments of light and of inspiration. O my Brothers, why not become at one with this divinity within you? Why be like the swine in the sty, groveling in the mud, when within you is a god?

What I have told you this afternoon is the teaching of all the great sages and seers of the ages, who have lived and taught in all countries and in all ages. They teach one fundamental doctrine, although that doctrine is expressed in different languages because given at different times to different races of men, and given in different formulations; but it is always the same essential, fundamental doctrine — truth.

I have many questions to answer this afternoon. Here is one:

It is said that "form implies limitation." Is the god within the physical form of man limited by or to the capacity of the physical form, or is it free to mingle with the universe, regardless of physical limitations?

It *does* mingle with the universe; the universe is essentially itself.

Furthermore, the god is not within the physical body. This is obvious. You human beings, we human beings, I, you, are simply feeble manifestations as individuals of a ray from the divinity at the core of each of us. This divinity, which is our own highest essence, our own highest being, manages to send a ray of its sublime, of its divine, essence through all the portions of man's constitution till finally it reaches the physical brain and gives it the light of thought and consciousness. The physical is but the vehicle, the last outward shell, of man's constitution; and this inner god dwells in its own realms and enlightens us with a ray; and this ray is our human soul. My inner god, or your inner god, in each case mingles with the universe, because it is a divine child of the divine part of the universe, of the invisible, spiritual, divine part of the universe, and therefore it is inseparable from the universe.

Indeed, even our physical bodies are inseparable parts of the universe: the atoms, the chemical atoms, of which our physical bodies are composed, are the same chemical atoms that compose the stone, or the wood, or the metal, or the planet, or the star which begems the violet dome of night. The atoms which compose my physical encasement leave me and return to me; so do yours; they pass through me or through you and return again. The physical body is but a more or less transient, more or less permanent, form, held together by the cohering life-will of the entity I call *I*.

Hence I ask you again: Why not follow this spiritual ray — this ray issuing to and in each one from your own inner god — why not follow it to its divine source? You can do it in consciousness. And, as you try, as you work to that end, you can so purify the lower part of your constitution that this ray will no longer be a feeble gleam of light touching and enlivening the physical brain, but will irradiate all your consciousness as a man, so that even in



the physical body you can have a cosmic consciousness, because you then will have become at one with your own inner god. O my Brothers, I hope you understand. The teaching is so simple, and yet to Occidental ears so strange. Remember that it is the teaching of all the great sages and seers. It was the teaching of Jesus called the Christ; it was the teaching of Gautama Buddha; it was the teaching of all the other great ones. You hold it in your own willpower and imagination to achieve this grand consummation of all evolution. You can each one of you be a god. Be your own inner god, which is a spark of the central, divine fire of the universe. Pray think over my words with care.

Here is a question very much the same as the last:

Despite the conviction that there is a god within each and every one of us, may not an immortal mortal be pardoned for not seeing the way clear to take that inner god seriously?

Looking backward or scrutinizing the present, and observing the fearful things that men do — the periodical wars of slaughter for patriotic or political reasons, and of birds and animals for sport, man's inhumanity, greed, selfishness, covetousness, thirst for wealth and fame, the misuse of power, and adoration of the great god Mammon — all this does much to shake one's faith in the inner god.

True, there have been great souls who have accomplished beautiful things. True, that every man occasionally radiates flashes of divinity, even as a diamond now dull and unresponsive, when a vagrant beam of light from without enfolds it, brings to instantaneous birth exquisite bursts of flaming color that rival in purity and rarity the rainbow or the sunset. Yet this constitutes a deplorably insignificant modicum of goodness wherewith the whole world might be leavened.

It is obvious that the shortcomings emanate from the lower man. But the god within must be pitifully impotent to be so easily deposed from its throne, permitting the lower nature to usurp the kingdom. If it can be so easily dethroned, is it not an unstable thing to depend upon for guidance?

How may confidence in the inner god be restored — and maintained?

This is a confession, and a plea for help! It emanates from a mind colored and overweighted with the old teaching of the materialism of our fathers which is now dead, which is abandoned by the greatest thinkers of the human race today and which yet exercises its lethal influence, its deadening influence, over the minds of men. The situation is pitiful. A man writes to me a question: "I believe in the inner god and I know that he exists within me as my own inmost; and yet he must be a pitifully impotent entity within me to allow me to do the things that I do." Isn't the answer to his question obvious? It is this: *Become at one with your own higher self! Be a man!* Refuse to follow the inferior, and cast in your fortune with the superior! Turn to the sun, which you admit exists! Why will you regard the shadows? Turn to the light! There is your answer. Begin if you must in a small way, as all men do with whatever duty they begin to do; but be a man! Have the courage of your own conviction! Follow it! Improve yourself! Study! Reflect! Aspire! Hope! Live so that the god may manifest itself in both your brain and heart; and you will soon, very soon, know that the divine Master within you lives — and is your self!

A short time ago a friend, hearing the Invocation given at the end of our meetings, asked me what I understood the meaning to be of the phrase "that from the corruptible I may become incorruptible." I do not doubt that there are others as well as

this friend who would appreciate hearing from you what you have to say about this, as your answer would be far more adequate than anything I could say.

Now, I do wonder if my answer could be or would be more adequate. The questioner has omitted to cite the other portion of this Invocation, beautiful as it is, which runs: "that from imperfection I may become perfection; that from darkness I may go forth in light." The invocation signifies the changing over of the inferior part of you to the higher; it means abandoning the mud for the aether; it means going out of the night, out of the shadows, into the glorious sunlight — and it also means giving up fevered unhappiness for ineffable peace. It means giving up ignorance for wisdom. It means throwing over hate, so that your heart may become irradiated with love. It means abandoning dislike so that your heart may be filled with forgiveness. These are all manly qualities. It takes a man to exercise them. And just in proportion as your character is virile, strong, manly, just in that same degree or ratio will your heart be filled with love and compassion and pity for those who injure you and abuse you. That is godlike! You have the power within you to be it and to do it. Why not use this power? Why not grow into being it? Why not become it?

Immortal gods, my Brothers: What is the matter with you all? I am not speaking only to you here; for as I stand before you and look into your faces I see recognition, I see that you understand me; but I am talking to the vast mass of humanity who are sleeping the sleep of the materialistic dead — materialists — filled with and following evil dreams, sunken in unhappiness, lacking peace, lacking spiritual and intellectual consolation, weaving webs of illusory phantasy all the time in their minds, entangling themselves in fevered emotions, refusing to go out into the rays of the life-giving sun. Ah! You exchange the "corruptible for the incorruptible" when you ally your consciousness with the divine

ray within you. Then you pass from imperfection to perfection; then you abandon the corruptible, in order to become the incorruptible — in order to become one with the fundamental laws of the Universe which endure for aye. Doing this you go forth from darkness into light. This is one third of our Invocation: "O my Divinity, blend thou with me, that from the corruptible I may become incorruptible, that from imperfection I may become perfection, that from darkness I may go forth in light." This is our beloved Katherine Tingley's Invocation: it is masterly!

You stated in one of your lectures that a sublime spirit — I think you called it a world-soul [No, I didn't!] — used the body of Mme. Blavatsky as an instrument. Also you have stated that there is a line of succession of theosophical teachers, one following another without a break and all representing the same high spiritual beings; at least that is as I understand it. I wish to ask: Did a world-soul also use Katherine Tingley as an instrument, and is one using you? This is not intended to be personal, but you yourself have stated that you are Mme. Tingley's successor.

I have never at any time written or said that a world-soul used the body of H. P. Blavatsky or of William Q. Judge or of Katherine Tingley or of myself "as an instrument." I have said, and I now repeat it, that one of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace, one or other of them, did at certain times employ the personality of one of these four as a vehicle through which to do certain things. That is a fact, and I have stated it, and I now repeat it. But these Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace are simply great men: they are men, men who have evolved unto becoming like god-men on earth, but nevertheless men like you and like me. They are simply more highly evolved men than we are. It was they who founded the Theosophical Society in our age and who sent H.P.B. as their first messenger in order to found our

Society and to give it certain age-old teachings that she brought with her, and these great Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace, who are the elder brothers of the race, are indeed back of The Theosophical Society and are protecting it, if they do naught else; protecting it, however, only in so far as we members of The Theosophical Society keep it a fit instrument to do the work that they intended it should do. Should we fail, then the inspiration will cease — and rightly so. If the artisan's tool is broken, shall he use the broken tool or forge one anew?

Theosophists know this and know it well; and we try, whatever our faults may be, my Friends and Brothers, to keep our Society what its great founders meant it to be; and, thank the immortal gods, I can tell you in the honesty of my soul that up to this date it has remained and now is a fit instrument to do the work they intended it to do and is a fit channel for their teaching to and influence upon the world. We are very watchful; and keeping The Theosophical Society fit to do their work means at least two things: first, impersonal love for humanity expressed in doctrine and in act; next, fidelity to the noblest powers and faculties within each one of us, so that as a band of brothers we can say, when the Master comes, "Lord, I am ready." You can say this if your heart is filled with impersonal love for all that is, for all things both great and small; if you have no selfish motives behind your acts; if you do your duty by the Society and also by your family and by your nation; in other words, if you live as an honest man should live, filled with ideals, striving for the best, but never content with what you have already achieved, and always longing for more of the vision sublime. If we can do all this — and we have succeeded thus far — The Theosophical Society will live on into future ages as a fit vehicle for the Masters' work; and then it will do the work that it was intended to do: unite men into a brotherhood, a brotherhood of love, of peace, of self-respecting

and energetic adherents and propagandists of the ancient wisdom-religion of mankind, teachers of mutual kindness, who are haters of hate, who are lovers of love. All this will keep our feet following the path.

Thus, you see, it is not at all a question of a world-soul. I think that this expression is a very trifling one, because in the minds of most men it is an ambiguous one. What theosophists call the avatars only are individual expressions of a world-soul, and the avatars are few; and there is a very interesting and singular history about them, which I have no time to speak of this afternoon. It is the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace, who are great men, highly evolved men, great seers and sages, initiates, holding great power, possessing titanic intellect, and of titanic spiritual development, grand men, who are behind the Theosophical Movement, behind The Theosophical Society; and at times they do use certain rare ones in the Society as the vehicles or channels for a more intimate dissemination of their teachings and influence. Such was H.P. Blavatsky; such was William Q. Judge; such was our beloved Katherine Tingley.

Remember, my Brothers, that the world is guided by spiritual powers; that mankind is not lost in a physical wilderness. These great men watch over and protect the destiny of the human race, of which they themselves are individual parts. That is their sublime duty; that is their grand work. And at different times, as the ages fly by, when spiritual truths have been largely forgotten and materialistic impulses and movements are rampant in the world, then they send forth from their ranks a messenger, one carrying the age-old truths anew to mankind, teaching men how to become at one with each man's own inner god, teaching men the explanation of the riddles of life, giving to men a philosophy, a sublime philosophy-religion-science, which synthetic system is based on the structure and operations of the universe. In other

words the duty of the messenger is to teach men truth and impersonal love.

Now, before closing, as is usual in our meetings in this our Temple of Peace, I feel impelled to call upon you once more to realize who you essentially are: to realize that each one of you is in his essence, and therefore most truly, a divine being, a god, a cosmic spirit, with which gods the universe is filled full, and each such god is a native of the invisible spiritual realms of the universe; and that consequently each one of you is but a feeble, poor, incomplete manifestation in your human nature of this divinity. Look at the hope in this teaching! Remember what you are — that you have this divine ray enlightening your minds, warming your hearts, all the time; that you have but to turn to it for it to grow always greater in its influence upon you; remember that practice makes perfect, that exercise brings strength, that striving for truth brings a larger visioning. Be therefore the god within you, the inner Buddha, the immanent Christ; for in that way peace and power, happiness and glory, strength and courage indescribable, will be yours. Have no fear of anything in the universe. Fear is weak and destructive; fear deadens; fear blinds; fear kills. Have the fiery courage of the god in your heart of hearts, and be it!

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[Vol 2, No 20](#)  
[Contents](#)

## Second Series: No. 20 (January 19, 1931)

### MORE ABOUT SLEEP AND DEATH

(Lecture delivered November 30, 1930)

CONTENTS: The immortal instinct within you. — You and the universe are one. — You cannot flee from yourself. — Sir James Jeans on the question of mind and matter. Where he differs from theosophy. — Nothing to fear in sleep or death. — Borrowing the thoughts of other men. — What is a spiritual monad? — Evils in the train of ignorance. — Why do we return to earth? — Our origin and our destiny. — Theosophy explains the term "space." — Old age as it should be. — The mystery of sleep. — About dreams. — Journey of the inner consciousness during sleep. — Analogy between sleep and death. — Countless hierarchies in the universe. — Dr. Bigelow and his understanding of the doctrine of karma. — The scientific basis of ethics. — Children of cosmic space.

Children of mortality, sons of death, victims of a blind irresistible fate, hopeless, eternally without a future destiny, driven as sear and dead leaves before a crazy wind of fate — are you all that? What a picture! What a gloomy fantasm! What a nightmare! Your feelings, your instincts, your intuition, your intellectual faculties — what is the answer that they give to such fantasms as these? How do you feel about it? Your own consciousness is the standard by which you may test the problems of life. Don't follow other men's views merely because those views are popular. Think for yourselves! Be true men! Answer the immortal instinct within you! Follow it! For that instinct is not only a spiritual one, but an intellectual one also. It arises within you and is the influence that the inner god, the sleeping divinity which is the core of every



human being, attempts to pass down through the clay of the human brain-mind with that human brain-mind's native ignorance, with its native atmosphere of darkness and chill.

How many men, alas, prefer to take the views, the fads, the theories, the hypotheses, which happen to be popular in the day in which they are enunciated, to the spiritual instinct, the intellectual instinct, the psychic instinct, even the physical instinct, which automatically rebels against the gloomy nihilism that I have just spoken of. For we know that man has willpower and intelligence; we know that man can think and feel and act with a will; and we know that in the core of his being he senses that he is not different from the universe in which he lives and moves and has his essence, and that he is at one with it, an inseparable part of the universe of which he is the child.

So, therefore, all is well, because what that universe is, that is you; what that universe is, you are that. You don't live outside of the universe, you are part of it, as a part is an integral portion of the whole. You are blood of its blood, life of its life, fabric of its fabric, being of its being. If not, then you are something different from boundless infinitude; if not, you are apart from it: and this means that there are two infinitudes then, boundless infinitude and you! This supposition is absurd. What the universe is, that you are; what you are, the universe is.

See how men differ among themselves! See how men differ from other lives, from the other multitudes and hosts and armies of beings which cover even the earth with pullulating vitality, and yet all are one in essence. Beyond the earth in the vast spaces of cosmic being, what must there be there, think you? What must *there* be? We are not different from the Universe; we are not exceptional; we are simply as a human host, parts of the All, parts inseparable from the whole, parts derivative from the whole.

Hence the resultant, the deduction, that we must draw from these thoughts, is: All is well; for the universe is well, if it is well run, it is well conducted, it is well organized, it is our very model and pattern of harmony and law. Therefore so are you.

Think! Don't take other men's thoughts and abdicate one of your own noblest faculties — that of independent intellectual and spiritual research. Think truly! Awaken the god within you, awaken your own individual spiritual faculties and powers! Think for yourselves, but think loftily and sublimely. You won't regret it. In doing so, you will find yourself, and happiness. There is no happiness like unto that. And when I say find yourself, obviously I don't mean the physical self; I mean the essential entity around which the physical and the astral, and the psychical and the mental, are builded as garments, through which garments the divine splendor of the essential self, which is at the core, which is indeed the core, of each one of you, works or tries to work, manifests or tries to manifest, its transcendent powers. In proportion as it succeeds in doing this, the cold mud of the brain is set aflame, and man cognizes, reasons, thinks, feels, is a man!

You have consciousness, intellect, instinct, inspiration, aspiration, life, willpower, reason, because the Universe has all these. You are not different from the whole of which you are an inseparable part. You simply exemplify and manifest as a part what the whole contains; and this thought is so obviously simple that no child will refuse to accept it. It is only sophisticated men — men thinking other men's thoughts instead of thinking for themselves, believing in fads and fancies of a time — who reject or turn aside from even the powerful noble instincts of their own essential nature.

Those fads and fancies and theories and hypotheses, whether religious or philosophical or scientific, are now matters of a

bygone generation. The crass materialism of our fathers is dead; our greatest scientific philosophers today are preaching the doctrine that consciousness is the fundamental essence in the universe. Get this thought and hold to it! Consequently, the fundamental essence in each one of you is consciousness, because, as said, you are an intrinsic, integral, and essential part of the cosmic whole. You cannot really lose yourself even if you try to do so. You cannot flee from yourself, try as you will; for yourself will chase yourself into the remotest chambers even of your unconsciousness, which men call deep sleep or death.

What does Sir James Jeans, one of the greatest of ultramodern English scientific philosophers, have to say about this question of mind and matter? Please understand that I don't quote Sir James Jeans because I, as a theosophical thinker and teacher, approve of or endorse everything that he utters, because most emphatically I don't; but he has said some excellent things, some exceedingly good things, and these things are the same in essential particulars as is the teaching of the ancient wisdom-religion of mankind today called theosophy; and it is the good things which he has said that I quote, quoting him for the things which struck me, as a thinking man, as being true. He says in his recent book, *The Mysterious Universe*:

Today there is a wide measure of agreement, which on the physical side of science approaches almost to unanimity, that the stream of knowledge is heading towards a non-mechanical reality; the universe begins to look more like a great thought than like a great machine. Mind no longer appears as an accidental intruder into the realm of matter; we are beginning to suspect that we ought rather to hail it as the creator and governor of the realm of matter — not, of course, our individual minds, but the mind in which the atoms out of which our individual minds have grown exist as thoughts.

The new knowledge compels us to revise our hasty first impressions that we had stumbled into a universe which either did not concern itself with life or was actively hostile to life. The old dualism of mind and matter, which was mainly responsible for the supposed hostility, seems likely to disappear, not through matter becoming in any way more shadowy or insubstantial than heretofore, or through mind becoming resolved into a function of the working of matter, but through substantial matter resolving itself into a creation and manifestation of mind [theosophists say of which mind is a function — G.de P] . . . 'consciousness.' . . .

And while much in it may be hostile to the material appendages of life, much also is akin to the fundamental activities of life; we are not so much strangers or intruders in the universe as we at first thought.

Now, here is where, according to our theosophical way of thinking, Sir James Jeans falls down. He speaks of mind, or as we say of consciousness, as being "hostile to the material appendages of life," but as consciousness and life are but two phases of the same thing, and as matter is but another phase of the essential underlying consciousness, the illogic of his idea becomes immediately apparent, for he has constructed a hypothesis of which the cardinal principles are in irreconcilable conflict. It is astonishing that he does not see this. Nevertheless the mere fact that he speaks of mind, of which our individual minds are as it were atoms, is most excellent good logic, sense, and philosophy, for the fundamental idea is typically a doctrine of the ancient wisdom-religion of mankind today called theosophy. Sir James gets the fundamental thought, and yet seems to be afraid to go the full length of his own Ariadne's thread of intuition. He is still psychologized with the old idea that men are accidents, albeit

thinking and self-conscious accidents, in an automatically acting and a fortuitously born universe.

On the contrary theosophists say that men are essential, intrinsic, inseparable, parts of the universe itself; and not only man, but every other entity and every thing that is; because all together they make the universe. Far from being "intruders" or "strangers" or accidental voyagers, we are pilgrims into the realm of the material universe, and the vast spaces of boundless space — visible and invisible — are our native home, our native habitat. There is our native land — here, there, everywhere. Isn't it obvious? Go outside the universe, if you can. Leave it, if you can. Vain and futile thought! You are here. Go ye ten thousand billion light-years beyond Sirius, and you will still be in the boundless All, for that boundless All is boundless infinitude; and ten thousand billion years of light-time beyond Sirius is as naught in the frontierless, beginningless, endless spaces of illimitable infinitude. There is your native home, my Brothers. Native of boundless space am I; natives of boundless space are you. Children of infinitude you are, having in you *in potentia* or *in actu* everything that boundless space contains. boundless space is your home; and the core of the core of your being is the heart of the universe — a heart which, quoting Pascal who in turn quoted ancient pagan writers, is like a boundless sphere having its center everywhere and its circumference nowhere, because neither center nor circumference are anywhere in especial.

Therefore, when man sleeps or when he dies, all is well. He is here on earth as a man because he is passing through one phase of his aeon-long evolutionary journey. He has become man from lower stages of his own line of evolutionary unfoldment. From man he will become a god; and man already shows godlike qualities — consciousness which can plumb or which tries to plumb the universe, intuition, intellect, which grip the problems

of life and solve them. Are these attributes not godlike? Man has the instinct of eternity in his breast; he senses that all of him is of the universe. So, whether a man sleep or whether he die, all is well, and because he has come here now, it means that he came here before and will come again, for he goes and returns on the cyclic round.

How did man come here? How did you come here? By accident? By chance? By fortuity? What are these? These are words. What do they mean? Nothing — except that, when you cannot explain a thing, you say, "It happened so." They are confessions of ignorance. No man today believes in chance. Everything exists because it must exist. Each thing or entity is but one link in a chain of events enduring from age to age; and every link on the forward movement or on the upward climb is a nobler link of evolutionary experience than the one next preceding it.

I told you on last Sunday, my Brothers, that sleep and death are not essentially different, that they are the same, two manifestations of the same process: death being a perfect or absolute sleep, and sleep being an imperfect and incomplete death. In either case, there is the loss of personal consciousness; in either case there is the loss of the active willing to do, to achieve; in either case there is rest, there is peace; in either case there is digestion and consequent assimilation of what the consciousness has just previously experienced, be it in the day preceding the night-sleep, or be it in the lifetime preceding the devachan, as theosophists say — or the heaven world following a lifetime on earth. In either case it is sleep-death, death-sleep; for they are essentially one. It is rest; it is repose; it is peace; it is supreme bliss; especially so in death, for in death the rest is so absolute, the consciousness is so perfectly withdrawn from the fevered forces of material life that its native faculties and powers work more naturally and more freely, because liberated from the

crippling bonds of the body and of the lower mind. The entity in death has cast off physical mortality and has put on the garments *pro tem* of the spirit which is deathless, because that spirit is the fundamental energy of the universe, expressing itself as incomputable hosts of atoms of spirit which are individual monads, each one being the source or fountainhead or root of a manifesting entity such as a man.

Strange creatures, we human beings: nature proclaims so loud all around us just what life is and what death is, and what sleep is, and we are blind, blind, blind, *blind!* And why blind? Because we won't see what is the essential self. We prefer to take other men's brain-mind thoughts and accept them as our own. These other men are just like you: speculators, dreamers, thinkers, some of them intuitive, some of them not intuitive at all. Therefore, our theosophical teaching is: look within yourself for truth and peace and happiness. You will there find fountains of wisdom illimitable, and fields of consciousness which you yourself may explore; for it is you yourself: the universe. Become acquainted with yourself; be your own inner spiritual essence.

You manifest feebly intellect, feeling, consciousness, intuition, and many other similar attributes and faculties which are all caused in your constitution by the working of a spiritual ray streaming into your constitution from the apex of that constitution which is the spiritual monad just spoken of. Hence our theosophical teaching is: follow this ray, which you manifest so feebly, to its source and become greater, and thus become progressively greater in the very things which make you what you are in your best and noblest. Following the self ever more inwards to the self, becoming more and more yourself, your higher self, your consciousness will in time, in future aeons, at last become cosmic, because the god within you, your own inner spiritual sun, so to speak, has a consciousness of universal reach.

A man is born as a little child. He has but little more thought and feeling and imagination and intellect than the young of the beast has, and is even more helpless — a pitiful little bit of humankind. But watch as the child grows. Note the wonder that takes place. Watch the growth in understanding. Sense the increase in magnitude and in depth of feeling, as the little child grows. See the child bring out from itself — ever more and more evolve in other words, evolve forth from within itself, which is what evolution really means — all the inner faculties. See him expand more and more as time goes on and as he grows to adulthood. Then it would seem as if the man, having reached maturity, had reached the boundary of all that he could do in that one life, and he remains steady there for a while, and uses or abuses (alas!) his powers; and then little by little you see another wonder beginning to take place: you see strange things happening in that man as he ages, until finally, if the life has been nobly lived, there is a richness, a mellowness, of understanding and of thought and of feeling in the old man, sinking into decrepitude physically, but expanding inwardly, which is godlike. Or, if he has lived evilly, wasted his powers, you see the second childhood preceding what men call death, and the spectacle is pitiful.

Now, isn't all this wonderful? From a microscopic human seed so small that no unaided eye can see it, there grows through many stages an entity who becomes a six-foot man, we will say. He makes a number of gestures, good, bad, and indifferent, on the stage of life, and then after a little more time we see him fade, until one day, like a wind-blown tree, he crashes and his place knows him no more.

It is ignorance which is the parent of fear; fear is the parent of hate; fear and hate are the parents of dishonesty. Fear not at all. There is no need to fear. Fear yourself, if you long to fear



something, as most men do. Men usually don't feel satisfied unless they can be afraid of something! Fear yourself then. Yes, I mean reverence the god within; for that is one entity with whom you cannot play the traitor! That god within is your savior, you yourself, your own inmost being, the source and fountainhead of all that is good within you; and when I say good, I mean everything that is worth while within you — thought, consciousness, intellect, intuition, reason, feeling, love, forgiveness, pity, kindness, the sense of brotherhood — everything that is decent and grand springs from it.

The thought is significant. It is a significant thing that we see a microscopic human seed become a six-foot man and express wonderful faculties and do marvelous things — perhaps shake the very foundations of civilization with the force of his ideas; produce marvels, it may be, of beauty — mechanical, intellectual, or what not; and then fade away, and decay, and die.

Nature repeats herself everywhere. What she does in the grand she reproduces in the small; and the reason for this is that there is one fundamental law or system of action, of operation, in the universe, which expresses itself therefore in every part of the universe, being its fundamental current of consciousness-vitality. Man is born, reaches the culmination of his powers, and dies because the physical universe does the same thing in the great as man's physical body does in the small. But the essential man was there as the consciousness-center around which the personal man, the astral-physical man, was builded. The reincarnating ego came back to earth and overshadowed — did not enter, but overshadowed — this human seed, which thereafter began to grow into the six-foot man.

You cannot *not* come back; you came here because you builded yourself in past lives, builded your character, to come here again;

and just as there are these different stages of growth in the life period on earth of a reincarnated ego, by the same law of analogical action which is an aspect of the fundamental law of boundless space, we began as entities in the beginning of this cosmic life period as unself-conscious god-sparks, sparks of the cosmic central fire, and we have been evolving ever since, living and living and living and living, and dying and dying and dying, swinging backward and forward like a pendulum of consciousness throughout the ages, until we are now here as men.

And if we follow the forwards-moving evolutionary current, as we must and as we will, in time to come we shall blossom forth as gods, fully self-conscious god-sparks: having been in the beginning unself-conscious god-sparks, we shall in future aeons of time become self-conscious gods. Is that the end of our growth? No. There are no ends. The term is foolish. We shall ineluctably go on forever; for space is frontierless; and when the theosophist speaks of space, he does not mean only our own physical universe. That physical universe is but a cross-section, one plane, as it were of the illimitable universe which to us as physical men is invisible and impalpable. The theosophist means by the word space particularly the inner and invisible worlds, the roots of the entities and things which show themselves in our physical universe; for our physical universe is merely the outer garment, the physical body, of what is within; and these within-things, this ineffable within, express themselves or expresses itself, through the outer veil or garment or body, just as the essential man expresses himself through the outer garment or veil of the astral-physical garment or body.

Even a dramatist like Shakespeare speaks of the seven ages of man. You probably all have read the famous passage that I have in mind. Let me, however, read it again to you. It is interesting. It is found in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, Act II, Scene 7. It is the

melancholy Jaques who speaks:

All the world's a stage,  
And all the men and women merely players;  
They have their exits and their entrances;  
And one man in his time plays many parts,  
His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,  
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms.  
And then the whining school-boy, with his satchel  
And shining morning face, creeping like snail  
Unwillingly to school. And then the lover,  
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad  
Made to his mistress' eyebrow. Then a soldier,  
Full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard,  
Jealous in honor, sudden and quick in quarrel,  
Seeking the bubble reputation  
Even in the cannon's mouth. And then the justice,  
In fair round belly with good capon lined,  
With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,  
Full of wise saws and modern instances;  
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts  
Into the lean and slipper'd pantaloon,  
With spectacles on nose and pouch on side,  
His youthful hose, well saved, a world too wide  
For his shrunk shank; and his big manly voice,  
Turning again toward childish treble, pipes  
And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,  
That ends this strange eventful history,  
Is second childishness and mere oblivion,  
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

What a picture! A theosophist in reading this — at least, I do — asks himself, I ask myself, what kind of men must Shakespeare have known? Follow nature's laws of self-control and high

thinking and noble living, and your old age will be a wonder to see: full of lofty thought rendered glorious and splendid with the increasing brilliance from the inner god flooding your physical brain; an old age broken it may be in body, bent and feeble it may be in body, and lame, but wise, full of wisdom and having a heart expanded with pity for all that lives, filled with love and understanding for all that lives.

Death comes suddenly, and sleep comes suddenly. Watch yourself as you fall asleep. I wonder how many of you will succeed? Most people lie down, and after a shorter or a longer period they are asleep. What has become of them? What makes that body lie there resting itself and either breathing easily and peacefully or snoring like a pig? What has happened? What has become of that energetic entity which enlivened, which filled with flame and fire, that body, and made the man a man? We are so accustomed to sleep that we do not think about these things. Nature is shouting the truth to us on every hand, and we are as deaf as adders to nature's voices, and as blind as bats in the sunlight. What has happened to that sleeping man? What has become of his thought? What has become of his feeling? Where is even his usual physical energy? In sleep he moves but little; he may turn in bed; he may mumble a bit in his sleep; but so does an infant.

I will tell you what has happened: sleep is caused by the withdrawal from the physical body of the entity which filled it with its flame and gave it active life. That is sleep. And when that withdrawal of the inner entity is complete, the sleep as sleep is relatively perfect and there is relatively perfect unconsciousness — the sweetest sleep of all. For then the body is undisturbed, rests peacefully and quietly, rebuilds in its system what was torn down during the hours of active work or play.

If the withdrawal of the inner entity — call it the mind, call it the

consciousness, call it the soul, we won't quibble about words is — incomplete or partial, then dreams occur: fevered dreams, sweet dreams, but dreams; for the entity, the consciousness, the mind, the soul — call it what you like — still in this last case feels the attraction of the physical part of itself, the physical man, still feels that physical man working on it psychomagnetically, as it were; and its unconsciousness is disturbed by the vibrations of the physical man, of the animate body. This produces evil dreams, bad dreams, fevered dreams, strange dreams, unhappy dreams.

If the withdrawal is somewhat more complete than in this last case, but not yet wholly complete, then there are happy dreams, dreams of peace. Finally, as I have already said, if the withdrawal is complete, so that the influence of the physical body cannot affect the entity which has withdrawn itself, then there is relatively complete unconsciousness, for the tired mind is resting also; and for another reason, a reason upon which I will touch with reluctance, but I feel it incumbent upon me somewhat to complete the picture of what happens when you sleep; the brain registers naught; for it is utterly quiet in these cases of utter unconsciousness in sleep. The brain registers naught of what the consciousness itself is experiencing. That consciousness is resting, but resting as it were half-awake, as a man may rest in quiet thought, eyes closed in a doze, not in a sleep, still conscious of what is going on around, but not fully awake; and in this state, this inner consciousness, call it the soul if you like, or the mind, or the inner man, is in another world, drawn to that other inner and invisible realm or plane or world or sphere, to which cause and effect — the law of karma as theosophists say, the cause and effect of thoughts just previously thought, of actions previously done, of feelings previously felt — have given it the direction it follows. Do you understand me?

I will repeat: when the sleep is what men call utterly unconscious

sleep, it is so because the inner entity, mind, soul, consciousness — call it what you like — is the least affected by the psychomagnetic vibrations of the body and of the brain in particular. It itself, this consciousness or mind, is in a doze, resting, but with a certain amount of its consciousness remaining, which the brain, however, cannot register as a dream, because the separation between the body and the consciousness which has left it is too complete. But while this consciousness is thus half-awake, so to speak, half-resting, it is in that particular world, invisible to human eyes, to which its feelings and thoughts in the previous moments and hours have directed it. It is there as a visitant, perfectly well protected, perfectly guarded, and nothing will or can in all probability harm it — unless, indeed, the man's essential nature is so corrupted that the shield of spirituality ordinarily flowing around this inner entity is worn so thin that antagonistic influences may penetrate to it.

The world is full of mysteries; and I think that the man who says that this is so, and it cannot be that, and that the universe stops here, and nothing but that is possible, is a foolish man.

But now, mark you, my Brothers. I have briefly described what sleep is. Death is exactly the same, but absolute instead of imperfect. Death is an absolute sleep, a perfect sleep. Sleep is an imperfect, an incomplete, death. Hence, what happens when you sleep in that short period of time, is repeated perfectly and completely and on a grand scale when you die. As you awaken in the morning in the same physical body, because sleep is not complete enough to break the silver chain of vitality uniting the inner, absent entity with the sleeping body, just so do you return to earth after your devachanic experience, or experience in the heaven world, the world of rest, of absolute peace, of absolute, blissful repose.

During sleep, the silver chain of vitality still links the peregrin entity to the body that it has left, so that it returns to that body along this psychomagnetic chain of communication; but when death comes, that silver cord of vitality is snapped, quick as a flash of lightning (nature is very merciful in this case), and the peregrin entity returns to its cast-off body no more. This complete departure (I use ordinary human words) of the inner consciousness means the snapping of that silver cord of vitality; and the body then is cast aside as a garment that is worn out and useless. Otherwise, the experience of the peregrin consciousness, the peregrinating entity or soul, is exactly the same as what happened to it during sleep, but it is now on a cosmic scale. The consciousness passes, and before it returns to earth again as a reincarnating ego, it goes from sphere to sphere, from realm to realm, from mansion to mansion, following the wording of the Christian scriptures, which are in the "Father's house."

Nevertheless, in a sense it is also resting, in utter bliss, in utter peace; and during this resting time it digests and assimilates the experiences of the last life and builds these experiences into its being as character, just as during sleep the resting body digests and assimilates the food it has taken in during the daytime, and throws off the wastes, and builds up the tissues anew; and when the reawakening comes it is refreshed. So is the reincarnating ego refreshed when it returns to earth.

Therefore, fear not at all. All is well; for the heart of you is the universe, and the core of the core of you is the heart of the universe. As our glorious day-star sends forth in all directions its streams of rays, so does this heart of the universe, which is everywhere because nowhere in particular, constantly radiate forth streams of rays; and these rays are the entities which fill the universe full. There are those which are beginning in one universe their evolution; there are those which have become

through evolution men or beings like unto men; there are those which from manhood have already evolved into godhood; there are those who from godhood have evolved into becoming super-gods; and so on. The universe is filled full with gods and other creatures, other entities: demigods, men, all kinds of entities existing in all-various stages of evolutionary growth.

I wonder if any human being here thinks that men are the only self-conscious, thinking, intelligent beings in boundless space. Of course not. The fact that we men think and feel, have intuition, have understanding and will, proves that these things, these qualities, these faculties, these powers, exist everywhere; for how otherwise could they be in us? Can the part be greater than the whole? And if the part, a man, shows certain faculties and powers, *de facto* from that very fact, the whole, the universe, must contain them also.

Consciousness is the fundamental thing in the universe, and along this line I desire to read to you a little extract from the work of a recent writer that I thought rather fine. It was written by a Dr. Bigelow:

Consciousness is continuous. That means you cannot, so to speak, pick up a single idea alone any more than you can pick up a single knot in the middle of a fish-net. You pick up any knot you like, but you will get at the same time what is tied to it. And if, at any point of the summed-up consciousness of a man's life, there is tied the record of an injury done to another man, that record will infallibly remain tied; and when, in a later life, in disentangling the threads of his own existence . . . he comes again to that particular point, that injury will return against him with the accuracy of a spring which expends when released the exact energy required to compress it, and the blow he receives will be just as hard as the blow he gave:



action and reaction are equal and opposite.

This is a faithful exposition of what theosophists call our doctrine of karma, of consequences, that ye sow what ye reap, that ye reap what ye sow. Enjoy ye happiness and peace and riches in this life? Ye have sown them by corresponding action in some past life or lives. Suffer ye now? Are ye broken-hearted, weary, heavy-laden? You have done it to yourself, my Brother. Nature is not mocked. Her fundamental essence is consciousness and her fundamental law is reaction — consequences. What you put into the ground of your character, you will reap; what you sow into yourself by thought and will and feeling, makes your character. Thus you build yourself through the ages; and if you do evil to some other, that evil will come back to you. You know the old saying: "Curses come home to roost." They do, indeed.

Here is the scientific basis for ethics. Ethics are not mere conventions. There are indeed conventional ethics; but the essence of ethics, the fundamental principle that right is right and wrong is wrong, that dishonor is wrong and that honor is right, that just dealing is right and that unjust dealing is wrong — these fundamental things which I call ethics, are based on nature's fundamental law.

Sow beauty into your character by your thoughts and acts, and you will become beautiful. Sow love in your character by your aspirations and thoughts and acts, and love will build your character to be lovely, and you will meet the guerdon of love, which is love. Be lovely and you will be loved; be hateful, and the very fact of your thinking and feeling hate distorts your character, twists it. The torsion is tremendous, because your will and feeling are with it, and you will return with a twisted and distorted character, which may even manifest in a twisted and distorted body, the natural reaction on the physical body of the

indwelling energy of your character.

Sow love, and reap it; sow hate, and reap it. Sow goodwill, deeds of kindness and brotherhood — and you will receive goodwill, and deeds of kindness and brotherhood. Be peaceful, and you shall receive peace; be kindly, and kindness will be your guerdon. Forgive, and forgiveness will be yours. Strive, and you will gain; aspire, and what you aspire to you shall reap, for within you dwells an indomitable will springing from the very heart of the universe, and to a man who uses his will aright and who uses his will with a will, naught can oppose his progress. If he fails, it is because his will lacks practice; and if he uses that will for evil purposes, if he abuses it, nature will react upon him exactly according to what he did and gave.

Use your divine part, the divine part of yourself, that spiritual will — use it with a will on the side of right, of love, of peace, of brotherhood, of happiness to others. Nature's reaction upon you will bring back to you all that you have sown. Ethics are man's way of expressing his consciousness of the harmony and symmetry and beauty inherent in the universe.

I have many questions before me that I intended to try to answer this afternoon; but as the time for our closing has now come, I beg your indulgence in the postponement of my answers to them to a later date. But before closing, if you please, may I call your attention once more to a thought which to me is the best part of the thoughts that I can ever give to you. It is as follows:

You are gods, my Brothers; every one of you in the core of the core of your being is a god, a divine entity. Call it a spirit, if you will; we will not quibble over names. I use the good old term god, because gods you are; but if the term offends you, then employ your own. When I stand here and address this audience (and I wish you were thousands instead of the few hundreds here) I feel

that I, a god in my inmost, am addressing an audience of gods, speaking to beings possessing godlike understanding, feeling that despite my imperfect words, your hearts are touched with what I have tried to tell you, because you have the understanding hearts of gods. Each one of you, to use the term of the modern mystical Christian, is the expression of an immanent Christ or Christos, endeavoring to express its transcendent powers through the medium of your imperfectly evolved mental and physical being. Each one of you is an inner Buddha, trying to express its wonderful faculties and powers through your imperfectly evolved mind and human consciousness.

But, nevertheless, you are essentially gods, children of cosmic space. You have never not been; you never will be not; for the essence of you, the core of the core of you, is boundless infinitude — the All; for each one of you is an inseparable and integral part of that All.

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[Vol 2, No 21](#)  
[Contents](#)

**Second Series: No. 21 (January 26, 1931)**

**SPRITES, FAIRIES, GOBLINS**

(Lecture delivered December 7, 1930)

CONTENTS: Do you believe in ghosts? — Turning back to our ancestors. — Subordination to cosmic law. — The human race in past and future. — Worlds exterior and interior. — Endless chain of hierarchies. — Man an expression of "mind." — Endless variety in the universe. — An elemental defined. — The life within the atom. — Names fairies go by. — Teachings of medieval mystics. — Forms of elementals; their destructive powers; their relation to disease; their link with human beings. — Fairies photographed. — The habiliments of fairies. — Universal belief in invisible entities. — Where do elementals live? Are they friendly or hostile to us? Can and do they communicate with men? — Folklore based on truth. — Transformism not accepted. — Power to carve our own destiny.

"Pat, do you believe in ghosts?"

"No, Sor; but I hate like Hell to be where they are!"

Pray excuse the apparent profanity in this quaint answer, friends, but Pat's state of mind is exactly like that of so many other people who, when you ask them: "Do you believe that there are other living beings in the universe besides men, beings who have a certain amount of consciousness and intelligence, and who in short are wholly animate entities?" — say: "No, of course I don't believe in those old superstitions." But on a dark night, when the storm gods are riding on the wings of the wind or, again, when everything is so still that even the creaking of the woodwork —

then perhaps their answer might be changed in their own mind to mean: "No, I don't believe in elementals or sprites or fairies, but I hate to be where they are!" So, when I ask: "Do you believe that there are other entities in the universe who have animation, some degree of intelligence, some degree of willpower?" — the average man of today probably will say: "No! Really, I don't know. Science has not proved such a fact." Eh? But when the same man thinks in the quiet of the nighttime, when he has a chance to reflect, then he begins to wonder a little whether after all he and other men and the beasts are the only animate and intelligent or quasi-intelligent entities living in boundless infinitude.

Now, if human beings were the only animate and self-conscious entities in the universe, how could we account for that fact? Why should this dust speck in the illimitable fields of the spaces of space be the only spot where animate creatures exist? Whence comes the intelligence which manifests itself in man? Whence comes the willpower of which he is an exponent? Whence come the passions, good and bad, which he so often shows — passions of which he, alas, rarely is the master, but of which he should always be the master, yet of which he too often is the slave? Why should this one spot of boundless infinitude, this one physical plane of ours, possess such entities as exist nowhere else? Explain that wonder to me, you who deny.

It seems to me that this magnification of our earth as the only habitat of intelligent entities is but the same state of mind of our ancestors of some hundred years ago, who thought that the earth was the center of the universe, and all the rest of the universe was created by god for man's sole delectation and instruction. Isn't it obvious that what is in one spot must exist either active or negative, everywhere; otherwise how comes it that that one spot is the inexplicable exception?

Don't fall into the error of thinking that you as men are essentially different entities from the universe, your parent. You are inseparable parts of the universe; out of it you cannot go; you belong to it; you are of its blood — blood of its blood, bone of its bone, life of its life — and everything that is in you is, *de facto*, in the whole of which you as men are inseparable parts. Pause in thought over this and then you will see why the critical brain-mind, with its egoistic assumptions and narrow and imperfect vision is so apt to answer like Pat, and say: "No, Sor!" But then the intuition comes: "But I hate like everything to be where they are!", thus constituting a tacit acknowledgment of the existence of invisible entities.

It is the teaching of the ancient wisdom-religion of mankind, today called theosophy, that mankind manifests merely as one race, as one host, of animate entities, what the universe contains in the grand. Even the atoms of the human body are cosmic atoms; and you will find the same atoms in the most distant star. The atoms of man's mind are likewise cosmic atoms — and these atoms are his thoughts, if you like; and you will also see intelligence in the majestic order, in the discipline, and in the subordination to cosmic law, of the celestial bodies.

Man is not an exception in the universe in any respect whatsoever. He merely exemplifies as one race what is everywhere. There are races far higher than we humans are — angelic races, godlike races on other celestial globes, and there are also other beings far inferior to men. Man is merely man because he is passing through this particular stage of his own long evolutionary pilgrimage. That is why he is man. He is man because he has reached the man stage; but he has not always been man.

In past times the human race was an elemental race, and existed

in the evolutionary stage represented by the beings whom theosophists call elementals. In the aeons of the far distant future we shall be gods; for a god is even now within each one of us — in the core of the core of each one of us, in the heart of the heart of each one of us. This divine entity shows divine powers, which express themselves feebly as yet through our imperfect human vehicle.

What are these divine powers? Will, choice, intelligence, constructive and creative ability, self-control, love, forgiveness, compassion, pity, the yearning for brotherhood, for peace, for happiness for all. These are divine instincts and qualities; and they spring forth from this core of the core within each one of us, in the heart of the heart of us.

I tell you that the man or woman is dead — dead within, though living in the body it may be — who does not sense these truths instinctively, intuitively — instinctively and intuitively — and thus recognize the verity of them. Show me why you as men have these wondrous faculties and powers, and show me why no other race of animate beings in boundless space may have them. You cannot do this. The mere fact that men have these faculties and powers, proves their existence elsewhere. Men are no exceptions in nature. Deny it, and you are faced with a problem that you cannot solve. Admit it, and all your being answers in glad response — your logical faculty, your intellectual power: "It is so!"

It is our theosophical teaching that the spaces of boundless space, not only our exterior, physical universe, but all the interior worlds — and these latter are by far the greater part of space: the interior, the invisible, but only invisible because our imperfectly evolved human sense apparatus does not report the existence of these interior worlds to us — all these interior worlds are filled full with animate beings, just as our earth is.

Not only men on earth, but the beasts and even the vegetation, show marvelous instinctive intelligence, each class after its kind, each class after its race, each after its family. If every animate entity was exactly like every other animate entity in boundless space, then there would be a drab uniformity everywhere. But you see such uniformity nowhere. Even among men you see differences in facility, differences in development — great men, inferior men (not essentially inferior, but in development), men intermediate who are the average men. And above us, high above us, there are the gods. These gods were men in some far past manvantara, or cosmic life period, just as we men of the present day in future cosmic life periods shall have evolved into becoming gods, even as now we are men from having evolved forth out of the elemental stages.

All nature, all the universe, boundless infinitude, looked at in this way we recognize to be one beginningless and endless and frontierless stream of evolving entities coming out from the invisible on the one hand as elemental entities, descending into the material spheres as life-atoms, passing a stage of existence in every one of the inns of life as they move along with this advancing evolutionary current: minerals, plants, beasts, men, super-men or what the Greeks called heroes, lower gods, higher gods, super-gods, and so on, forever.

Now, pause: either all things are at an absolute standstill throughout infinity, or movement, which means change, which means growth, which means progress, exists. And the latter is the fact; for we move, we change, we grow, we evolve; and if we do this, as we most certainly do, you must admit the same process everywhere, otherwise the same old problem confronts you: What is man? Why should he be the sole exception in boundless infinitude? Reason! Think! Free your soul! Give to it the wings with which it was born!



Even our great scientists today, the most advanced among them, are now talking about 'mind' and consciousness as being the fundamental of the universe. Now, what does that mean? Just what I have told you: it means that men are expressions of this mind, of this consciousness; and we men are not the only such expressions. This cosmic mind governs the movements of every molecule of physical substance. Just as we human beings spring forth from this cosmic mind as our fountainhead, as our source, so do the gods. But all everywhere is evolving. And every entity — although swimming, immersed as it were, in this cosmic life, in this cosmic mind — every entity is itself an individual and is moving, is growing, is changing, is evolving. If man does not monopolize all the intelligence in the universe, if he is not the sole exponent of willpower and of love and of all the other noble faculties in the human constitution, then these same faculties and powers are elsewhere and everywhere; because if elsewhere, they are logically everywhere; for the universe brought them all forth, and what the part contains the whole is the source of. Think it out.

Therefore, the gods exist because men exist; men exist because the gods exist; the elemental beings exist because men and gods exist; we and the gods exist because the elemental beings exist. It all comes back to the same thought: the one instance proves all the others and all the others prove the one. Life is everywhere, because life is motion, movement, change, which is evolution, growth. And where life is, is intelligence; where life is, is willpower. But, and here mark you well, my Brothers, not always existing in equal degrees. This is obvious! There are highly evolved men, men poorly evolved, and then the vast range of men occupying the intermediate stages. So is it also in the incomputable hosts of beings living in boundless space.

Therefore, the universe is filled full with gods; it is filled full with vast hierarchies, hosts, multitudes, armies — call their aggregates what you like — of other sentient, animate, thinking, conscious, quasi-conscious, entities, beings, creatures — we won't quibble about names. They exist in all grades, from the loftiest that the mightiest human imagination can conceive of and beyond, down to the lowest that human thought can fathom, and lower still. This means that the power to use one's will exists in degree, in all-various degrees; it means that intelligence in the universe manifests itself in evolutionary degrees or stages, some low, some higher, some higher still. Therefore the universe is filled, not only with gods, but with beings between the gods on the one hand and the elemental beings on the other hand.

Now, what shall we call this incomputably vast range of consciousnesses? What name or names shall we give to them? Call them what you like. Briefly, theosophists speak of them as gods, demi-gods, heroes, men, creatures lower than men, and the elementals. *Elementals* is simply a name given, as a generalizing term for purposes of convenient expression, to all beings below the minerals. Nevertheless, the minerals themselves are expressions of one family or host or hierarchy of elemental beings. The vegetable kingdom likewise manifests merely one family or host of elemental beings happening to be in the vegetable phase of their evolution on this earth. Just so likewise as regards the beasts. The beasts are highly evolved elemental beings, relatively speaking.

And, as I have already told you, men in far distant aeons of the cosmic past were elemental beings also. We have evolved from that stage into becoming men, expressing with more or less ease, mostly very feebly, alas! but still expressing somewhat, the innate divine powers and faculties locked up in the core of the core of each one of us. And this core of the core of each one of us is our

own inner god. Christians of a mystical turn of mind today speak of this inner god as the immanent Christ; the Buddhists speak of it as the inner Buddha. What matters the name?

Every race of men on earth has believed in these hosts of entities — some visible, like men, like the beasts, like the animate plants; and anyone who denies that a plant has a certain degree of animation needs to study the subject. Even the minerals are alive and filled with life, for they are in constant movement.

Consider, if you like, what modern science tells about the chemical composition of every atomic entity: that an atom is composed of two kinds of electrical bodies, one existing at the heart of it, which is called the atomic sun, and which is the protonic nucleus of a positive electrical character; and around this atomic sun whirl with vertiginous speed the electronic particles of a negative electrical character; and it is this speeding, this manifestation of electrical life, which holds the atoms together so strongly that no power that man has been able to put to the work has succeeded as yet in wrenching an atom asunder. All that our modern physical chemists can do is to apply, as it were, a gentle pressure at appropriate moments and to appropriate substances, and thus take advantage of what nature herself is doing.

Where movement is, there is always life. See how symmetrical and beautiful these movements in the atom are! Consider how wonderful and strangely symmetrical they are! Then raise your eyes to the violet dome of night; watch the celestial bodies in their movements around the sun; gaze through a telescope or study the photographs that that telescope produces, and see the wonderful panorama existing in cosmic space! It all inspires reverence and awe and wonder. The mere fact that man can feel these things and cognize them shows that he instinctively recognizes his

identity with the universe of which he is an inseparable part. He recognizes that his own life is there in cosmic space as well as here; he senses his fundamental oneness with all that is.

Do you believe in fairies? Do you believe in sprites? Do you believe in goblins and hobgoblins? And there are many other kinds of these entities, too. Now, I don't say that I do believe in them. I am going to tell you *what* I myself think about them after a bit. I am going to make a few general observations first. In various countries and at various times, names have been given to certain classes of these invisible entities — entities who are low in the evolutionary scale of life. They are not at all high in evolutionary development. But they indeed exist. I have jotted down the names of some of them, and I will read these names to you: Fairies, Sprites, Hobgoblins, Elves, Brownies, Pixies, Nixies, Leprechauns, Trolls, Kobolds, Boggarts, Barguests — and the 'Little People,' generally speaking. The ancient Greeks had their Naiads, the elemental beings who haunted the fountains and springs and the rivers; the Oreads, who haunted the hills and the mountains; the Limniads, who haunted the ponds and lakes; the Hamadryads, who lived and died with their native trees, which trees expressed their life; the Dryads, a general name for the invisible lives of the trees of the forests; and the Meliads of the fruit trees and the gardens; and there were others.

In the European Middle Ages the Philosophers of Fire, so called, and the so-called Rosicrucians, taught that these elemental beings were of four general kinds. These men had to be very careful in the language that they used, because the authorities had a heavy hand in those days. They 'knew it all,' you know. However, these medieval mystics taught that these elemental beings were of four general kinds: those frequenting the element of fire (a technical term which did not mean exactly the fire that we know), those frequenting the element air (also a technical term), and these

were the salamanders and sylphs respectively of fire and air; those unquiet, unsteady, elemental beings who, they said, frequented the waters, and whom they called the undines; and then the gnomes of the earth.

The idea here was that the universe, inner and outer, visible and invisible, was composed of a number of planes, so to say, or worlds or spheres, from the spiritual to the physical — seven in all; and they gave these names, these four names, fire, air, water, and earth, to the elemental spheres which were the least evolved, the grossest: the gnomes of earth, the undines of water, the sylphs of air, and the salamanders of fire. They said that these beings were "without a soul." They meant by that expression that they had not evolved to the point that men have reached: in other words, that they were sprites unevolved; they had not yet brought out from within, which is what evolution means, the powers of the indwelling god at the core of every individual. It is to the beings inhabiting the four lowest grades of the invisible worlds, of the invisible spheres, that the general term *fairies* applies. Under that term, as a general term, you may class all these other entities whose names I have just recited to you.

The question now therefore is, do these beings exist? They do. Do they dress like men, more particularly like European men of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, with long pointed shoes and little pointed caps and tight hose, with little green or red or parti-colored cloaks? — and you will remember how men dressed in the Tudor Age in England, for instance. No, they do not. These elemental beings can and do take almost any form; they change form according to any passing current of energy, and copy the thought-forms existing in the atmosphere, existing in the places or in the individuals to which they are attracted; in themselves they are as formless as cloudlets, or as globules of air; they are like cloudlets of air gathered around a permanent central point,

which in each case is the center, the durable center, of such an elemental being.

The elementals are exceedingly subject to currents of human thought and human will; and it is upon this fact that the mystical Medievalists taught that the Magician, in order to control the elemental beings, must himself have a strong will and a steady and permeant intelligence. If he has not these and if he therefore cannot control these beings, they taught that the spirits of nature could even kill him — destroy his body. Such indeed is the fact.

Do you doubt it? Then go to your insane asylums; go to your criminal prisons; look at the human wrecks which, alas, are among us everywhere. Look also at the suicides, and consider the hysteric statements of those who commit crimes in sudden and frenzied impulses of passion. All these are abnormal cases; they are the cases of weak-willed men who have lost control of themselves and have become the victims of some dominant passion; and such a dominant passion furnishes a very appropriate field or atmosphere in which these "soulless" elemental beings can flourish and live and act.

The elementals are not responsible for what they do. You cannot say that fire which destroys a beautiful work of art is responsible. You cannot say that the hailstones which destroy a crop are responsible. From the standpoint of the medieval mystics, the destructive fire or the hail, etc., are merely physical manifestations of the working in the invisible realms of these elemental beings who work automatically, instinctually, and without the guiding light of spiritual conscience. These elemental beings have not as yet evolved forth from their own inner god a self-conscious soul such as men have.

I will tell you a little esoteric secret in this connection: every time when a man flies into a passion, whether of desire or of anger,

whether of fear or of hate, he has lost control of himself and at the time exemplifies the characteristic and power of some elemental being under whose influence he has fallen. This natural fact, so simple, so easily understood, is the basis of the old superstition about the action upon human beings of devils.

These elementals are not devils; they are simply elemental beings, and they have a natural and strong affinity for man. They look upon man much as we humans look to the gods; but when the man becomes degenerate and drops to their lower sphere, then is their chance. Automatically and instinctively they act, and they act as impersonally and as much without conscience as does the electric current. And I may say just here that the electric current is but a stream or flow of these elemental beings. Turn the switch, release the current and, if the circumstances are right, the man whose hand touched the switch is a dead man.

I will go a little farther: Diseases are the results of loss of self-control at some time, either in this or in some past life. You can say that an elemental has entered into the man's vital aura and that the man cannot repel the invasion or dislodge the invader, the reason being that the man has lost control of himself. Thus, such an elemental is like a disease seed dropped into fertile soil; and if the man does not oust it with his will and by aspiration to better things, in other words by resuming his normal spiritual manhood, that seed will grow, and disease or horrible consequences will be the result for him.

These elementals are akin in their very origin to human beings; because, as I have told you, human beings in a far past cosmic manvantara — or past life period of cosmic existence — were elemental beings also; and these elemental beings in future ages will become men — will evolve forth a soul from within, just as the acorn evolves forth the lofty oak from within itself. The acorn

is not the oak, but the acorn contains the oak *in potentia* because it has in the heart of it, in the core of it, the oak characteristics — the *swabhava* of the oak, as theosophists say.

Therefore, when I am asked: Do I believe in fairies? I answer: Yes-No, No-Yes. I believe in fairies in the manner that I have set my belief forth; but if you ask if I believe in fairies as the men of four, five, six, hundred years ago believed in them, then I answer, No, certainly not; not at all.

The universe is filled full with gods; the universe is also filled full with intelligent, with half-intelligent, with quasi-intelligent, with almost unintelligent entities, existing in all-various grades and degrees of evolution, but nevertheless all are evolving entities, and all begin their evolutionary pilgrimage at its beginning — that fact is obvious. The beginning of any entity is its elemental root or seed; and as this elemental entity evolves, changes, grows, expands, in other words brings out what is locked up within it, as the acorn brings forth the oak, as the apple seed brings forth the apple tree: in brief, as this expansion and unfolding, this evolution, proceeds, you have a constantly greater and nobler expression of the spiritual essence at the core of the core of such an elemental being.

And here I repeat briefly what I have so often told you before: that theosophists are strict and rigid evolutionists, but we are not transformists. With us, evolution is a natural process exactly explained by this Latin word *evolutio* and signifying the unfolding, the unwrapping, the bringing out, of what is latent or unexpressed in the very fabric and essence of the being itself. As a rose unfolds from its bud, bringing out what is the *swabhava* or characteristic of the rose-plant, as the acorn brings forth the oak, unfolding the characteristics from within itself of the oak-tree, just so does man or any other entity anywhere in the universe



evolve or unwrap or bring forth what is locked up within itself as the very law or essential characteristics of its being. Elemental in the beginning of a cosmic life period, evolving through all the countless forms of existence during that cosmic life period, and ending as a fully self-conscious god at the end of that life period — there in brief you have the picture. Elemental at one end, beginning, and god at the other end, the ending of such a cosmic period of existence. Each such cosmic life period is both preceded and followed by other cosmic life periods. We have thus an endless chain of causation extending from eternity to eternity, so to speak.

It is therefore obvious that in order to span the impassable gap, so to say, between the elemental being at one end and man at the other, the evolving elemental being must pass through all these intermediate cosmic stages. The elemental cannot attain godhood at a bound. It must evolve or grow into becoming a god.

See now the ethical side to this: Do not blame for their faults and shortcomings and natural incapacities those who are less evolved than you. Don't be harsh in your judgments. Be pitiful; be kindly. Remember that they would do better if they knew better; and that, in order to know better, they must evolve, they must grow. Do you blame the little child for screaming? Do you blame it for causing a conflagration or an accident to others? You try to correct any fault in the child, and this is your duty; you try to forestall any accident that the child may bring about; but you don't crucify or hang or electrocute the infant, for the simple reason that it does not know self-consciously what it is doing, it has not as yet in its infant years brought forth as it does in the years of later life a spiritual conscience living within it.

Just so is it with all other entities, and so also, but on a higher scale, with your fellow human beings. Society must protect itself,

of course; but don't protect yourself harshly, don't do it unkindly. Remember the refining and magnetic power of love! Have the understanding heart; learn to forgive; and be yourself an example of what you want others to be. You yourself set the example. Be true men. Manifest what you as a fully evolved self-conscious being are. The basis for ethics lies in nature's own fabric and structure, that is to say in nature's own laws. Ethics are not at all mere human conventions. They are based on natural law — the essential laws of the universe.

I have before me this afternoon five questions that have been sent in to me, and these questions ask about sprites, fairies, and goblins. Remember that all these names are just names for various classes of the same beings — different names for different elemental beings existing in various kinds and classes.

A kind friend sent to me the other day two newspaper illustrations, being reproductions of two photographs, in each case showing a child with dancing "fairies" before her. These photographs were printed some years ago, and produced a small sensation in a restricted circle of quasi-mystical and perhaps rather credulous people. Many people believe that these photographs were true pictures of actualities simply because they were photographs. Conan Doyle, the clever creator of Sherlock Holmes, a brilliant man, is said to have investigated the matter of these photographs, and it is stated that he was sure that no double exposure of the photographic plates had been made. But as I looked at these pictures and studied them, knowing what I do about elemental beings, these pictures seemed very unreal and artificial to me.

Now please understand me: I accuse nobody of willful deception. Conan Doyle was a brainy man, but he made mistakes. Show me a man who is infallible, incapable of making a mistake. I don't

believe that such a being exists. Anybody can make mistakes, and I can make mistakes as readily as anybody else in matters concerning which my experience is small; and so it is with every other man. Of course the man whose experience is wide along a certain line of study or practice will make fewer mistakes than one who is ignorant in that line or inexpert in that line. The man who thinks that he is infallible I fear is self-deceived and foolish. Infallibility rightly means having infinite cognizance of infinite matters, and this for human beings is impossible. We are all evolving entities and this means that every one of us is imperfect. But nevertheless we are all growing in knowledge and in spiritual wisdom simply because we are all evolving. There are great men, men less great, men less great still, and what we may for purposes of illustration call inferior men, and so forth.

I don't think that these photographs that I have just spoken of are aught else than — but no, I won't say anything that might seem unkind. Perhaps it is best in this connection to leave my thought unsaid. I will say this, however: that these elemental beings, when they are in the presence of a human being, as indeed they are constantly (because they surround us everywhere, being in our flesh, in our blood, in our brains, in our lungs, everywhere; we are permeated by them) take on the lineaments, the shapes, even the clothing it may be, of the thoughts that they automatically sense in the mind of the being or beings with whom they are at the time in direct contact.

The photographs that I speak of showed little fairylike creatures dressed more or less in the styles of the Tudor Age in England, and also having wings somewhat like the pictures of angels. As we know, the picture books and children of our present age figure the fairies of the medieval times as being dressed just like these photographs show these dancing images to be; and the addition of the wings to these dancing images that the photograph

showed were doubtless a later imaginary addition to them derived from the medieval pictures of angels large and small, flitting around by means of wings.

Why should not our picture books and our children think of fairies in short skirts and bare arms and silken stockings and bobbed hair with wristwatch on arm, etc., etc., or perhaps with tophats and swallow-tail coats? I trust that my thought is clear. How is it that other nations and other ages have picturated these elemental beings as possessing the shapes and as being clad according to the costumes and habits of these other ages and other peoples?

For instance, we still have records that the ancient Greeks had notions that these elemental creatures acted like Greeks and dressed like Greeks. Why? In England, the fairies are supposed to be dressed in the costumes and to have the habits of an earlier or of a later age such as the Tudor Age. Why? In Germany they were supposed to be dressed and to act like German peasants. Why? And in Sweden to be dressed and to act like Swedish peasants. Why? Go to India, go to China, go to other countries of the East, and in each instance you will find that elemental beings, called fairies in medieval Europe, are described as being dressed in the costumes of those Oriental countries and to act like natives of those Oriental and other countries. Why? Isn't it obvious that each land and each people has given to these elemental beings habiliments and costumes with which these different peoples themselves were most familiar?

Here are the five questions that were sent to me. I will read the first to you, and then after a few words of comment I will read the others.

I understand that you believe in fairies and similar creatures existing in the imagination of the superstitious men of a

bygone age. Is this true? I am sure it must be false.

The questioner thinks for me, you see. In the first place, are there no superstitious men today? "Pat, do you believe in ghosts?" "No, Sor; but I hate like Hell to be where they are!" We are just as superstitious in our own way as our fathers were in their way, every whit as much; and we still have superstitions often of a most irrational kind — scientific superstitions, philosophical superstitions, religious superstitions also. We know well that they are superstitions, we know it just as well as we know anything else; and yet we hold to those superstitions or fads and fancies of a past era like grim death, merely because they are popular, and the average man has not yet been able to shake them off. But the great man frees himself from these superstitions; that is, he thinks for himself. Such is the mark of a great man, to be able to think for himself, but nevertheless to think kindly, brotherly.

I will say in answer to the question that I believe in the elemental spirits as I have described them to be; but, in the fairies as they have been commonly supposed to be, no, I do not believe in them at all, except in the sense that I have already outlined and hinted at.

Question 2: How is it that every race of men throughout universal history and in every part of the globe has always believed in invisible entities existing in other worlds than ours?

Because man's own instinct has told him that these entities exist; it is the consensus of judgment of the human race that these entities exist, and this is a matter quite apart from what uneducated and unguided mysticism in any age may have supposed regarding these elemental entities. The popular mythologies, it must be remembered, were never at all the belief of the wise and illuminated seers.

Now, pause in thought over this: When universal mankind in every age has felt and believed and taught the same things, we must believe that innate human intelligence and instincts are working, and therefore that there is truth in these same things, leaving aside all embroidery and decoration of fancy and imagination; the essential must be true, because man's instinct repeats it in age after age, man's instinct sets it forth in belief and teaching in age after age; and the instinct and the thinking and the intuition and therefore the teaching have always been that these elemental beings exist in all steps and grades of evolutionary development: some are spiritual, and are very kindly to men, and are lofty, ethereal entities; others are deep-sunk in material existence, and are therefore unfriendly to man, and often malignant; and there are all the intermediate stages of these entities between these two extremes. Such has been the universal belief of the human race.

Do we not find the same varieties of entities and things even in the physical world? Are not some beasts friendly to man? Are not some unfriendly? You will find these varieties and grades of evolutionary development even in men. Some men are dangerous; some men are kindly; some men are good; some men are bad; some men have a heart; some men seem to be heartless. Think over these ideas. Are you going to be like the dumb, driven sheep, following every wind of opinion, and from year to year merely believing what the passing age believes? Or are you going to liberate the wings of your mind, of your intellect, and think for yourselves? Study! Read! Think! Give your consciousness a chance to express itself with its native energy.

If these invisible and airy beings exist, where do they live and what is their character?

They are everywhere — in the fire, in the water, in the air, in the

earth, in the sky — everywhere, each class existing in its appropriate sphere, just as men are on earth; each class lives and acts and is fit for its appropriate sphere, just as men are on earth. Every tree, for instance, is an outward expression of such an elemental being passing through its tree stage of evolutionary progress. Every insect is such an elemental being passing through the insect stage of its evolutionary journey. Of every beast exactly the same observation can be made; and obviously I here refer only to the beings that surround us on earth. The invisible realms are filled full with these elementals. They are everywhere, existing in all-various grades of development and are of all-various kinds, some very friendly to men, some unfriendly and hostile — not by will, but by natural character; men and they don't tune in together. There are poisons that can be extracted from plants and from beasts which can be used to heal; but they likewise can be used to kill. Steel can kill, and yet steel in the hand of the clever surgeon, and rightly used, can heal.

Are they friendly or hostile to human beings?

The one or the other, as the case may be.

Can they and do they communicate with men?

It depends upon what you mean by communication: if you ask whether they speak to us as human beings speak to human beings, then the answer is no, because they are not men. You might as well ask: Can the trees communicate with a man? I say, yes! Ah! Have you never been in some great primeval forest? Has your soul never at any time felt the influence of these wondrous creatures, the great trees, with their unutterable peace, and their quiet whispering to us, even with the tremulous movement of their leaves, strange thoughts of beauty and wonder? Have you felt it? Yes; these beings can communicate, *but in their own way*. Look into the eyes of the dog you love, or of the horse that you

love. It cannot "talk" to you, but nevertheless it talks to you *in its own way*.

There are no fairies at all such as the medieval pictures misrepresent them to be. The fundamental idea that sprites, elemental beings, exist is very true. Some even look like men, and that is also true; but they look like men simply because they haunt the habitats of men and automatically take on the appearance of men. Consider that even the dog, a highly domesticated beast, is beginning to have certain minor human traits. He loves his home; he loves the fireside; he loves the one or two or three whom he is accustomed to, just like men. Compare the domesticated dog with the wild dog, or with the wolf, who loves the free open spaces, and you will see the differences at once.

The vast majority of these creatures have no permanent form, because they take on any form according to the currents of energy or of thought to which they are so highly subject. They are, as I said, like globules of air, like cloudlets, changing form constantly with every passing thought that they catch and automatically conform to and follow; with every passing impulse of a psychomagnetic kind that they catch they change accordingly. But, as a matter of fact, even so do men to a certain extent. The same principle prevails. Don't men change from hour to hour and from day to day — not change in the general sense of growth, but change in their opinions, their feelings; and this they do even hourly. A man may act like a fiend in the morningtime. He does not mean to be a fiend, but may be so grouchy that his whole appearance is like a fiend; and by noon or in the afternoon he may be an angel, a pitiful, compassionate angel, doing a work of human kindness somewhere.

Do I believe in fairies? Using this word as a general term for these



elemental beings, Yes. I now repeat: Do I believe in the fairies of the European peoples, as these fairies are portrayed by medieval writers in different ages and by those modern writers who copy the Medievalists? No. Do I believe in the fairies as they are described by the populace of Hindustan or China or of Japan or of the countries to the north or to the south of our own double continent? No, I do not.

But nevertheless I know that the folklore regarding fairies is *based* on truth; I know that these elemental beings do indeed exist, that they are of all-various kinds, that the world is filled with them; that they exist not only on our physical plane, but on all the invisible planes, and on all the other planes of ethereality as these planes increase in spirituality. The gods themselves were elemental beings once, because that stage was the beginning of their evolution in our present cosmic sphere. We men were elemental beings once, because once we also were in our beginnings. The elemental beings are evolving into becoming men, as we humans have already evolved into becoming men. We men are evolving into becoming gods, as the gods have already evolved from manhood into becoming divine.

Evolution, in our theosophical teaching, is an operation of a universal nature and therefore prevails everywhere. Not only the entities of earth evolve, but it is our theosophical teaching that evolution is a universal law, more accurately one of nature's fundamental operations; for evolution is growth, and growth is change, and change is movement, and movement is life, and movement springs from consciousness. Without consciousness life and movement cannot be, they cannot exist, because movement to be movement according to law which means order and harmony thus signifying intelligence must proceed from a point of departure in a purposive line to a destined point, and all the movements that we know in the universe are this kind,

proceeding from point to point according to law and order which is harmony; and chance and fortuity are utterly irreconcilable with law and order.

Now, Brothers, please do not misunderstand me to mean, when I say that human beings were elementals once and that in future cosmic aeons they will be gods, that I imply by this remark that the god within us has become a god without purposive operation, and by mere fortuitous transformism from a previous human being; nor, similarly, that the human being is the human being because it has changed without purposiveness by chance action from an elemental being. That is not my idea. I mean that the heart of every entity is a divine essence from any beginning of evolution to any end of evolution; and it is the currents of consciousness and energy flowing from this divine essence, through the various bodies in which that divine essence or inner god exists, which provide the motivating urges to betterment, to improvement, to growth. The inner god has been there from the beginning, but unexpressed. Evolution is bringing forth what is within, not chance accretions of faculty or organ by merely exterior environmental action.

Evolution is not something added to you from without. What is in the acorn? The seed-life of the oak. That seed-characteristic is in the acorn from the beginning. Therefore the god *in potentia* is in the elemental being from the beginning; and all evolution is simply an unfolding, an unwrapping, an expanding process, bringing out ever more and more perfectly what is within; and the different stages of this bringing out are the different stages which the evolving and advancing entity goes through — elemental being, mineral, plant, beast, human, hero, lower god, god, super-god — the series is endless. What a picture this teaching gives to us!

But we now existing as human beings, having evolved forth from within us the essential noble human instincts — having evolved forth the divine feeling of love, of compassion, of pity, of understanding for others, and therefore the instinct of forgiving — have a heavy responsibility upon us, for we have become cognizant of right and wrong; and hereafter what we choose to do we individually shall be responsible for; for our minds have been enlightened, our understandings have been fired with the divine fire within us; we have come into touch with our inner god, however feebly; and thus now being men, self-conscious entities with a consciousness as we are now, we shall pay for what we do that is wrong, and we shall receive the guerdon for what we do that is right. Therefore the teaching of all the sages and seers of all the ages has been one: come up higher, my Brothers. Be yourself, your divine self. Manifest the god within you, for it is there. Take command of yourself. Be true men; and do this by expressing the power of your inner god.

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[Vol 2, No 22](#)  
[Contents](#)

**Second Series: No. 22 (February 2, 1931)**

**SOMETHING ABOUT MYSELF**

(Lecture delivered December 14, 1930)

CONTENTS: The self-perpetuating brotherhood of teachers. Their cyclic appearance among men. Their messengers. — Theosophy in all ancient scriptures. — The way to receive truth. — Leader and follower alike. — The beauty of clairvoyant trust. — Not claims but facts. — Charges of charlatanry refuted. — "One man and Truth a majority." — Explanation of "In the name of the Masters"; "the authority that has devolved upon me"; the term mediator. — The constitution of The TS (Point Loma). Does it invest the Leader with absolute authority? — Autonomy of National Sections. — Esoteric spirit of The TS. — Dangers of unlimited power in the hands of one person. — Protest against charge of claiming infallibility. — Against laying down dogmas. — A vow of poverty.

For many weeks, for months indeed, I have been receiving at numerous intervals questions referring to myself; and I have regularly laid these questions aside. I don't like to talk about myself, although indeed I am always enthusiastic when it comes to the matter of the theosophical work which I am doing and which I am trying to do; but for a number of reasons I have brought these different questions with me to the platform this afternoon. I shall read them to you and then try to answer them, because it seemed to me that, while the subject of my own person is very uninteresting to me, it has possible value in the minds of those who don't know me and my work; and I think that the answers which I will try to give to these questions will enable you

to understand our theosophical work better than many do at present. I refer here of course to questions which have been asked about me and my individual connection with The Theosophical Society and its activities. Had they been asked about The Theosophical Society only, I would have answered them immediately.

A theosophical lecturer speaks under difficulties always. A great many people don't know what theosophy really is. They think that it is some strange, outlandish, possibly even weird, form of belief; instead of being, as it truly is, a philosophy-religion-science giving in reasoned formulation truths about the structure, the operations, the physiology, and the psychology, of the universe. In other words, it answers the great questions which all thinking men put, not only to their own souls, but in the silences ask of that encompassing spirit of truth which some men call god and others nature, and to which others give no name at all.

All sane men hunger for truth; all aspiring men want light — and in the vast majority of cases they have neither. A little of each, mayhap, they indeed have: a little only of guidance, a bare glimmering of light; and these rays of light and truth that they do have come from within, from the operations of the divine entity which is resident in the core of the core of every human being — because, verily, my Brothers, this divine entity essentially speaking is that human being in his divine inmost.

It is due to the enshrouding veils of personal selfhood, and also due to miseducation along all lines of human thinking and feeling, that men in the Occident with very few exceptions have lost touch with the inner individual god dwelling at the heart of every individual human being, and which inner god is the divine-spiritual essence of each such individual. Hence it is that Occidentals usually seek for guidance and light outside of the

inner fields of consciousness, forgetting that guidance and light are within, because the understander is within, the feeler is within, vision is within; and this within is an inseparable part of the universe — this divine flame within you, which is your very utmost, truest self, is an inseparable portion so to speak of boundless infinitude.

You obviously cannot leave the universe of which you are children. You are in it, you will be in it for aye, for aye you have been in it, because you are, each one of you, inseparably a part of it; and being thus each one of you an inseparable part of boundless infinitude, whatever is in the encompassing whole is in each part of that whole; and each one of you is such a part.

Therefore the cosmic light is within you; the cosmic guidance or life is within you; and it is to this within that the truth seeker, the man hungry for light, for more light, must finally turn if he will find truth and light and peace and happiness.

Granted all this as being necessary deductions from the premise, nevertheless there remains the other fact that men, not knowing how to find this wondrous path, need help; they need guidance. The little child growing to adulthood has within it all the undeveloped faculties and powers of the adult; but during its period of infancy and childhood it needs the mother's guiding hand, the tender care of her protecting arms; and just so is it with us humans as contrasted with the sublime gods who infill the universe and of whom we are the offspring. Think! We humans have not by any means reached the summit of evolution. We have merely attained one stage, one grade, one state, on our upward evolutionary climb. Therefore it is that all the great sages and seers of all the ages have told men always: "Look within; Man, know thyself; seek out the inner god; but I will help, for I have found." Therefore are teachers necessary; therefore are teachers required; and these spiritual teachers are the truest helpers of the

race, their noblest guides, sometimes called Saviors.

As every well-read man knows, there have been such great men on earth, men whose outstanding spiritual and intellectual genius has shaken the very fabric of civilizations, or, indeed, they have builded anew for a succeeding age and race of men. Each such great sage and seer brought in a new age, for in each such case, the times in which they came were times in which men had become spiritually asleep and intellectually and psychically degenerate.

All evolution, all growth, all progress, is like a rising along an arc for a time, reaching a culmination of power and faculty, and then slowly sinking as the faculties wane, until the historic trough of the curve is reached. Then a new great one appears, and directs men on another upward round subsequent to the one down which they had come. Each such upward round is a little higher in its culmination than the one last passed.

This Theosophical teaching of guides, of leaders, coming to men in regular serial order or in serial succession, is one of our most beautiful and most consoling theosophical doctrines. The burden of the message of every such great sage or seer always contains the appeal to the individual man to awaken from his spiritual and intellectual slumber and to become more at one with the god within him.

No true theosophical lecturer ever tells you: "Believe me!" Never! He says: look within; examine yourself, and if aught that you hear from me is repulsive or offensive to your ethical instinct, then abhor it. You may make a mistake in doing so, you may turn aside from something which might help you greatly; but nevertheless in being sincere with yourself you have exercised your divine prerogative of judgment, your divine prerogative of free choice and free will; and this is for you an invaluable spiritual exercise,

which strengthens these inner powers, which opens new faculties within you, so that you grow or evolve more rapidly. It is also by our mistakes that we can learn lessons of great value.

Keep your heart pure: there is a key; keep your mind open: there is another key. Hearken for truth always. Seek for a greater light always. With your mind open, your heart clean, then no matter what may be the mistakes that you may make, you are rising along the upward path.

The Theosophical Society was founded by this association, this brotherhood, of great sages and seers; for they exist in all ages, and their association is self-perpetuating on account of the new recruits who join this brotherhood as age follows age. They sent forth one of their disciples to found the Theosophical Society in our age, in 1875; and that messenger was H.P. Blavatsky — instructed to bring to men, not something new, but the age-old truth based on universal facts: to sound that truth anew, to awaken men's hearts, to stimulate men's minds.

Theosophy teaches naught that is new in the sense of being unnatural — not based on nature. Theosophy teaches the ancient wisdom-religion of mankind. Search the old scriptures of the races of the world: you will find theosophy in all of them if you know how to look for it — how to find it under the guise of metaphor, symbol, emblem, and allegory — but it is there. Prove this statement of mine by your own investigation.

Hence, when a theosophical teacher speaks, he does indeed speak with a certain authority, because he himself has been taught. Himself having been taught, he in his turn can teach others. He knows whereof he speaks, and the witness that he brings is a true witness, no matter how feebly he may be able to show it. I tell you that the witness that he brings is a true witness. Indeed every good man is a true witness of goodness; every man of genius



brings a true witness of that genius; and who will say nay to this obvious truth?

Therefore, when some people who don't understand these wondrous theosophical thoughts, which nevertheless are so simple, so true, criticize our doctrine of a succession of theosophical teachers and say that we "claim" this, or that we "claim" that, my reply is simply that they understand not that which they criticize. They haven't understood the meaning of the doctrine; and yet the truth is there for anyone who will honestly search for it in earnest study and unbiased mind.

Where and how will you learn chemistry? By going to a professor of chemistry. Where will you learn astronomy? By going to an astronomer. Where will you learn anything? By going for it to him who knows it. You can thus prove whether he knows or not what he teaches: you can prove whether he knows it by his life, by his teaching, and by your own reactions to these.

Abhor what your conscience admits not as good; on the other hand, accept what is good, what you feel to be right, and hold to it though all the world be against you. Be true men! Death itself is naught when compared with moral cowardice and the stigma of infidelity to principle. Be true, and all the world will be yours in time. Be sincere and in time you will know the truth, for then your heart is pure and your mind is clear; and nature's currents of life and of intelligence flow steadily and surely through hearts and minds that are pure. Truth lies within you. It is but visions of the truth that is within you that you see in the phantasmagoria outside of you. This is the basis of the teaching that every true theosophical leader will tell you of.

It has been said by some who don't know me and who don't understand me that I "make claims." I think that I have never made a claim in my life. I tell you facts, and I ask you to prove

them. If you like them not, accept them not. But it is my duty to lay the facts before you; and if people say that in doing thus I make claims, what is my answer? I can only say: No, my Brother, I am telling you the truth as I have received it. That truth I cannot, I dare not, alter or distort. Prove it yourself. Accept it if it is good and hold to it like grim death. Abhor it if your conscience says nay.

As Victor Hugo used to say: "When the night is dark, shall I refuse the authority of the torches?" Shall we throw the pilot overboard because of our mind-proud feelings that "we don't relish the thought that we are under his control"? Ah! Immortal gods! I love to follow what is grand! I love what is beautiful, and I gladly follow it. Show me what is right, and I will follow to the world's end. I have learned something: When the night is dark, I accept the authority of the torches. But I never follow until something within me leaps in glad and instant recognition of a truth, and then I am a slave of truth.

I am a leader of men who trust me, but I am a follower of my teachers too; and I cannot follow those teachers faithfully and truly if I vary one faint line from the path of duty. I cannot fail and follow simultaneously.

Learn, my Brothers, the beauty of clairvoyant trust — of trust based on your instincts of what is right. A grander man is he who can trust when he feels that his trust is rightly placed than is the man who in his mind-proud way will believe in naught and trust in naught because, forsooth, he knows it all. Poor, purblind follower of his own darkened vision — a human mole! It is fashionable today to be moles of that kind. It is supposed to show strength of intellect to refuse to follow even when both intellect and instinct conjoin in an appeal to pursue the path that the great ones have trodden. Whereas, I tell you, that when the great man

sees truth, he follows it, he moves steadily towards that truth; he cannot do otherwise.

As I suppose you know, we humans are so apt to follow what we like, what we want to do. In this respect we are much like little children. If daddy tells a child something that he doesn't like, the child usually obeys because he knows what is going to happen to him if he doesn't; but although he may follow daddy's instructions, the child badly brought up thinks that daddy has made a mistake — or that daddy is a mistake. We grownups in many respects are just like such a child. This is illustrated by a little story which I have before me and which I will read to you:

His father had found it necessary rather severely to punish Robert, aged five. The little chap came running to me with resentment in his heart.

"Auntie," he sobbed, "did God make you?"

"Yes, Robert," I answered.

"And did he make ma?"

"Yes."

"And did he make me?"

"Certainly, my boy."

"And did he make pa, too?"

"Of course he did."

"Well," sobbed Robert sadly, "that's when he made a mistake!"

I am afraid that we are much like little Robert. We always think that the other fellow makes a mistake if he does not do as we think he ought to do. But is that state of mind fair? Give the other man the benefit of the doubt. Examine what he sets forth. Prove it

yourself. Can anything be more fair than this procedure? It is wise, too.

You have claimed in some of your General Letters addressed to members of The Theosophical Society and of the Esoteric Section that spiritual and intellectual forces are flowing through you and that you stand in personal contact with the Masters. As so many unworthy people have made similar claims does this not open you to the charge of charlatanry and thus injure the reputation of the Society which you represent?

I have not at any time made any claims; but I have indeed stated certain facts, and have stated them positively. I have not at anytime set these facts forth as mere claims. Any man, my Brothers, who will tell others a new fact is always exposed by that act to the charge of charlatanry. What is he going to do? Is he to be a coward and keep his mouth closed, or is he to do his duty and tell the truth as he was told to do it, charge of charlatanry or not? There is the case.

I always say: examine what I say for yourselves. If you like what you are told, then hold to it and come and help me; and if is offensive to you, then reject it. You are the judges, each one is the judge for himself. But as to my making claims, I make none! The annals of history are written large with the cases of men who have taught truths, who have stated facts, and who have been called charlatans, thieves, rogues, robbers of souls, devils, imps, cheats, frauds, and whatnot. But you will never find a true man bending under these charges. He will pursue his path and will go to the end.

I tell you that the old saying is true which you must have often heard, that "one man and God are a majority"; and theosophists say: one man and truth are a majority. What happens finally? Very soon other men come, and the man who was alone is the

head of a multitude, and that multitude swells until one day it suddenly finds itself to be the majority. This is the guerdon of courage, a courage based on the conviction that what you say is right, is true, is just. A theosophical teacher who could be afraid of aught in this sense of the word — afraid of anything save his own feeble, human, erring nature — a theosophical teacher, I repeat, who could be afraid at any time of telling what he knows to be true is indeed a weakling and at worst a fraud; and the sooner he is pulled down from the pedestal upon which he stands, the better. He is no true theosophical teacher.

The mere fact that evil men have made false claims to be teachers of truth in the world — does this disprove the obvious truth that good men have taught truth? Shall we deny the sunlight because the night is there? Shall we deny the existence of truth and peace because falsehood and war exist in the world? Shall a man be afraid of being called a charlatan because there have been charlatans? You have your answer. The world moves ahead on account of the great men who have led it and who lead it — true leaders: those men who have courage, moral courage, and who are not afraid to speak the truth, but who speak it with kindness. Courage, truth, brotherly love — these are three magical weapons always ready for the hand of one who brings real light and help to his fellow men.

As regards the statement in the question that I have claimed that "spiritual and intellectual forces flow through me, and that I stand in personal contact with the Masters," I can only say that whatever statements I have made in these respects are not claims, but are statements of fact, and I don't think it would be easy to point to any statements made by me which would show me as a poser claiming myself to be a focus of spiritual and intellectual forces.

As much as any other true theosophist I shrink with disgust from advertising myself, as a charlatan might do, as being a public envoy of the Masters. What I have written and said, I hold to, because it is truth, but it is grossly unfair and unkind to claim that statements of fact which I have indeed uttered have been made with the remotest desire of posing. Such would be abhorrent to me.

In some of your official announcements you speak of yourself as the messenger of the Great White Lodge. What do you mean by this? In what sense is more weight to be attached to your claim than to similar claims made by others since H. P. Blavatsky's time?

I have never at anytime made claims, as is here alleged. I have stated certain facts; and upon those facts the construction embodied in this question could indeed be made; but the facts that I have stated have been indeed statements of facts and in no case the making of claims. Furthermore, no more weight is to be attached to anything that I may say, in case I should ever make a claim, which is most unlikely, than is to be attached to a claim made by anyone else. Claims amount to little, if anything: it is what the man gives from himself that you must go by; it is your reaction to him and to his life and to his teachings which for you is the important thing; it is not his claims, nor is it indeed his bare statements. Otherwise you are like dumb driven sheep, merely following some more or less vociferous bellwether.

I urge upon you to listen to what you hear; to listen carefully and honestly, to give it careful thought; and if you find that it appeals to you as true, then, in the name of holy truth, hold to it and give your help where you feel that help is needed. This is the act of a true man. If, on the other hand, what you hear appeals to you as false or as offensive, then abhor it, refuse it, reject it. Never mind

if you make a mistake, if your judgment is insecure and lacks clarity and strength. By exercising your judgment and discrimination, such as you have them, you exercise spiritual faculties and these faculties will grow stronger in time and with practice; consequently in time your judgment and your discrimination will be stronger than now they are through the exercise that you give to them. This principle of conduct is an excellent one to follow. But as I have already told you, if you believe that what you hear is true, then hold to it and ally yourself with its proclaimer. Is not this right?

I do not know that I have ever definitely called myself "a Messenger of the Great White Lodge." On the other hand, I have made certain statements of fact which point in that direction, but I have left the inferences to be drawn from my statements to the good judgment and sense of honesty and truth of those who have listened to me. What I am, I am, but I urge this upon no man. It is, however, true that I have been given a mission to fulfil from the same great teachers who sent H.P. Blavatsky into the world; but it must not be thought that these great men are not working through others also. By their lives you will know these others, and by their teachings you will recognize them.

Your General Letters to the Fellows of your Theosophical Society and of the Esoteric Section are signed, "In the name of the Masters and under the authority that has devolved upon me." This expression has caused adverse comment from members of other theosophical organizations. Please explain just what you mean by it.

It would seem to me that the words are clear enough, and possess a meaning which can hardly be misunderstood. They mean that what I write officially, in such official communications, is written in the name of my teachers, whom I follow, whom I am pledged

to follow; and I am pledged by my spiritual self, and by my manhood, faithfully to follow and to deviate not from the path. Would you have me do aught else than tell you the truth as I know that truth? Would you have me cheat and hide the facts and perhaps from fear say something that is untrue? Am I to be blamed because I tell the truth, because I state a fact? Shall this be thrown in my teeth as being a mere claim? I tell you, as I have told you before: reject what I tell you, if it offends your ethical sense; but if you know me, know me to be a true man, know what I do, know what I aspire to do and what I long to accomplish, and if you feel that I am right and that I need help in my work, then why not help me in that work?

"The authority that has devolved upon me" is the authority which I possess as Leader of The Theosophical Society, an authority which fell upon my shoulders after our beloved Katherine Tingley, my great-hearted predecessor, passed on. That is all this latter part of the quoted sentence means. I cannot see that there is any particularly unjustifiable claim here.

Why is it that people are so prone unkindly to judge? Usually without asking a man openly what he really means or intends to say, some people will sit down and write articles for the newspapers, or write letters to each other, and allege that So-and-So "makes claims." There is one pleasing thing about all this: it arouses an interest in our theosophical work; it advertises both our theosophical work and myself. We thus get a lot of free advertising, and this fact does not at all displease me; but nevertheless such action is hardly fair. As a matter of fact, despite its unfairness I nevertheless wish that they would do more of it, simply because of the advertising value it has for us.

Shall I change my policy and say something different from what I have already said merely because what I have said has aroused



adverse comment from people who don't understand me? Shall I not rather follow the example of the great teacher of Palestine: "Master, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

I know full well, my Brothers, that many of these people who have criticized me and my various written and spoken communications and also certain of my acts since I became Leader of The Theosophical Society, would be now with me and supporting me if they only knew me and understood me. I recognize this fact fully; and therefore have I long since extended my hand in friendship. I have said: "Come, Brother; here is my hand. Come to know me. Learn to trust me. Test me. Differ from me, if you will; but let us live brotherly."

It is publicly stated by the official representative of another Theosophical Society who declined to accept your outstretched hand of fraternal cooperation: "A Theosophical Society is a union of men on the basis of the recognition of the divine self for the realization of universal brotherhood without mediation or mediator." He also says that Dr. de Purucker claims to be such a mediator. Do you? And if so, why?

Here is a man criticizing me because he thinks I have not said the very thing that I have been talking about from this platform for eighteen months, ever since I became the Leader of The Theosophical Society. I have said to you on each Sunday when you have attended here: "Look within. Man, know thyself. Find your own inner god and abide by its guidance, for there lie truth, and peace and happiness and light." And now this criticizing brother comes along and says that I make claims to be a mediator between a human being and his own inner god! This is a preposterous assertion!

What I do claim — and this is a claim, and I have so announced it openly — what I do claim is to be one who can show you how to

find your self, how to find your own inner god. In that sense, I am a mediator between you as men or women and the god within each one of you, because I point to the path, to the Middle Way. I have myself been taught this; therefore having been taught it, I can teach it, exactly as a professor of chemistry or astronomy can teach chemistry or astronomy because in each case the teacher has been taught his science — he has himself learnt it. He is a mediator — such a professor — between the untaught consciousness or mind of the learner and the graduate expert. That should be clear. It is on the other hand, absolutely false should anyone say that I have said that a theosophical leader, teacher, lecturer, writer, or whatnot is a mediator in the sense of being an intermeddler between a man and the divine spark within that man which is the core of that man's spiritual essence.

I think that the statement that the question contains with regard to what a Theosophical Society should be, is very good as far as it goes; but it is also incomplete. I, too — and I know that all my fellow theosophists will agree with me — also say that a Theosophical Society is a union of men on the basis of the recognition of the divine self for the realization of universal brotherhood, but also that a genuine Theosophical Society exists for teaching men the forgotten doctrines of the wisdom-religion of mankind. Furthermore, in such a Theosophical Society, the grand, the sublime, teaching should be constantly to the fore: that it is man's primal duty to find himself, to find his divine self — the god within him. I tell you this truth on every Sunday afternoon when I speak here.

But because I can show you the way by which to find your own inner god, to find that inner peace which passeth all ordinary understanding, and because I can show you the way by which to unlock marvelous faculties and powers now lying latent within you, does this contradict what I have so often stated that the

supreme tribunal for every man lies within his spiritual being? The two statements are not contradictory, but complementary. When the night is dark, may I not accept the authority of the torches? If a man shows me the way and says: "Here lies the Path," shall I treat this friend with scorn, and say to him, "I myself know the way; I need you not"? If you do indeed know the way, then you need not help from outside; but how many know this way?

Yes, the two go together: teachers are needed; the true man longs for light; he yearns to be shown the path; a teacher does this; but nevertheless that path is to the inner god, to the man's own divine essence, and he himself must find it and must tread it when found. This inner divine essence of the man is of cosmic reach, for it is divine.

Consequently, is a theosophical teacher a mediator? Is a theosophical teacher a mediator in the sense that I have just set forth as being one showing you the path that you yourself will follow? Yes. But if it means that I claim or that any theosophical teacher claims to insinuate himself into your conscience and to guide your conscience, thus coming between you and your own inner god, then the allegation as I understand it is a falsehood.

It is unfortunate that my hope for a fraternal union of all genuine theosophical hearts has been in some cases so greatly misunderstood, and that the essential or rather the true meaning of my words has been so frequently distorted. If my outstretched hand of fraternal cooperation is refused, I myself will nevertheless decline to withdraw it. Some day I hope a brighter light will come to those who now don't understand.

The next question:

I belong to a Society in Germany which, like yours, claims to

have been founded by H. P. Blavatsky in New York in 1875. I was much interested in your appeal for fraternal cooperation among all Theosophical Societies, but was discouraged by the following objection raised by the administration of our organization:

"By virtue of its constitution the Theosophical Society (Point Loma) is guided by a Leader invested with *paramount authority* in all that concerns the society, holding his office *for life* (Art. V of the Constitution). In accordance therewith, the Leader exercises *all power, all rights, and authority* (Art. VI). By virtue of his power, the Leader appoints all the *leading officials* of the society, and has the right at any time to remove them from office (Art. VII)."

Are you really an autocratic despot with absolute power over your members? I'm not frightened by words; I like what I know of your character; and so long as you are the Leader, then I say the more power in your hands, the better. I believe in the Masters, and if a servant of the Masters rules in the spirit of wisdom and compassion and peace, nothing could be finer. But I have heard of schemers getting control of theosophical groups. Is there not danger in placing so much power in the hands of the Leader?

Very soon after I came into office, following the passing of my great-hearted predecessor, Katherine Tingley, I found our Society, as of course I knew was the fact, working successfully under a Constitution which had been adopted almost unanimously in 1898 in and by the Theosophical Congress in Chicago, thus giving great and wide-reaching powers to the "Leader and Official Head" of the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society, as the Society was then called. I immediately began to talk about the matter to our officials, and to take counsel with them. I told them

that I desired to strip myself of all the authority that I possibly could renounce; that I wanted to govern, if they insisted upon using that word — in other words I wanted to do my work as Leader — only by appealing to the hearts and to the minds of the Fellows of The Theosophical Society. I stated that I desired to bind our members to me, individually and collectively, by bonds of brotherhood, by strong bonds, bonds stronger than steel, the bonds of mutual love and mutual understanding; and, I added, I don't want anyone to follow me as Leader who does not trust me and love me — to love me not as a mere man but to love me for what I stand for, to love me for the spirit of truth that is within me, to love me for what I am trying to do in my theosophical work, *i. e.*, to bring brotherhood as a reality into the world, to bring peace to men's hearts and confidence and quiet to men's souls. Our officials listened to me for a long time in silence, but at last they saw my viewpoint, and I succeeded in having my way.

Thereupon, at a Congress held on December 5th, in 1929, in this our Temple of Peace, our old Constitution was changed in certain respects in conformity with my urgently expressed views, and it was thus that, at my own desire, I stripped myself of much, of most indeed, of the authority that my great predecessor had — a wide-reaching authority given to her by almost unanimous vote in Chicago in 1898 at the Theosophical Congress, and given to her in order to enable her to save the Society at that time, so that there should be one head, one directing will, one guiding intelligence for the years that then were to follow.

The Chicago Congress at the time acted wisely, for the Society was then in very difficult waters. When a ship is close to the rocks of disaster, as was then the case, what will best and most quickly ensure safety? Is it by calling a council of everybody on board from the chief navigator down to the cabin boy, and having long discussions about every detail, whether the wheel is to be swung

to starboard, whether the wheel is to be thrown to port, or whether so much coal is to be consumed? Nay! When the ship is in danger you put its affairs and its control into the hands of a wise and responsible head, and thereafter hold him responsible for what ensues. In times of danger one guiding mind means safety. What would happen if two men tried to steer the same automobile in a crowded city street? Then when the work is done, he lays down the authority formerly given to him. And that is what happened in The Theosophical Society.

It is true that the Constitution of The Theosophical Society, as it at present exists, gives "paramount authority" to the Leader in all that concerns the policy of the Society; and my power as Leader of The Theosophical Society begins and ends there. By constitutional direction I am bound to direct the policy of The Theosophical Society; but, as a matter of fact, so does the head of any big business organization; so does a captain on a ship; so does the President of the United States; so does the man anywhere who holds the guiding wheel. To say, as does this kind critic, that I exercise "all power, all rights, and authority," is false; it is not true. I have no power outside the duties laid upon me by the Constitution to direct or guide the policy of The TS, and this I am instructed and solemnly pledged to do.

Let me add here that our Constitution contains an Article in accordance with which it can be amended at any time, and I could be voted out of office in a day, if the Fellows of The Theosophical Society so desired it. As it happens, they don't so desire it. I have learned to love my fellow men more and to recognize with even profounder vision the duty I owe to them since they put their trust into my hands.

Let me tell you something, my Brothers: There is nothing in the world that will call out the best in a man so quickly and so

strongly as trusting him. All his being rises in eager desire to prove that your trust is well placed. There are rascals in the world, I admit; there are evil men. But look at our Society as it is today. Suppose (I will suppose this) that I am or my Successor will be an evil man: do you know how long I or he would be the Leader of The Theosophical Society? Probably within a year, perhaps within six months, either of us would be a leader without a following.

Theosophists believe in the realities of life; we believe in trusting each other; we have learned that it is the best way. It is so even in the ordinary walks of life. If you go into a gentleman's business office and commence your talk with him by saying: "Sir, I distrust you; I think that you are a blankety-blank scoundrel," you are surely not going to do much business with him! Use your instinct of truth and of right in such matters. If you go into his office and he impresses you as being an honest man having a clean steady eye and a manner expressive of intelligence and power, then it is only natural and right to trust him within reason. It is an incomparably better thing to do than to be ruled by corroding suspicions. It is incumbent upon you to exercise your judgment, of course; there is need to use discrimination; remember always the experience that you have gained of men; don't be a fool; but learn to trust the best in others, and they will welcome your trust and return your trust a hundredfold. That is what all good men learn.

Furthermore, I do not appoint "all the leading officials of the Society"; I appoint my own Cabinet, as I believe the President of the United States does, and as I believe that some of the great men of affairs of the world appoint their own councils or executive committees; and I appoint also the General Secretary and the General Treasurer of The Theosophical Society. Every National Section of The Theosophical Society is autonomous within the

provisions of our Constitution, and appoints its own President and Officers. But under our Constitution such National President requires my approval before he assumes office. As The Theosophical Society, considered as an international body, is composed of these National Sections, and as the Constitution explicitly recognizes the autonomy of these Sections within the provisions of our Constitution, you see at once that so far as the National Sections go the constitutional power of the Leader is rather negative and passive than positive and direct in this respect.

It amazes me that people will criticize and judge before they know the exact facts and the spirit governing The Theosophical Society and permeating all the provisions of our Constitution. This spirit of which I have just spoken is a tradition among us and dates from the time of H. P. Blavatsky. In other words I mean that the spirit of The Theosophical Society is distinctly an esoteric one, and it is this esoteric spirit as between teacher and pupil — which theosophists call the chela spirit — which distinguishes our Society from any other Society called theosophical that exists today. This spirit is not something new, but has existed in all esoteric movements of the past. It is based on the fact that there is truth in the world, that the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace exemplify this truth in their lives and in their teachings, and that such authority as they have flows forth from their spiritual status and is gladly accepted by their chelas or pupils on account of the love and the devoted trust which these chelas and pupils have in these teachers or masters. It is this esoteric spirit of devotion to which I refer, and its influence is both powerful and beneficent in its operations.

The objection raised in the question which I am now answering was doubtless intended to be honest and kindly; but nevertheless this objection is a criticism which is erroneous because greatly



divergent from the facts. Furthermore — and this is to my mind the strongest observation that I can make to any sensible body of people in commenting upon this matter — what would it avail me so to conduct myself, so to treat the people who trust me, that they would lose trust in me, begin to dislike me, begin to hate me, and finally to turn from me? I would be cutting the ground from under my own feet. Remember that our National Sections are autonomous within the provisions of our Constitution; furthermore, every lodge of The Theosophical Society is autonomous within the provisions of the Constitution; and it stands to reason, therefore, that in order to insure success for the Movement which I head, I will do all I can so to conduct myself and so to guide the policy of The TS that the Fellows of The Theosophical Society will continue to respect me and continue to love me. This is obvious. Hence I say that criticisms like the one embodied in this question are childish because they show lack of mature reflection and ignore the essential esoteric spirit permeating not only our Constitution but far more important still our entire theosophical work.

The next question:

The Constitution of The Theosophical Society of which you are the Leader places enormous powers in the hands of its chief executive, which is yourself. Is it not dangerous and unwise to bestow unlimited powers upon any person? Does not experience teach that such powers are misused if the person endowed with them is neither holy nor wise?

Yes, certainly; but our Constitution does not place enormous powers in my hands, as I have already tried to explain to you. The power, such as it is, that I wield, my Brothers, is the power of an understanding heart working on the understanding hearts of those who have learned to understand me and to love me. That

fact is the basis of such power that I have. I have no right under the Constitution to say to anyone: "You must do thus or so; you will have to do it." All I can say is: "I appoint you to such or such other position or to do this or that work. Will you do it?" The Constitution gives me the power to appoint and even obligates me to appoint certain people to do certain things, if the need be great enough; but is that an unusual and an awful power? I say No, because it is a power commonly exercised by individuals holding responsible positions of authority.

A captain of a ship on the high seas has more power on shipboard than I have — several times more power. His word is absolute law. He can put a man in chains and do other things that I would have no power to do even did the fantastic idea occur to me to do it, and this supposition is absurd to the last degree. And yet people cross the seas by the millions, put themselves under the despotic control of the ship's captain — and don't know anything about it!

Yes, answering the question more specifically, I think that it is very dangerous to bestow unlimited powers upon any person; but when it is not a question of unlimited powers being bestowed, where is the point of the question? I have not unlimited powers. My powers are very restricted.

The next question:

H. P. Blavatsky is quoted as having said: "Dogma and authority are the extinguishers of light and truth." Are you not laying down dogmas in the name of theosophy and demanding that people shall accept you as an infallible authority?

Now, can you beat this question as a sample of a preposterously false statement? How on earth could anybody get the idea that I pose as being infallible? I have never at any time made any such claim or demand; I simply could not do it because it is utterly

contrary to all my character, to my instincts, and to my views of what is right. I have never given any slightest grounds for the supposition that I demand "that people shall accept me as an infallible authority," nor have I ever laid down any dogmas of any kind. What I have said is this, and to me it is a simple statement of truth: "Shall I, in the nighttime, deny the authority of the torches?" When I go to school I go to learn. Shall I, when I go into the schoolroom, refuse to allow my professor to lecture, because I don't like the idea of being taught by him? Why then go to the schoolroom? But the professor does not claim to be infallible. The presumption is that he would not hold his post long if he did.

No, my Brothers, I have never at any time made any such preposterous demand or claim. Every human being can err, and any human being who errs is fallible. I can err; it is as possible for me to make a mistake as for anyone else to make a mistake; but granting all this, I am also bound to say that in my own line of work and duty I have been taught; therefore in those lines I know what I am doing; consequently, in those lines I am much less apt to err, to make mistakes, than one who has not been taught in these respects as I have been taught. Isn't that fact an obvious fact? Why then utter the utterly false statement that I demand "that people shall accept me as an infallible authority"?

Furthermore, as concerns the matter of "laying down dogmas in the name of theosophy," all my policy and all my teaching run directly counter to this idea, for I can envisage no more disastrous fate for The Theosophical Society than to have it become a vehicle for the teaching of dogmas of any kind, even dogmas of truth.

The next question:

Some of your supporters speak of your superior fitness as a theosophical leader and say that your authority rests thereupon. If that is so it's very fine indeed; but when they go

on to say that the possibility that you might err is not even to be considered, it gives me pause. [And it gives me pause, too!] Do you really consider yourself infallible?

I do *not*. I do not know where this kind questioner got his (or perhaps her) idea that our people of The TS look upon me as infallible or claim that I am. I have never at any time heard any one of our people make such a stupid remark. The allegation is manufactured out of whole cloth, out of a complete misunderstanding of the facts. My people know me; they know that I am a man, that I have my own troubles; they know that they can trust me; and that is why I am here in the position that I hold. But they also know that I came as a teacher of the ancient wisdom-religion of mankind, however much my human capacities are inadequate to reach the lofty standard that an ideal teacher holds. All I say is that I do the best that I can do, and try to do it all the time. I was taught and trained to teach, and I pass my life and give all that I have and all that I am in a sincere endeavor to do my utmost best. Some other, doubtless, could do much better than I, but at least I feel that what I do do is the best that I can do, and our blessed Masters ask no more than this from any one of their disciples. Consequently, when the Above and the Below conjoin in harmony, we have peace and understanding and such efficiency as may be in the circumstances.

I wish that I might be notified immediately of any Fellow of The Theosophical Society who may at any time (and I am merely stating this as an absurd possibility) be overheard to say that I cannot err and that I am infallible; and I can assure you that should such an impossible thing occur, such Fellow and I would very soon have a most interesting and beneficial half hour together. I certainly would talk to him like a Dutch uncle!

(I have before me a number of other questions similar to those

that I have already briefly answered, and as I have determined once for all to have this matter out and to be done with it, on Sunday next I think that I will continue this lecture and talk to you on the same theme under the title 'Something More About Myself.' Before closing, I desire to add a few remarks to those I already have made to you, if you please.)

I do my best — at least I try to do my best — with the heavy duties laid upon me, and under the heavy responsibilities which I carry. I know that it is quite possible that I may make mistakes, but I can easily rectify them, because such mistakes as I may make at any time will not be mistakes of the heart but mistakes of a tired brain. For instance, I may be sleepy some day and then may make a mistake in writing. Anybody can make mistakes. But I will tell you that I have been taught to fill the post that I now occupy; and having been taught, I am more or less expert in that post; and therefore the chances of making mistakes are fewer than otherwise they would be.

Furthermore, I have taken certain irrevocable obligations upon myself, one of them being what you might call a vow of poverty. I have no right individually, personally, to own one dollar — no, not one. I can of course hold millions, billions, at any rate as much as I can gather, for the beautiful, for the grand, work of The Theosophical Society. But personally I cannot own a dollar. So you see that one common fear of so many people in modern times that a leader will be a money-grabber or an amasser of funds for his personal benefit, is in this case without any foundation.

Furthermore, I don't want to own any personal fortune. I give my life and all that is in me, the best that is in me, to the work which I love more than anything on earth, more than any human tie, and as I shall labor until I die in the work to which I have made my life consecrate, do you think that paltry temptations such as those

of money-getting would have any weight with me or make any appeal to me? None at all! Personally I am poor. I don't personally own a dollar in the world. I am provided with the means to get the little food which I eat. Kind and understanding friends help me. I labor at my theosophical work unceasingly from morn till eve. I have no vacations — I work night and day. I love my work. But shall I say in this respect that "the laborer is worthy of his hire"? No, I am not hired, I give myself and give myself gladly. But I have no right and I have no slightest desire to lay aside one dollar for myself.

But how I long — and I will tell you this frankly, my Brothers — how I yearn to be able to control the monetary means for expanding our theosophical work, thus enabling me to bring peace to human hearts, to bring light to human souls, to bring help and consolation to broken human minds, by a far larger dissemination among men than is the case at present of the teachings of the ancient wisdom-religion of mankind today called theosophy. That is what I yearn to do; and had I the funds wherewith to do it today, you would see marvels of theosophical propaganda and growth within even a twelvemonth's time. What cripples me is lack of monetary funds.

All that I ever had I have given to The Theosophical Society, exactly as Katherine Tingley did, exactly as did her predecessor Mr. Judge, exactly as did H. P. Blavatsky who preceded him. I would that I could describe to you the peace, the rest, the happiness, and the joy, that flow from the feeling that all you have and all you are has been laid on the altar of the Masters of Truth! I cannot tell you what a keen and poignant feeling of happiness and peace this brings.

I think now, my Brothers, that you have learned something about me; and I am happy to be able to talk to you as frankly and as

openly as I have spoken this afternoon — more frankly than I have ever talked to a public audience at any time since I assumed office.

In closing, let me remind you, as I remind you always on every Sunday afternoon when we meet here together to study and to commune heart to heart and mind to mind, let me again remind you, my Brothers, that each one of you is the vehicle or carrier or garment of a divine flame, your own inner divine essence, which is a flaming spark of the central fire which permeates the universe. Let me again remind you that each one of you, although a human being, is in his inmost, a god; and this god attempts to express its divine faculties and powers through you as a man; and it succeeds but feebly as yet, because evolution has not as yet sufficiently opened the inner nature so that the glory there within and above may stream down into the human consciousness. We wrap ourselves around with encircling veils and garments of selfishness, obscuring veils of the lower selfhood; so that even this divine splendor can pierce through these thickened veils but poorly. Nevertheless, there it is; there is the divine within you, your own inner god, the source of all that is good in you, of all that is strong in you, of all that is noble in you: the source of all your aspirations, the source of all your deepest yearnings, the fountain of all your noble hopes. Oh! ally yourself with your self, your divine self!

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[Vol 2, No 23](#)

[Contents](#)

**Second Series: No. 23 (February 9, 1931)**

**SOMETHING MORE ABOUT MYSELF**

(Lecture delivered December 21, 1930)

CONTENTS: The awakening of cosmic consciousness. — Hope for all in the future. — The Christ story universal. — A glimpse of the vision sublime. — In speaking about oneself. — Remorse in the wake of wrongdoing. — The sunrise of the New Era. — Enemies turned friends. — Principles upheld by The TS (Point Loma): autonomy, freedom from dogma, belief in Universal Brotherhood. — What about toleration? — Test of a genuine Theosophical Society. — A pledge to Katherine Tingley. — No theosophical popery! — The amended Constitution of The TS. — Spiritual and ethical lazybones. — Is divine self-knowledge the whole of theosophy? — From a letter from G. de Purucker to Fellows of The T. S. — The birth of the Christ-light within. — A Christmas greeting.

The Christ-spirit which dwells in every human heart, and which at this season of the year should be given opportunity to show itself, is, I wonder, now living consciously to you in the hearts of how many of you? Go into the streets of our great cities; look at the faces of the men and women whom you see passing by, seamed with sorrow, stricken with pain, filled with a heart-hunger for something that dimly they sense but know not where they may find it in order to satisfy this hunger of the heart. Is it not written large all over them? It is at a time like this, it seems to me, when we should give more thought to these things.

The fundamental fact in the universe, my Brothers, is that the cosmic spirit lives and works through all things, and with especial power in those beings who offer it any special opportunity to



manifest itself through them; yet even in those beings who will not voluntarily give themselves up to the divine fire within, in them also the spirit shows itself somewhat, so that at times and oft indeed in the most unexpected places you will find men and women doing deeds of wondrous courage and of spiritual grandeur, these being the times when the personality sinks into forgetfulness and the inner spiritual man lives — manifesting the very god that he is in his inmost essence.

For every human, as I tell you on every Sunday when I speak to you here, is the manifestation of a divine being, of his own inner god — a feeble manifestation indeed, expressing but poorly, oh! so inadequately, the wondrous faculties and powers of the divine flame within. And why? Because men involve themselves in thick and almost impermeable veils of personal selfhood. They do not know what it is to forget self, to live, as the saying goes, in the eternal, to feel the wondrous sense of oneness with the All. When a man can do this latter, my Brothers, his consciousness has taken upon itself cosmic reaches; it has then become universal; he has then raised himself above and out of the enshrouding veils of the lower person and has become divine, and therefore cosmic, because he has become at one with his inmost.

See now what you have within you; sense the spiritual powers within you. Live in them, and be truly men. This is the message of the Christ, all forgotten during many ages. It is a call to man to come up higher; to be one with the divinity within, man's own inner god, the divine being at the heart of the heart of him, which divine being one portion of the world calls the Christ immanent, or the Christ-light, and which another portion of mankind calls the Buddha within, or again the Brahma sleeping within the temple of man's own selfhood.

Think what recognition of this truth means and, following the

recognition of it, the putting it into practice in the daily life. It means all-around victory; it means enormous power for good; it means complete self-forgetfulness — and by this last fact I mean becoming cosmic in consciousness, giving up the personal for the impersonal self, transcending the personal in order to become divine — universal.

This is the message of all the sages of all the ages; it is the essence of all esoteric teaching; it is the basis of all true religion, the key to all philosophy, and the knock at the portal of all true science. For, pause: when a man has become cosmic in his consciousness, expanded, universal, all that his consciousness can touch and reach he becomes cognizant of; and therefore can he enter into the very heart of the minutest atom and know its secrets; he can pass to the stars and, entering into their life, know their secrets also.

Let the Christ-light shine forth, my Brothers. Be yourselves, and receive all that the universe can give unto you, for each one of you is an inseparable part of that universe. You are in it; you cannot leave it; you are a part of the indescribably vast whole, and therefore whatever that vast whole has within it, is in you. As an inseparable part of it, you have all that the whole, the cosmic whole, has.

You are essentially divine: "Know ye not that ye are gods and that ye are the temple of the spirit of the universe?" Realize it and live accordingly, and then you will walk like a god among your fellow men. You do it by transcending the personal veils which shut out this inner light, which prevent it from entering into your personal consciousness.

The Christ-spirit, the light of the Christ, is in you; for it essentially is you. Jesus Christ, the Jewish sage, the Palestinian sage, was not the only one who could say with truth: "I am the way; I am the

life; I am the light"; for every human being who allies himself with the god within him says the same and says it aright. Now think this over. What name shall we give to this inner glory? Shall we say the Christ-light? Yes, if you like. Shall we say the buddhic splendor, as I love to say? Yes, if you like. The thought is identic; only the words vary. But however you may call this divine thing within you, this splendorous flame of the cosmic fire, realize it, and you cannot then do other than live it, for you will be it.

Whence come all your intuitions? Whence come all your intimations of spiritual grandeur? Whence comes the urge in your heart for peace and for love and for compassion and for pity and for kindness? From within. These things are deathless; their nature is universal and they come with your expanding consciousness. Whence comes the living flame of genius in man? From the same inner god. There is no favoritism in the universe; for essentially man, being an inner god, an inseparable part of the cosmic fire, has free will, has choice, has all the faculties of the universe, developed or undeveloped, as the case may be, within him — a treasury upon which he may draw, a fountain at which he may drink — himself, his divine self! I tell to you a message of hope; I give to you a doctrine of peace; I lay before you teachings of spiritual grandeur.

Isn't it pitiful to see the faces in our streets? Can you blame some of us for despairing almost at seeing what men are and do? I myself sometimes almost despair; and then I turn to the light within me and it gives me hope again and peace, because I know that the time is coming in the far distant future when even these poor, battered specimens of humanity will realize the divine powers and faculties within them and will then seize their spiritual heritage and will become men and live as men; and then, making their peace with themselves, with the inner god, they will begin divinely to grow, and finally will walk the earth as

gods.

This is the Christmas greeting that I give unto you — the greeting of Jesus the Palestinian sage, one of our elder brothers when he lived; but he was not the only one. "Greater things than these shall ye do," he said; and do you think that the story of Jesus as told in the Christian scriptures refers only to that Jewish lad, that Jewish sage? No; it is a tale as old as mankind; for as the message of Jesus, later called the Christ, was given to the hearts and minds of his fellow men, calling them up out of themselves and out of the veils of personality in which they lived, so is the same message the teaching of all the great sages and seers of all the ages. Jesus the Christ merely repeated the spiritual message of the gods and of all his great spiritual predecessors.

As the Greek god Apollo pointed out, as the writing on the pediment of his temple at Delphi said: *Gnothi seauton*, "Know thyself." Do you now understand why? Because that self is an inseparable part of the cosmic self, a divine flame living within you, and an inseparable part of the cosmic flame; and therefore in knowing yourself you begin to tread that still small pathway of which the Hindu Upanishads so nobly speak, which is your self, and which, as you follow it, will lead you to the heart of the universe.

Within yourself lies your salvation; within you lies truth; within your self is your only hope; and that hope is a cosmic one. Let the Christ-light live in your hearts and minds and illumine all your being; for it is wondrous holy, wondrous in all that it works and does upon you.

My call, my Brothers, to the audiences who assemble here in our Temple of Peace, is always this: Know yourself, your essential spiritual self; you are gods in your inmost; each one of you is a god in his inmost — a spark of the cosmic flame; and the universe

is filled full with gods in all-various degrees and grades of evolutionary growth and development; and we men are but one hierarchy, one great family, of these divinities, which family is passing through our present human stage of evolutionary development.

We began our evolution as unself-conscious god-sparks; we are now men, but we are advancing with our faces set to the Mystic East; we are growing; we are evolving; and the time is coming in the far distant aeons of the future when we shall have brought into a burning flame this radiant spark of divinity within us. Then we shall be as gods on this earth, *dhyan-chohans* is our own theosophical term. Even now men show, however feebly, divine faculties — intelligence, a capacious and scrutinizing intellect, a feeling of love for all that lives, a sense of oneness with boundless space. Our hearts are on occasions set aflame with the holy fire; and then we turn in love and pity and compassion and we forgive our fellows for their mistakes, realizing that in forgiveness lies grandeur, high moral grandeur; and that the man who cannot forgive is not highly evolved.

The French have a proverb, *Tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner*: "To understand all is to forgive all." To understand *all*! Forgiving, however, is not condoning. No man should condone a wrong; but for the helpless, in some cases, for the poor wretches who sin — my heart melts with pity for the man or woman who cannot forgive them. Do I like their company? I do not; I confess it. I had liefer converse and be with men and women whom I can more easily feel to be akin to me, akin in thought, akin in feeling; but I am working out of this my own particular veil of limitation that still binds me; for I have myself been *taught*, my Brothers.

I have been taught the teaching that I now give to you; and I tell you that forgiveness is sublime; forgiveness is also a spiritual

exercise. Exercising the faculties within you by forgiving, they will then grow strong; and forgiveness will become easy; and this spiritual exercise develops you spiritually; it will enlarge the sphere of your consciousness, so that, as it were, you will expand, expand, *expand*, as the years pass, until your consciousness in very truth becomes cosmic in its reaches. Then indeed you will live in the divine part of yourself; then indeed you will have become at one with the god within you, with the inner buddha. You will then be suffused with the buddhic splendor; you will then be fully living in the Christ-light.

The man Jesus was truly a "Christos," simply because that Palestinian avatara manifested the divinity within himself; it was the case with the Buddha-Gautama likewise; and also with many others. Every human being has that sublime end before him as his destiny. This then is the message of Christmas that I bring to you again. Forget, if you will, the old story of the babe in the manger and all the other legendary decorations which pious but unwise men gave to the grandest story in human history — the story of a spiritual initiation, not alone applicable to Jesus but to hundreds of great sages who have preceded him and who followed him — in order to carry this wonder-story over easily into the minds of the uninstructed; and remember that the essential meaning of the Christ story is the living Christ within you, born anew at every time when a man surrenders to his spiritual Self, to the god within him. Then the Christ is "born anew." And it is so easy!

Evildoing makes trouble for you; wickedness has bitter pains which follow in its wake; but peace and happiness indescribable are the guerdon of him who lives the life of the Christ in his own heart, and also power — spiritual power to sway the hearts of his fellow men for good, power to fire their minds so that they may see. Isn't this a grand thing to do?

Oh! that I could awaken human hearts, so that they might see the vision sublime as I have seen it, however imperfectly! Any one of you may also see it if you live the life which will bring it to pass; and I look forwards, my Brothers, to the time to come in the future, when that vision sublime, as it first appeared to me, will become something ineffably grand. I live for it; and I want others to come with me into the light.

Test what I say. Test it by your own instincts; test it by your own intellect; test it by the intuitions within you. If it is wrong, then abhor it, reject it, cast it from you. But if it is right, as you see it to be right, then hold to it and come and help us!

On last Sunday afternoon I talked to you a little about myself. I did so in answering questions that had been sent in to me, as many such questions frequently are sent in to me: What kind of a man I am, what my work is, what I aspire to, etc., etc.; and when the afternoon meeting closed I had not yet answered all the questions that I had accumulated. So I thought that I would take up the remainder of the questions this afternoon and in answering them tell you a little something more about me. I thought that that would be a bit of a challenge. If I showed the slightest intention to apologize for speaking of myself, you would recognize at once in me a preacher who follows not his own doctrine. A man must reach a point where he may speak about himself with the same impersonal feeling that he would about some beautiful flower or about the humble ant, let us say, crawling on the ground under his feet.

It has been said that I am a despotic leader of The Theosophical Society. Merciful heavens! May the immortal gods in their pity forgive such statements as that! I forgive them, and surely what I can do the gods will do! But I would like to know if any man making an unkind and untrue statement about some other man

imagines for an instant that he is exempt from the gnawing and corroding remorse which will some day come to him because he has done an injustice?

Do you know, I think that the most poignant pain that a man can endure is the realization that it is too late to repair a wrong done. That is an awful feeling. I would not harm a fellow human being consciously for anything that this world contains. I will tell you why I make this statement: it is because I have wronged my fellow men, not only in other lives, and the pain that then I had tore the scales from my blinded eyes, gave me the vision to realize the wrongs that I had done; and I consecrated my life and my future lives to repair the wrongs that I did, and to do it in the best way that I could find; and this is the case with every one of you, my Brothers.

I would that in this beautiful Christmastide — not beautiful on account of the old and greatly misunderstood legends, but beautiful on account of the inner meaning that they contain — I would that I could persuade at least a few human hearts to see with me into the Mystic East — into your own inner spiritual splendor — the sunrise of the New Era flooding with its rays the faces turned towards it; for that sun is the living mystic Christ within you, and the Mystic East is in your own heart; and each one of you is a child of the cosmic christos, the universal Christ-spirit; for you are sons of the sun; each one of you is an imbodyed divinity.

I will crack some stony human hearts yet! Some of them are so enshrouded, so enfolded and hard with personality, that they are worse than adamant; but I will break them. I have won enemies to become friends and oh! how happy that has made me, for I knew that in some past life, when my soul was younger, I had then injured them; and in making amends, in giving all that



is in me to repair the wrong done, I have found a peace, a happiness, and a strength, which cannot be described in words. I so found myself, my inner self.

Let me now answer some of these questions that have been sent to me.

The President of one of the European Sections of The Theosophical Society (Point Loma), recently sought the cooperation of another theosophical organization in his country. His proffered hand of friendship was rejected by the General Council of the other theosophical organization on the ground that the Point Loma Society "does not uphold the theosophical principles of autonomy, of freedom from dogma, and of toleration."

The charge was also made that the literature published by the Point Loma Society proved this statement. As an interested and unbiased outsider, I would like to know just how much basis in fact there is for the position taken by this other theosophical organization.

My Brothers, there is no basis whatsoever for it, except in one point: our Society does not stand for *toleration*. Do you understand me? If not, I will tell you why. A man says to you: "Why, come along with me; I am tolerant; I will tolerate you." Eh? Do you want to be *tolerated* No! Consequently, theosophists don't stand for *toleration*; we stand for equality, for freedom, and for *brotherhood*. We are not tolerant because we are not intolerant. Now think over this fact. This word toleration, comes to the tongue so glibly; yet the man who boasts of his tolerance and preaches it, I tell you, is intolerant at heart, for tolerance means to "tolerate" another; and do you think that merely tolerating other human beings would be right or grand or even decent? I do not. What would a man think of you if you were to say to him: "I will

tolerate you"?

It is absolutely true that not only do theosophists believe in and teach autonomy, but it is one of the provisos of the Constitution of The Theosophical Society; it is guaranteed by our Constitution. Every Section of The Theosophical Society is autonomous within the provisions of the Constitution; and so indeed is every lodge of The TS.

We have absolute freedom of belief and speech. Look for instance at *The Theosophical Forum* which we publish monthly. In it we have printed attacks on our TS, on our people, on myself; and this is done deliberately. Why should we not print attacks against us, if any good purpose can be served by so doing? Are we afraid to do so? We are not.

I trust in the hearts of my fellow human beings and in their sense of justice and right. I believe in the great human heart. It is to the human heart, to the nobler human mind, that I appeal. I believe in being absolutely frank and truthful. If men misjudge us or me, so much the worse for them, but at least our record is clear. I have peace in my heart and quiet in my mind, because I know that truth will prevail.

Freedom from dogma? Of course we have no dogmas, obligatory or otherwise. On almost every Sunday afternoon, my Brothers, when I have spoken here, I have told you that our TS has no dogmas whatever. Any man, any honest man or woman, can be an FTS — a Fellow of The Theosophical Society — if he accept the only prerequisite to membership, a belief in universal brotherhood, not as a merely sentimental feeling, not meaning at all that we must all drink out of the same dirty cup or all sleep in a common bed, but an honest-to-goodness movement of the human heart, recognizing our spiritual oneness and that we are all flames or sparks from the same central cosmic fire, but

nevertheless recognizing the fact that we are men and women in different stages of evolutionary growth.

The following is quoted from a European publication:

"The Universal Brotherhood founded in 1898 by Katherine Tingley, after amending its former constitution and its name, since 1929 calls itself *The Theosophical Society*, although there are about half a dozen societies claiming that name in the world already. The name of the society as well as the spirit of the publications by its Leader and other representative members indicate that it is intended to signify by that name that The Theosophical Society is the *only genuine* Theosophical Society which was founded by H. P. Blavatsky as the Messenger of the Great White Lodge."

Question: Does The Theosophical Society with International Headquarters at Point Loma really claim to be what the writer of the above paragraph states: *i. e.*, the *only genuine* Theosophical Society founded by H. P. Blavatsky as the messenger of the Great White Lodge?

It does not; no such preposterous claim has ever been made. We claim to be *one* of the important theosophical life-streams, albeit a chief one, descending from the envoy of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace; but any other Theosophical Society whatsoever that teaches the original theosophical doctrines and can claim its founding as an offshoot from the Society founded in 1875 by H. P. Blavatsky, we recognize as a genuine Theosophical Society. The degree of genuineness, my Brothers, we recognize to depend upon the greater or less fidelity to the original teachings of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace as set forth by H. P. Blavatsky, their envoy in our age.

This doubtless otherwise kindly querent is laboring under a

totally wrong impression. Is it so indeed — or may it be, mayhap, one of those sad cases of mud-throwing? Some of you at least do not know what we have been through in past years. We have suffered under wrong and false imputations circulated against us, printed and given by word of mouth, involving things that are wholly false.

That great woman, Katherine Tingley, with whom I worked for more than 26 years, always and invariably urged upon me the duty, impulsive and strong in feeling as I am, of being patient and forgiving. She told me more than once: "The time will come in your administration of The Theosophical Society when you will be able to tell the truth before the world"; and I said, "As I live, I will do it." I am going to do it by winning the hearts, through my own genuine sincerity and brotherly love, of those who have differed from us. Isn't that ambition far grander than always to be squabbling? I have offered my hand in brotherly sincerity, and I say to all others: Come, let us be brothers; here is my hand; let us work together; let us knit up again the torn fabric of the Theosophical Movement, and become at one and at peace. And I challenge, in the name of holy truth, those who will not as yet hear the Masters' call, for such it is; and brotherly love is always suffused with the divine.

The Fellows of your Society accept your leadership as practically infallible, and, indeed, the Constitution of The Theosophical Society (Point Loma) gives you wide powers. Does not the history of the nations, especially of popery, teach what great crimes have been perpetrated through absolutism? Is it not true that to foster faith in authority draws the consciousness away from the higher self and darkens the soul, and is therefore wrong?

Yes, a thousandfold is it evil; and you will find naught of it here. I

say from this platform on every occasion when I see a chance to voice the sublime truth: in yourself lies the working of your own destiny. It is to the god within you that you must turn for guidance. Do I not call upon your own inner god, as individuals, whenever I speak to you? Do I ever say to you that you "must" follow me? You know that I have not ever said so. The very heart of the theosophical teaching is a call to the inner god.

Furthermore, not one single Fellow of The Theosophical Society, man or woman, young or old, looks upon me as infallible, or has ever looked upon my great-hearted predecessor, Katherine Tingley, as infallible. She was great, and stood for what she knew to be the crying need of The Theosophical Society, and for her own convictions, before the world at a critical time in the history of The Theosophical Society which then needed a strong and guiding hand. She once told me, "G.deP." she said, "when I pass on and the cycle turns, will you continue as I have had to do in order to save the Society?" And I said, "No." And she said, "Thank the immortal gods!" I knew what she meant, and I knew that my answer was what she expected. She had a work to do in a certain line and lived to do that work, grandly and nobly lived to do it, but she knew that when she passed on it would be at the end of one cycle and at the beginning of another, when new methods were to be employed by her successor.

When her death came at the turning of the cycle, the time came for me to lay down the great authority given to her at the Theosophical Congress in Chicago in 1898; and when I came into office at her passing, I consulted with our officials, and with some of the wisest and most experienced Fellows we have, and I told them that I was going to strip myself of all the constitutional power that I could rightfully abandon, and that in future I was going to work to win the hearts of my fellow men by love and by their conviction of my truth and troth and honesty; that the time

had passed when the Leader of The Theosophical Society needed to use the strong guiding hand in order to keep the Theosophical ship straight to the north — to the Mystic North in this case, to the pole star of the spirit. So I did, indeed; and our Constitution which was amended on December 5, 1929, by delegates duly assembled in congress here, gave me just sufficient power to guide the policy — to define and outline and guide and guard the policy — of The Theosophical Society.

No member at any time has ever looked upon me as infallible, or as 'practically infallible.' I would like indeed to find such a strangely believing member. I challenge anyone to bring him to me and let me talk to him!

When people talk about infallibility, I think that they rarely realize what the word signifies. The highest god in highest heaven, to use a common phrase, is fallible as compared with Boundless infinitude. How then about a mere man, no matter how great that man might be? Even the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace, demigods as they are in very fact, at least the greatest of them, are still fallible. Naught but boundless infinitude can be said to be infallible; and really even this is but a figure of speech, and the whole idea behind this foolish question is but a to-do about nothing at all — *vox, et praeterea nihil*. It is no compliment to the intelligence of any person who will say, who will make, erratic and indeed foolish statements like this about any other human being.

You may remind me that one of the great Christian Churches teaches the infallibility of its Head under certain conditions. Are we to be guided by what a certain portion of mankind think? Is such a statement an argument? No, of course not. No member of The Theosophical Society at any time has ever looked upon me as infallible; and I want to drive that fact home. I disclaim the

allegation. I should be ashamed to wear such tinsel habiliments of human vanity.

My Brothers, don't you know that one of the most enduring ties, as among men, is the feeling that we all can err? It is the recognition of the feeling that we all can err that makes us charitable, that makes us kindly, that leads us to the divine actions of forgiveness.

Yes, I myself have said on occasion after occasion that it is perfectly true that any attempt to draw the human consciousness away from the indwelling inner god towards belief in an outside authority darkens the judgment, beclouds the understanding, and weakens the will; and all these three are just the opposite of what our teaching is.

I call upon you to look within, to understand yourself, to follow the divinity within you, to use your own judgment; and even if you make a mistake in so doing, or make mistake after mistake after mistake by so doing, nevertheless by exercising your inner spiritual faculties, you are giving them strength, just as the exercise even of a physical muscle will give strength to the muscle which is used; and the time will come, if you obey, if you follow, this inner spiritual exercise, when your own judgment will become clearer, when your mind will become less obscure, and you will then begin to see the vision sublime. And then — then we shall have caught you; then you will be a captive of our love; you will no longer refuse it; and remember that I am merely voicing the words of all the great sages and seers. Don't misunderstand me: *our* love — yes; but only because it is identic with the love given by the great ones, the great spiritual guides of mankind.

There is abroad in the world today a tendency to criticize others, to say: "I don't care about joining any society; I want to stand outside and look on. I have had plenty of it all. I don't care to

affiliate with any organization. I think you are doing a good work, even a splendid work; but I just prefer to stay outside." Now I ask you a plain question: Do you admire that spirit? I do not. Give me the man who will help when his heart, when his conscience, and when his mind, tell him that before him is a work into which he should throw himself as a helper. Do you want to be mere lookers-on? — spiritual and ethical lazybones?

I tell you frankly that I can understand that attitude, but I neither admire it nor have sympathy with it, and therefore I have no patience with it. I think that the man or the woman who can stand idly by and be a mere looker-on when something is going wrong or, contrariwise, when a great and noble work needs help, is doing a positively unethical act, and manifests a species of subtle selfishness which should be shaken off as soon as possible. Give me the man who follows the urgent promptings of his soul to lend a hand where help is needed! He indeed is a man! Nature calls strongly for aggregations; nature calls upon men to band together and to work together, and all her movements and operations are contrary to and against them who attempt to stand aside while the processions of life move on.

A member of another Theosophical Society writes: "Theosophy is divine self-knowledge, the self-recognition of God in man; it needs no outer leader and is not obtained by faith in authorities." Do you agree with this writer?

No, I do not. The statement is badly phrased and therefore untruly phrased. I am sorry to say frankly that I am tired of a certain class of theosophical egoists who stand before the public and pose as being men of spiritual discernment, and whose attitude carries the tacit declaration: "We are the pure, we are the high ones. We know what theosophy is; theosophy is as we say it is." Give me, on the contrary, the man whose attitude is



charitable, because his heart is kindly. Give me the man who has the understanding heart, who can understand the difficulties of his fellows, who does not assume the self-righteous and self-sufficient attitude!

It is perfectly true that one of the basic, essential teachings of theosophy is that voicing the inner divinity or the inner god in man, which is the final tribunal to which the man should turn; that as a bare statement is wholly true. But I for one do not speak of this inner divinity as "God." I have often told you just what this inner divinity is, and in doing so I merely repeat the message of all the great sages and seers: It is your own inner god, the divine entity at the core of the core of you, a spark of the flaming fire of the universe; for the universe verily is filled full with gods, and men are merely feeble exemplifications of this natural fact, for men as spiritual entities are at present passing through one phase of their aeon-long evolutionary journey, the phase of humanity.

Again, is divine self-knowledge the whole of theosophy? It is indeed a teaching that we should aspire to make a living reality in our lives; it is a noble aspiration, and one that all right-thinking men should strive to follow. But the definition itself is incomplete as given. It seems to me actually to be a subtle appeal, mark you, to personal selfishness.

Theosophy is more than an urging of the individual to try to find the god within himself for his own purposes. Theosophy is, besides, a reasoned formulation in human thought and language of the nature, structure, and operations of the universe and of all that it contains, and therefore it includes man and all his relations with the universe in the scope of its teachings. Theosophy is wisdom; and once that a man has this wisdom even in minor degree, all that pertains to him as an individual will automatically find its proper place in his thought and life. Having this wisdom,

you will have the key of the great problem of finding yourself, of how to gain this self-recognition of the inner divinity. But to limit the scope of theosophy to that one teaching alone is to amputate from it vast ranges of religious and philosophical and scientific thought.

If this Fellow of another Theosophical Society who wrote as quoted above sincerely believes that definition is all-inclusive, then I ask his forgiveness if my words may seem to carry a touch of reproof. I am bound to speak the truth as it is given to me to see it. I also speak that truth as I have been taught it. But I speak kindly if, indeed, at times with directness and emphasis. There are times when one needs to use language forcefully.

Now, let me read to you something in this connection that I wrote to the Fellows of our Society on February 17th of this year:

There are theosophists belonging to different societies in the world today who are heart-hungry for theosophic truth, and for theosophic guidance. They crave, they long for, a theosophical leader and teacher whom they can trust; and while I believe that there are certain kinds of theosophists who dislike the idea of a leader and teacher, and who think that H.P.B. was the only teacher, or perhaps that H.P.B. and W.Q. Judge were the only teachers; nevertheless, in the quiet of the nighttime, when reflection follows the tranquil course of the stream of consciousness undisturbed, they must realize that the flow of inspiration from the great mahatmas of the Himalayas has never been broken, and cannot be broken if the theosophical teachings are true.

It is futile, it is useless, it is even childish, to point to an occasional statement here and there, made by H.P.B. or by Judge, to the effect that no Master of Wisdom will be sent to the western world until the last quarter of the twentieth

century — if even then. Of course this is true; and I may add just here, that it is highly improbable that even then a Master of Wisdom will be sent, although a messenger most undoubtedly will come.

All such conclusions arise from a misunderstanding of the meaning of what H.P.B. did write and from a too strong emphasis laid upon words. I repeat my declaration: the Masters of Compassion and Wisdom are as active in the world today as ever they were; and the stream of inspiration and holy light flows even now with undiminished intensity from the great asrama. Those who have ears to hear, let them hear.

It were childish to suppose that a sudden interruption of the stream of inspiration and of teaching, once started through H.P.B. for the saving of the souls of men from spiritual degradation — which saving is done through enlightenment and teaching — could have taken place when H.P.B. went Home. The spiritual forces of the globe do not work thus; they are flowing continuously; and even they, the great Masters of Wisdom and Compassion, are but the instruments of the Law, and the servants of the guides and governors of the spiritual universe. Hence the great ones work continuously and incessantly.

O my beloved theosophists! Take heed and listen well! You can drink at these Pierian Springs still, if such is your wish — at these springs of illumination and wisdom and knowledge, of which the great teachers are the constant transmitters to their fellow men of minor grade in evolutionary development.

And what I then wrote I now again say; I repeat it. I have been asked: "Are you an occultist?" I haven't time to answer this question today. I will merely at the present moment say: Yes, and answer the question more fully on next week.

On last Sunday you stated, during your lecture, that you were under a vow of personal poverty. You said that you could not own one dollar for yourself, although you could and would be glad to hold millions for the theosophical work. Is this vow of yours of recent date, and can you break it when you will?

If I could break a vow like this when I willed to do so, what kind of a vow would it be? No, my Brothers: I took this pledge when I was a young man still in my teens; and it is a pledge that I cannot ever break. I cannot own one dollar personally, but I can hold millions, billions, any sum, for the work which I was sent to do. I can hold it and consecrate it to that work; but I cannot personally own one dollar, and I am happy.

Dear Dr. de Purucker: At this Christmas season I am reminded of an expression which I have heard theosophists use, to wit: "the birth of the Christ in the human heart." As I shall be attending your lecture in the Temple of Peace on Sunday, December 21st, I should very much like to hear from you some explanation of what is meant in theosophy by this beautiful expression.

I always say, my Brothers, "the birth of the Christ-light in human hearts"; and in beginning our study this afternoon, I tried to explain to you just what that phrase signifies. It means that every one of you in his highest, noblest, most impersonal part, is a god, a divine being, a Spark of the central flame of the universe — not central because it is in a locality, but because it is everywhere central: it is the inmost of the inmost of every mathematical point everywhere; and this wonder, some parts of the world of men have called the Christ-light, the Christ immanent, the Christ indwelling, and another part of the world of men speak of it as being the inner Buddha, the buddhic splendor. To me this latter is a more beautiful phrase, because it means more to me at least. To

you the words the Christ light perhaps may mean more.

Now, this Christ-light is the source of all the noblest that you are; it is the source of everything that is high and good within you; it is the source of your manhood, the source of the strength of character that you have, the source of all your spiritual faculties, the source of the powers that are in you; it is the source of the love which inflames your heart when you do deeds of beauty and of goodness. This is the Christ-light!

Oh, may that Christ-light be born in every human heart, at least once a year! And may that birth of the Christ-light be your Christmas, although at first it may burn only as a tender flame, as a little babe of light, so to say. Open your nature to it and let it fill you; for it is your spiritual self, the god within you. It is all that is holiest and most beautiful in human existence, and the source of all that is good and divine within us.

And now, in closing, my Brothers, I want to read to you again something that I wrote to the Fellows of our Society as a Christmas greeting last year. I think that it will follow on well with what I have just stated; and I may add, perhaps, before reading it, that from times immemorial the human sages and seers have always chosen the season of the winter solstice for one of their great initiation ceremonies. That is why the birth of the mystical Christ, now called the Christmas-anniversary, was placed at the date of the winter solstice, December 25th, but which rightly should have been, astronomically speaking, December 21st. The calendar in Julius Caesar's time was inaccurate, even after he amended it with the aid of the astronomer Sosigenes.

Let me now read to you what I wrote in my General Letter to the Fellows of The Theosophical Society and to members of the Esoteric Section on December 7, 1929:

There is much more pertaining to this season of the year than even our own theosophical students generally realize. Resolutions made at this time in a proper spirit — in the spirit of impersonal devotion to high ideals — and with a heart overflowing with love for all that is, have a relationship with the divine; and because of this divine relationship they exercise throughout the subsequent months a silent but powerful domination over both mind and heart.

It was a knowledge — deep, wide-reaching, mystic — of these and other collateral truths of nature that brought about the working of one of the highest degrees of initiation at the time of the winter solstice, and for some two weeks thereafter. Memories of those far bygone days still linger in the hearts of men at this time — memories of a time when divine beings were on earth, and taught their younger brothers, mankind. This fact was commemorated in later ages in the initiation ceremonies of the winter solstice, wherein the aspirant passing successfully through the trials, met his own inner god face to face, and being "raised" to union therewith, became suddenly suffused with splendor, so that, as the phrase passed outwards from the crypts, he was said to be "clothed with the sun"; and it was true — in a far more real and mystical sense than sincere but unknowing men of later times have ever realized.

Therefore do I send out my deepest and most heartfelt good wishes to all that lives, to Fellows and non-Fellows, to men and women of whatever race or creed, wherever they are. And more, to the very gods do I raise my own soul in reverential recognition!

Brothers, in parting with you this afternoon, I wish you a very merry Christmas in the usual sense, and I hope that my poor

words may at least have evoked the latent fire in your hearts, and that I can go to bed tonight when my work is done feeling that I have brought a little hope, a little help, a little light, to others.

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[Vol 2, No 24](#)

[Contents](#)

**Second Series: No. 24 (February 16, 1931)**

**THE THEOSOPHICAL MAHATMAS**

(Lecture delivered January 4, 1931)

CONTENTS: Recognition of greatness in others. — No limits to human genius. — A spiritual brotherhood of sages and seers. — Theosophical mahatmas men, not spirits, evolved not created. — The sanest men on earth. — Their existence a logical necessity. — Do they belong to the theosophists? — Varying degrees among them. — Why do they hide from men? — Do they ever work in the world? — Where do they live? — Why are they deprived of physical comforts? — Hindu yogis not to be confused with Masters of Wisdom. — The word "Mahatma" explained. — What about Mahatma Gandhi? — How can one meet a Master of Wisdom? — The Theosophical Society and the mahatmas.

There is a hunger in the human heart for beauty; there is a longing in the human soul for harmony and for peace; there is an unceasing aspiration in the human mind for an understanding of the problems of the universe; and all these qualities of heart and soul and mind are fundamentally one, arising out of that amazing spiritual fire, call it light if you like, which dwells in the inmost of the inmost of every human being, and which is a reflection in his human character of the divine flame which is fundamentally the spiritual man; and this flame is the core of his being.

Men yearn for truth; they yearn for light, they yearn for peace and happiness; and alas, in how slight a degree is this divine hunger satisfied! It is unsatisfied because men will not self-consciously realize who they are — the man will not realize who he is, what he is, in the core of himself, for his human



consciousness refuses to recognize the living existence in him of this divine flame of the spirit. Nevertheless, there is through the ages a pressure towards this realization, and when recognition comes, then indeed breaks the splendor of the spirit on the mind and illuminates it divinely. The man's soul is then moved, the very depths of his being are stirred, for he recognizes not only his kinship with — in an abstract sense — but his fundamental oneness with, the universe of which he is a child, an inseparable part.

When this recognition of our inner spiritual grandeur comes to us, then we recognize also that there is spiritual grandeur outside of us existing in other human beings. Then we recognize the kinship of other human spirits with our own. This is the meaning of what I have told you on many other occasions: it takes greatness to recognize greatness, just as it takes a loving heart to recognize love in other hearts.

Thus the man who is spiritually awakened, or who is becoming spiritually awakened, recognizes that other men also can be grand and great, and that their hearts are filled, as is his, with an innate and instinctive spiritual nobility. In other words, he recognizes that the divine is working in other human beings also, and that possibly in some of these other fellows of his, there throbs a heart which is more or less fully cognizant of its spiritual powers. The man then realizes that he may find one or more higher even than himself: one or more who have become more or less at one with the inner flame of divinity, with the inner god, with the divine spirit stirring within.

Such intimations or intuitions of the living divinity within us all persuade us beyond cavil or argument that our noblest aspirations are true, are based on fact; for in very truth there are such greatly awakened hearts in the world; there are indeed such

wondrous men in the world, men who have evolved to the point where the divine flame within, the inner god of them — the inner god of each one of them — is expressing itself more or less fully and according to the evolutionary stage of advancement of the individual.

Such great men it is customary, and it has been customary from immemorial time, to speak of as Saviors of their fellows. They are indeed the spiritual saviors of men, the great and outstanding human spiritual genii — spiritual geniuses — of the human race; they have shaken men's hearts by the magic of their teaching and by the example of their lives, and by their power to explain life's mysteries to inquiring minds hungering for truth and light. Such great men are the men who stand high on the pillars of the civilizations of the past, just as they will stand high on the pillars of the civilizations of the future, as other men, newer men, take the places of those who already form this grand spiritual brotherhood of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace.

How stony must be the human hearts that do not leap in instant recognition of this truth! How natural it is to all our intuitive feelings to believe that there is spiritual grandeur in the world, that there is beauty in other men, that there are beauty of soul and wondrous strength of will, and power of intellect, and flaming, clairvoyant imagination which overleaps the boundaries of the frontiers of the common or herd-mind!

Look at history. See the great men that the human race has produced. Look at the outstanding spiritual and intellectual human genii. Look at Gautama the Buddha, the very embodiment of wisdom and love. Look at Jesus the Avatara, another embodiment of love and wisdom. Look at others of these great ones, whose names perhaps are less well known; and we realize

as we survey these human embodiments of spiritual light that our intuitions and intimations are true. Then, as all men know, beneath these genii of the spirit and of the intellect there are, and there have been, and there will be in the future, other men whom we call geniuses, men of wondrous ability, men of high and vaulting talent, whose souls commune with the very stars, and pluck from heaven heaven's own flame of truth, and tell it in phrase and in teaching to their fellows. You know that these men exist: you know that the records of these genii of the race are written in living flame across the pages of history. Where then will you pause and say that human genius cannot go higher than this level, or than that level, or than the mediocre plane which average mankind already has attained in its evolution?

It is our theosophical teaching that greater men even than those geniuses to whom I have alluded exist in the world at the present time and existed in past times; and they have lived and taught and guided their fellow men; and these great ones, we say, compose a spiritual brotherhood of the great sages and seers of the human race. These are what are called the theosophical mahatmas. They are the elder brothers of mankind — and they are men, not spirits; they are men who have evolved through self-devised efforts in individual evolution, always advancing forwards and upwards until they attained the lofty supremacy that now they hold. They were not so created by any extracosmic Deity, but they are men who have become what they are by means of inward spiritual striving, by spiritual and intellectual yearning, by aspiration to be greater and better, nobler and higher, just as you, my Brothers, in your own way so aspire. They are not what they are by any favoritism either of a god or of Fate, but have merely run ahead of the great multitude of men. There they stand: they are helpers, they are seers, they are sages. They have naught that they have by way of gift. All that they have,

which means all that they are — all that they have evolved to, all that they have become — they have gained by self-devised efforts in individual evolutionary growth.

How does a child learn in school? How does a man learn a profession or a calling? By study, by application, by aspiring to be something better and higher than he was before. Apply these same principles of growth and conduct to the living spirit within you, to the human soul within you, remembering that this human soul is evolving just as much as the body itself is evolving; and in fact the body is evolving only because the soul evolves; and I use this word soul only that you may understand me easily.

Applying these principles of growth that I have just spoken of you will readily see that these mahatmas are highly evolved egos, highly evolved human souls, and that their existence in the world is a logical necessity and an inevitable result of evolution. It is all a matter of inner growth and development: listen — it is all a matter of bringing out *what is within you*, latent, as yet unmanifest, not yet brought forth into an adequate expression in human life.

Whence comes the majestic oak? Out of the little acorn, out of the magic vital particle in the acorn, which particle contains within itself all the potency and life-to-be of the future oak, the majestic tree in its turn giving birth to thousands of other acorns. Just so does a man grow, from small to great, from great to still greater. Is not then the idea simple when once you understand it? Indeed, is it not easy to understand?

You now see just what these mahatmas are: evolved men, men who have in evolution run ahead of the multitude of the races of mankind who have preceded us. That is all there is to it. They are men who have brought forth the powers and capacities of the inner god of which each human being is but a feeble expression

at present; and, granting that feeble expression as we must, my Brothers, look at the wondrous powers that even now the human being shows forth.

Pause a moment in thought! Think of man's intellect gauging the ways of the stars, probing into the very womb of space, counting the atoms in a particle of physical substance, drawing up philosophies and sciences and religions which have shaken the very souls of other men! This is indeed godlike; this is indeed more than mere genius; this verily is the working of the divine flame within.

Look again at the love which fills man's spiritual being, if he only will give it room therein: love which embraces within its compass the entirety of all things, the spaces of boundless space. What a divine faculty love is; what a divine energy it is! Think again of compassion and pity and our instinctive sense of friendliness and brotherhood. Think of men's yearning for peace, for harmony.

All these are godlike qualities. They are divine qualities. They come forth from the divinity living in the core of the core of each one of us, for each human being is an incarnation, an embodiment, of his own inner god. The modern Christians of a mystical bent of mind call it the Christ Immanent, the immanent Christos; and the Orientals, in Buddhism for instance, call it the living Buddha within; and others of the Orientals, in Brahmanism for instance, speak of it as the Brahma in the City of the Human Soul. Call it by what name you like; we instinctively sense that the divine flame is there, the source of all that we are that is good, that is grand, that is great.

It is an alliance with one or more of these inner faculties which makes man great, which makes him a genius, which makes him able to shake the hearts and move the minds of his fellow men. For when he is allied with this divine flame, it sweeps through

him and sways him, and then you can see it expressing itself in all the being of the man who shows it. He then forgets himself utterly as a personality. He then lives in the boundless. He loses all thought of his personal being, and lives in eternity. For during such times of illumination his consciousness has taken unto itself cosmic reaches, and he feels with the vibrations of the atoms in farthest Sirius, and vibrates sympathetically by reaction to the movements of the polar star. This is no mere poetical phraseology — it is actual truth.

You cannot ever leave this universe. You are a part of it, a living part of its essence, and on every plane of your constitution you are here and there, and boundless space is your native home. Therefore, every part of the universe, everything that it contains, or ever has contained, or ever will contain, is in you, manifest or not yet manifest, but there. Think! Each entity — man, god, atom, ant, flower, beast, sun, nebula, solar system, any entity anywhere — is an inseparable part of the boundless All, and therefore contains in himself, or in itself, everything that the boundless All contains; for the boundless All is the WHOLE, and the entity is an encompassed part of it; and what the whole contains, of necessity every part contains. Does not every drop of the ocean contain all that the ocean contains? When the dewdrop slips into the shining sea, is the dewdrop different from the shining sea? So is man, living in the ocean of the spirit all-encompassing, everywhere around him and in him and permeating every atom of his being on all the seven planes of his constitution visible and invisible.

The great ones of the human race are great precisely in accordance with the degree in which, and by which, they manifest the divine powers lying within them. When they manifest these divine powers grandly, then such men are called mahatmas, our theosophical mahatmas. It is not we theosophists who speak of them as *our* theosophical mahatmas. It is non-

theosophists who so refer to them and wrongly refer to them. The mahatmas are not our property. They are called theosophical mahatmas simply because people associate their existence with The Theosophical Society; but nevertheless they are your elder brothers just as much as they are ours. They are the elder brothers of the human race, and are no more ours than yours.

They are highly evolved men, controlling powers over nature's forces which they have gained through self-directed evolution during many, many, many, many lives in the distant past. Now they are become masters of life; in former ages they were men like you and me. In future ages they will become gods, just indeed as we shall all of us so become, when the destiny of the human race on this planet shall have reached its furthest end for the present cosmic period of evolution; because within each one of us there is the individual's own indwelling inner god, the source of all that is great in us; and evolution is simply bringing out or unfolding what the man already and now has "within" him — or "above" him.

There is naught that is weird about these great men; they are the sanest men on earth, the gentlest, the kindest, the most pitiful, the most compassionate, the most brotherly and the most peaceful and the wisest, the strongest and the purest, the noblest and the greatest. They do not stand, all of them, on the same step of the ladder of evolutionary progress. Some of them are very great, very high, others less so, others less so still. Then next in turn there are their chelas or pupils, men who are striving to become like unto their Masters, and who are a step or two or three ahead of the average man; and then we the average men find our place in the scale. Thus, our Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace, the elder brothers of the human race, have simply preceded us or run ahead of us in evolutionary development. All of us shall be Masters of Wisdom and

Compassion someday. Those who exist at present are simply those who are ahead of the multitude of humanity.

Many foolish questions have been asked about these great men. It is, for instance, said of them: "If they are so great, and know so much, then why in the name of conscience don't they come out before the world, and show their credentials, and act like open-minded men, instead of hiding behind a veil of secrecy and anonymity?" Why the devil should they? Excuse me: why should they come out and expose themselves on a public platform, and be examined as if they were for purchase? If they can do their work better — and they are far wiser than you or I, and certainly know how to do their work better than we know it — if they can do their work better in the silence, and unknown of the multitude, how foolish it were to cripple their work by choosing the difficult and foolish path!

Nevertheless they are active in the world all the time. Their agents are active always and everywhere. Their influence is always for good, always for brotherhood, always for kindness among men, always for peace, always for progress and the gaining of a greater light, always for the things which give to men's hearts high hope and courage, and to their minds inspiration and love and rest. But this is not the rest which is mere negative repose or sleep; but it is, on the contrary, the rest which comes from the harmonious working of all one's functions and faculties — spiritual, intellectual, ethical, vital, and physical.

Sometimes they awaken men when men have fallen to sleeping, to spiritual and intellectual inertia, and resting in the smug satisfaction of physical comforts. Then they begin to call forth the soul of men, that fiery flame which stirs and moves within us and leads us to deeds of greatness and to imagination of sublime things. Yea, then they stir up conditions so that men shall awaken



and begin again to recognize the call from within, the call of the human soul.

They are our elder brothers because they watch over us as an elder brother watches over his younger brother. They are our teachers because they teach us through the ages; they instruct us and guide us. They are our Masters, because we are their pupils. It matters not that the pupil does not always recognize his teacher. In things of the spirit, and in things of the mind, these great ones always follow the best path, the most efficient path. They stimulate men's minds with high and noble thoughts. They work through other men as their agents whom they have chosen from out the multitude, and who themselves are, relatively speaking, great men, but in less degree, and who become the pupils of these greater ones.

Where do these great ones live? The answer is that they live wherever they please. But their main home, so to speak their main headquarters, is in one of the little-known parts of the earth, a region which they have deliberately chosen on account of its quiet and aloofness from the fevered throbs of existence, so that they may pursue their avocations in quiet and in peace and undisturbed by the hurly-burly of the busy marts of men. When the philosopher, when the scientist, is working at a problem, does he go out and stand on the street corner? No, he seeks quiet and peace where he can think and work on his problems undisturbed. The principle is the same.

I have brought with me this afternoon to our Temple of Peace some questions that during the past few weeks have been sent to me on this matter of the theosophical mahatmas, and I will now read these questions to you and try to answer them.

I trust that you will understand the language, occasionally a little technical, which I am sometimes obliged to use. I make this

observation because on one or two occasions it has been reported to me that certain phrases used by me are not easily understood. I often speak to you about the inner god; and this, extraordinarily enough, seems to be one of the phrases that not everyone has rightly understood. I was amused to hear the other day that some kind friend who had attended one or more of our meetings remarked to an acquaintance: "What did the gentleman mean when he spoke about the inner god? What is the great idea?"

It seems simple enough to me that any human being can realize or can understand that there is a divine center within his own very essence, a spark of the central fire of the universe, and that all that the man is, is simply an outflowing of the energies of this central spark within him, this divine flame which is the very core of his own being and is his truest self.

It is wrong, perhaps, to think of this inner god as having a body. What on earth has a body to do with it! Has a beautiful thought, for instance, two arms and two legs and two ears and a nose and a mouth, etc., etc.? Obviously not. A thought is a beautiful energy — if indeed the thought be beautiful. It is only bodies that have shape. Has your consciousness *per se* a shape? It were a poor consciousness if it had a shape that a carpenter or a smith might make or might copy! Consciousness is a divine energy, a living flame, a living fire, and it simply makes unto itself bodies as it will, through which bodies it manifests its native powers.

I hope that you understand the language that I am now using. I do not mean to imply that the inner divinity has no form whatsoever; but whatever form it has is a purely spiritual form of which our physical body is a most imperfect reflection.

Before I come to these questions before me, I am going to read to you something. This is a little story that is taken from a magazine called *Oral Hygiene*, a dental magazine, I suppose, and it

illustrates the utmost need of using language that those you are speaking to can easily understand. I try to follow this rule always, but sometimes it is a little difficult when one is treating of subjects of abstract character. This is the little story:

Chinese patient over telephone: "Doc, what time you fixee teeth for me?"

Doctor: "Two-thirty; all right?"

Chinese patient: "Yes, tooth hurty me all light, but what time you want me to come?"

Now this quaint little story just illustrates how easy it is for a man to be wrongly understood. I might say a word or use a phrase which to me is perfectly clear, but if you don't happen to know just the sense, the idea, that I put into this word or into this phrase, you might misunderstand my meaning totally; and this is one of the reasons why I am so glad to answer the questions that come to me, because these questions show me whether I succeed in conveying to you the sublime theosophical teachings which it is my duty to give to you.

This is the first question:

Apparently these elder brothers called mahatmas deprive themselves of the comforts of modern civilization by living in remote places away from their fellow men. Is this a matter of preference or is it one of necessity?

I think that I have already explained this question in what I have said this afternoon, but briefly the answer is that they prefer to live as they do live. To them it is by no means a deprivation. But, also, they can work much better in the quiet and away from the noise and hurly-burly of our modern Occidental life, and they would be idiots if they took the hardest and most difficult way for

doing their work. By choice they live in the simplest way, in the quietest, in the most peaceful way, because they have found that this way is the best.

For the so-called modern comforts I don't think they care two pins! It is — now please don't be hurt! — it is the man whose whole thought is centered in his body who thinks so much of the value of physical comforts. Haven't you ever heard of the absent-minded folk who are so wrapped in thought that they sometimes don't know what they do, or eat, or what clothes they put on, and of the faithful wife who has to follow in order to prevent her husband from going out in the street in his slippers or in something still more undress!

These great men care not for the so-called physical comforts of modern civilization. They have a sublime work to do in which their whole life is involved; it is their self-chosen work, and they do it in the most efficient way and in the manner which pleases them best.

People today think a great deal about the comforts of our physical civilization, such as the street railways and automobiles and electric lights and houses heated with steam or electricity, etc., etc., etc. Yes, yes; all this is comfortable, and is all right in a way; but it is likewise very uncomfortable and unpleasant if, when you are trying to put a number of thoughts together in consecutive fashion, you have to do so in a room facing a street where a river of streetcars is passing by with clanging bells, and a stream of honking automobiles fills the spaces on either side, and steam-whistles are blowing and wheels are rattling and all the rest of it! This may be one of the comforts of civilization, but it is nerve-racking to a man who is trying to find the necessary quiet and peace for him to achieve some really great and enduring work.

Continue for a moment to examine this other side of the question.

I want to ask you honestly if a man is happier merely because he has an automobile? I mean really and truly happier. I am not referring to the man who is trying to pose before his fellows and to put on side and swagger, as small-minded people sometimes do. Now there is no harm in automobiles or street-cars or electric lights or anything like that. I am not saying a word against them. But do you mean to tell me — does any sensible man or woman in this auditorium mean to tell me — that a man's happiness depends upon whether he has an automobile or lives in a house with electric light or gives up his burning log in the fireside for a hissing and cracking steam-radiator? If so, I pity him. I know just where his thoughts are, consequently where his actions are, and what his aspirations and yearnings are.

The so-called comforts are by no means unmixed blessings — steam heat, for instance. Ask the average Englishman who comes to this country and goes into one of the steam-heated apartments of New York or elsewhere, what he really thinks of the American steam-heated rooms. Very probably he will tell you 'a mouthful', and so did I when I first experienced the effects of such a super-heated room.

Please understand me: there is no harm in comforts, even physical comforts; there is no harm in them at all if they do not absorb too much of the man's attention and vital energy — as they usually do. All these things are good if good use is made of them; and they are all bad if you become their slaves. Be men! Be true men! Be at least in part the spiritual and intellectual fire which is within you! Then you can have all the physical comforts in the world, and they won't touch you or harm you — that is, have them if you want them! But if you want to be one of the human sheep, a semi-slave to merely physical things, then I tell you in all earnestness that you are in a parlous state.

You see, therefore, just about what I mean and how much attraction the much-lauded physical comforts have for really great men, men whose souls commune with the stars, and who, when they look into the eyes of their fellows, see a divine light there, see the flame of the other man's inner god, and who can commune with the divinity within that fellow man. Estimate life's values justly. That is our theosophical rule.

I can easily accept most of the theosophical teachings, but it is difficult to associate the yogis and so-called mahatmas that one meets in India with the teachings of the Masters of Compassion and Wisdom and Peace concerning which you so often tell your Temple audiences. Will you please explain.

It is as wrong as it is foolish to confuse the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace, these great ones that I have tried this afternoon so briefly to explain to you, with the yogis or so-called mahatmas of India. Perhaps the confusion arose out of the fact that this word mahatma is used, or has been used recently, in the newspapers in connection with a very sincere Hindu political agitator called Gandhi, and the explanation of the use of this word in such a connection is the following: mahatman, commonly spelled mahatma, is a title like Mr. or Sir or Lord or Baron or Count, or whatnot; it is a mere title, and it has been customary for ages in India to give this title of Mahatma to anybody who, in the eyes of those who speak, holds a position of public veneration or respect; but it is most often given to beings who possess or who are supposed to possess spiritual and intellectual grandeur.

The theosophical mahatmas, therefore, are quite different from these Hindu yogis. Some of these Hindu yogis and sadhus doubtless are good and sincere and earnest men. Some I have every reason to think do not at all merit this title. I don't mean this remark unkindly. I am not speaking in order to cast

aspersions on anybody; but nevertheless I am asked an honest question and I will answer honestly, for it is my duty to tell the truth as I see it or know it. Our Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace really are like demigods on earth, if we compare them with the average run of men, simply because they have evoked each one his own inner god and have become at one with it.

These yogis, in some cases, are men who are striving to conquer the body and physical temptations in various ways, for instance by torture of the body. They also study more or less some of the magnificent philosophical teachings of India coming down from far-distant ages of the past; but mere study will not make a man a mahatma, nor will any torture of the body bring about the spiritual vision — the vision sublime.

Our mahatmas are such because they are the fine flowers of evolution and have made themselves to be what they are through many lives on earth of high aspiration, of lofty thinking, and of spiritual yearnings. No, our theosophical mahatmas are quite other than the Hindu yogis or sadhus.

Are the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi the same as those taught by your Masters of Compassion and Peace?

Just as far as Gandhi teaches the age-old wisdom-thought are the teachings identic. I do not know how far he teaches the archaic wisdom because I am not acquainted with Gandhi, although I have much respect for his earnestness and sincerity. Just so far as I teach the same old wisdom-thought are the teachings identic. Anyone, of any race, and at any time, who teaches truth teaches what the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace teach. In these words then you have your answer.

I tell you, furthermore, that it is not so much what a man teaches

as what a man is that is the real test of the man; and you can feel what the man really is simply by being in his presence, my Brothers. It is what a man lives, how a man lives, what his convictions are, that make him high or low in the eyes of the gods. If Gandhi lives what he believes in, and if he believes in high and noble things, in just that degree he is a great and good man. If he does otherwise — and I do not affirm this — then he is a hypocrite.

No matter what career a man follows — and this is our theosophical teaching — no matter what the career or avocation in life is that he may choose, if he lives up to the heart-belief within him, and that heart-belief is one of spiritual and intellectual nobility, then he is an honest man and therefore a good man, and never will he hurt his fellows either by word or by act. Is not this a just rule? When I look into a man's face I am searching for a light; and if I see this touch of the buddhic splendor in his eyes, then I know that before me is a man, it may be a great man. It is utterly indifferent to me what his opinions may be or what line of work he follows — science, religion, philosophy, politics, or whatnot. All are indifferent to me. I look for men, and when I see a man I will trust him; for my own heart recognizes manhood in my fellows.

When you speak of mahatmas or Masters of Wisdom, do you speak from personal knowledge? Have you ever met one? What is to be done in order to meet one of them?

This question is somewhat of a poser. There is one thing, my Brothers, that no genuine, no true, theosophical teacher ever is allowed to do, and this is publicly to claim acquaintance with the great ones. No genuine theosophical teacher ever desires to do this, but earnestly desires to avoid it. There may be times when the positive assertion in the affirmative is called for, and if these



very rare times fall within our esoteric rule of open speech in this respect, then the affirmative statement is permissible; but to answer affirmatively a question like this, merely in order to satisfy what may be a perfectly proper inquiry, is not one of the permitted cases; and besides, suppose that I were to answer this question by saying that I speak from personal experience of the existence of the mahatmas, what real good would that do to you? Those of you who know me and who therefore know me to be an honest man, will take my word for what I affirm; but those of you, my Brothers, my Friends, who know but little or nothing of me, would merely say, and would be quite justified in saying, "It may be. The man at least seems honest."

Therefore, if I were merely to tell you again and again, and fifty times a day, that I have met the teachers, that would be no real proof to you. Those who know me — to them indeed it might be proof; but to those who know me not at all, it would be a bare assertion; and I speak in this way, my Brothers, because in recent times there have been many such claims made by individuals who announce having had a personal contact with the teachers — indeed, many strange and indeed weird claims along this line have been made, and I have listened to these claims with disgust.

Let me remind you that it is one of our theosophical teachings that any statement made by a theosophical lecturer must be taken or rejected according to what the hearer finds of truth or of falsehood within it. This is a rule that theosophists insist upon and apply to ourselves first. And I tell you today, my Brothers and Friends, what I have often told you before: take nothing from me that you hear me tell you unless your consciousness leaps in recognition of it, and you feel that the statement made is true. Then take it, and hold to it like men. But, in any case, test it; probe it; prove it, by all the faculties that you have. Put to this work of test all that you have within you — spiritual vision, intellectual

power, and thus analyze it. Reject it if your consciousness disapproves of it, for that is only honest.

I now turn to the next part of this question: "Have you ever met one?" I have, and more than one. But this assertion is no proof to you. It is my bare statement. But after what I have just said, I explain that I make the assertion because it seems an honest thing to do for those who, in this auditorium, may feel that I have spoken too vaguely. There may be hungry hearts in this room who will be glad to know that a brother has had the glorious opportunity. To these I speak in order to give them hope, to assure them that I have had that great and wonderful privilege.

What is to be done in order to meet one of them?

Live the life which they teach you to live, and then you will meet them; live a life of kindness, of brotherhood, of love, of pity, of compassion, and of earnest and unremitting exercise of the intellectual and spiritual faculties. Analyze, discriminate, study, aspire, yearn to become greater than now you are; and the Masters will instantly and instinctively feel the call of your heart — and you will soon know of their actual existence. They, in order to be known, must be reached, must be gone to. The reason is obvious. In order to learn anything, in order to gain anything, you must take the preliminary steps towards it. You must arrange the appropriate circumstances and live in accordance therewith, in order to gain the real things of life, in order to cultivate your inner faculties; and, in cultivating them, to insure yourself becoming something greater and grander than now you are. How are you to do it? The answer is: by living the life which will bring it about. Is the reason not obvious? In order to be on that distant horizon of splendor, you must yearn towards it and go unto it.

Are the Masters spoken of by H. P. Blavatsky and others as having been active during the early times of The Theosophical

Society still alive and working with you?

They are still alive, and very much alive! But look at the curious way in which this question is phrased! "Are they working with you?" My answer, Brothers and Friends, is that I yearn to work with them. They are the goal towards which I aspire, the pattern which I try to follow. They will work with me, if you like to phrase it so, but only when I have begun to work with them. Is it not so in all affairs of life? Does the chief in any department confide in his subordinate who refuses to obey orders?

Now, the mahatmas give no orders. They show you a path, wondrous, beauteous, with glory and victory at the end, and tell you how to tread that path. That path will lead you unto them, and will in aeons and aeons in the future lead you to the very heart of the universe. Therefore they will work with me provided that I work with them, provided that I follow the suggestions that my Chiefs have given to me. The companionship exists when the companionship already exists, to utter a rather paradoxical aphorism. But if I fail, if I fall, if I stumble on the path, I can always pick myself up again and strive anew to forge a stronger link with them than that which previously existed. There is one thing only that I fear in this connection, one only thing that every student, every disciple, must be always on the watch for. It is this: turn not like Orpheus — backwards.

If you stumble on the path you can always arise and press forwards more rapidly than before; but never become discouraged. Remember that the light is ahead, that victory lies in front. Forwards is the key word of progress. No matter what the mistakes and failings and stumblings on the path may be, forwards lie light and victory beyond human thought adequately to express.

The Masters will work with anyone who "lives the life", and it is

so easy and so beautiful to do this — and living the life means gain: gain in power, gain in faculty, gain in sensitivity to the wondrous mysteries that surround us, gain in the sense of becoming conscious of being at one with the boundless universe. The final guerdon, the final recompense, it is beyond present human imagination to conceive of.

I have one more question, Friends, and this question I promised to answer this afternoon. It is a personal question:

Are you an occultist?

Were I to say Yes, then you would rightly say, "The man's an egoist." Were I to say No, then you would rightly say, "The man's a liar." I don't like either horn of this dilemma. However, strictly according to the definition of this word occultist, as meaning one who studies the hid structure, relations, and operations of the universe, then I am an occultist, and so is every other man who does the same. If the questioner, by using this word, means one — and the woods are full of them today — who makes big claims about being in touch with cosmic spirits, or masters, or elementals, and will tell you how to get powers for a monetary fee, then I repudiate with all the earnestness of my soul, any intention ever of trying to be such an occultist.

I am an occultist because I study the hid things in the universe, which means also the secret powers and faculties in the human being. I know what I have proved to be true; but by telling you this as a mere assertion, what good am I doing to you? You need not believe what I tell you. My friends who know me will believe me when I tell them, because they know me. But you kind strangers and friends — to you it is a mere assertion. So you see how difficult it is to answer questions such as this.

And let me add a few words before I pass from this to my close: I

do not mean, and I did not mean, to imply that certain individuals who have called themselves occultists and who make a living by it are bad people. On the contrary, I have known astrologers and palmists and others who follow strange and unusual professions who are as fine and sincere people as any I have met anywhere, and who are governed in their dealings with their fellows by a high sense of honor; and I doubt not that if they had the private means they would give what they believe to be their services to the world free, and without price. I say this in justice to those of this type whom I have known. I hate even indirectly to do a wrong to a fellow man. I have been wronged myself and I know how it feels.

But coming back to the question: merely to tell you that I am an occultist by the dictionary-definition of the word does not tell you much! Yet I answer the question in the affirmative for the same reason that led me to answer some other questions this afternoon in the affirmative. There may be in the audience one or two, at any rate a few, whose hearts would be glad to know that the speaker whom they hear this afternoon had gone at least a little way behind the veil, however short the way may be; but nevertheless I repeat that a mere assertion does not prove anything. Beware of makers of claims! I tell you sincerely that I have never made a claim along these lines in all my life; and I add to this that had I ever made any such claims I would not be fit to stand on this platform and speak to you. I would be totally unfit.

Any man who has been taught the truth, or some of the truths, regarding the structure and operations of the Universe in its invisible realms especially — what it is and what it contains, and man's relations thereto — is an occultist. An occultist means one who studies the hid things of cosmic being. Every one of you can be an occultist if you will: if you will live the life, if you will undertake the training, if you will follow the necessary studies.

Every one of you has the powers within him which will make acquisition of these hid and wondrous mysteries of being your own.

My Brothers, in leaving you this afternoon and in wishing you all a Happy New Year, let me remind you once more that the core of your being is a living god; this inner god is your essential self, the fountain of all the highest that you express as a human being, the source of all that is great, grand, and sublime!

Why not ally yourself with this flame which is your self, your spiritual self? Your guerdon will be victory over the forces of life; and the end will be union with the spiritual sun of which you are, each one of you, a ray. Sons of the sun you are!

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[Vol 2, No 25](#)

[Contents](#)

**Second Series: No. 25 (February 23, 1931)**

**SOME SECRET CAUSES OF REBIRTH**

(Lecture delivered January 11, 1931)

CONTENTS: Each of us an artist of character. — Searchers for light in the material world. — The law of reïmbodiment universal. — Is the universe a gigantic machine? — Thirst for material life. — Power to reduce number of rebirths. — State of the atom-soul. — Diversity of individualities. — It pays to live aright. — Is rebirth the result of fate? — Length of period between lives. — Exceptions to this rule. — Is a man always born in the same race? — Hints on the afterdeath state. — Opportunity for receiving more light. — The stream of inspiration from the Masters of Wisdom. — Penalty for betraying the ancient mysteries. — The ancient rule in passing on truth. — Knock at the Temple door!

Children of destiny! Don't you see this fact written all over your faces? Don't you see the lines engraven by experience when you look into the faces of your fellows? Deep lines, lines of sorrow, lines of pain, lines of joy, and those clear expanses of consciousness, left by the experiences of love and peace, which the face likewise shows? Your destiny is written all over you — all over your face, in your body, in your gestures, in the expression of your eyes, so that he who has the key to this, even as he runs, may read in the faces of his fellows what their past has been, what their present in all likelihood now is, and, judging by the past, what the future will be.

Children of destiny! A destiny that each one of you for himself has woven around himself as a spider weaves its web; for you are your own makers, your own formers and shapers, because you all

are living entities endowed with willpower and consciousness; and these are divine things, divine faculties, for with them a man may carve his way not only in the world but through the spaces of space, as the ages roll by. For he himself traverses time as a pilgrim, just as he traverses the short expanse of one life as a pilgrim, making himself as he goes: an artist — an artist of character; and that character is himself.

Time and space weave their magic web; and this magic web is destiny. It is on this web that the reincarnating entity taking birth after birth in lives on earth pursues his path through the ages. Mark you, my Brothers, this web is the web that he himself makes, for it is the web of his character; and time and space cooperate with him — with his will, with his consciousness — which thus make this web of destiny.

Build yourselves nobly, therefore; and if ye have builded awry, straighten it out and build better for the future, for there is that within you which is undying. This is consciousness: not a consciousness separate from the universe, but a consciousness allied with the very heart of the Universe; for each one of you is an inseparable part of the universe in which you live and move and have your being. This consciousness is undying, for the very heart of it is boundless infinity — the universe; and your willpower, that magic sword with which you carve your way, is one with the very essence of the universal life.

Do you know, my Brothers, that this thought of man's essential oneness with boundless space is the lost key to the grand mysteries of existence? — not only of human existence, but of cosmic existence. Feeling this oneness, then a man knows that the universe is his home: that the universe is his eternal dwelling place, and that in it he lives, for he is always one with it. He is but one expression, one part, of the vast boundless whole. There is



the lost key to modern Occidental thought, the lost key of Occidental science, philosophy, and religion; and if the theosophical philosophy brings back to Occidental mankind just this one thought of man's oneness with the universe, then what peace, what consolation, what spiritual and intellectual help will it bring to bruised and broken hearts!

Men hunger for light and know not where to look for it; men's instincts tell them truth, but they know not how to interpret those instincts, because their minds, their intellects, have been distorted by the teachings of men searching in the material world only for light — a noble occupation, indeed, but nevertheless signifying that the searchers have lost the key to the grander within, of which the material universe is but the outer carapace, the shell, the clothing, the garment, the body.

This is one of the secret causes of rebirth, of the rebirth of the human soul; because man, being an essential part of the universe, one with its very heart, in his heart of hearts and indeed in all his being must obey the cosmic law of reimpodiment: his birth, then growth, then youth, then maturity, then expansion of faculty and power, then decay, then the coming of the great peace — sleep, rest — and then the coming forth anew into manifested existence. Even so do universes reimpody themselves. Even so does a celestial body reimpody itself — star, sun, planet, whatnot. Each one is a body such as you are in the lowest part of yourself; each one is an inseparable portion of the boundless universe, as much as you are; each one springs forth from the womb of boundless space as its child, just as you do; and one universal cosmic law runs through and permeates all, so that what happens to one, great or small, advanced or unadvanced, evolved or unevolved, happens to everyone, to all.

This indeed is one of the secret causes of rebirth. It is one of

universal nature's fundamental operations. Therefore we human beings, as parts of the enormous, of the vast, of the incomprehensible whole of the universe follow the law of that universe. We cannot do otherwise. Reimbodiment of everything, of every individual entity, is one of cosmic nature's fundamental operations — laws if you like; and because the whole so acts, does it not obviously carry along with it every part of itself?

Is this, the universe, but a gigantic machine? Are human beings and other entities merely the flotsam and jetsam of a tide of fate, swept along from eternity to eternity without self-devised direction, without the exercise of the will of the individual? I have told you just the contrary. Precisely because every part of the whole is an inseparable part, therefore does it partake of all that the whole has and is; and as the whole has consciousness and will, therefore every part is composite, is composed of, consciousness and will; which means that you as parts of, inseparable parts of, the cosmic whole, of necessity have consciousness and choice, willpower, free will.

You carve your own destiny, you make yourselves what you are; what you are now is precisely what in past lives you have made yourselves now to be, and what you will in the future be, you are now making yourselves to become. You have will, and you exercise this will for your weal or for your woe, as you live your lives on earth and later in the invisible realms of the spaces of space. This is one more, and the second, of the secret causes of rebirth.

We human beings love this earth of ours — and rightly so, in a sense, for here we are; here lies our present destiny; here is the inn, so to say the inn of life, in which we are at present staying for a lifetime. We shall return to it. But in this inn of life we use our willpower; we are shaping our destiny here every instant; we are

making ourselves to be what we in the future shall become. So therefore, quite outside of the universal impulse, the cosmic impulse, that I have previously spoken of, which impulse is based in the fundamental law of the universe carrying us as parts along with it in the stream of evolutionary progress: quite apart from that, each one of us has individual willpower. Our destiny lies not only on the lap of the gods but in each one's own right hand, so to say.

Be therefore the gods within yourselves, for the core of the core of every one of you is a divine being, a child of the spiritual universe of which I have just told you. You are inseparable from the universe. Indeed you are it; it is you. As the ancient Hindu philosophers put it: *tat twam asi*: "That boundless space thou art, O disciple!" It is this use of our own willpower, by which we carve our way, that determines what kind of life we shall have when next we come back to earth and take up a human body anew.

Now, this is a third secret cause, and perhaps it is the most materially effectual; and this third cause resides in the bosom of each one of us. It is this thirst for material life, thirst for life on earth, hunger for the pastures and fields wherein once we wandered and which grew familiar to us, which brings us back to earth again and again and again and again. It is this *trishna*, to use the Sanskrit word, this *tanha*, as the Pali books of the Orient say; it is this thirst to return to familiar scenes that brings us back to earth — more effectual as an individual cause, perhaps, than all else. We hunger for the scenes that we have known; we long for the waters of life that we have drunken of; we yearn for the loves of olden days. Thirst, hunger, there, perhaps, is the most materially effectual secret cause of rebirth, at least so far as the individual human is concerned.

So is it even in the ordinary affairs of human life. Do not men

usually go to the things that they like best, driven by the hunger for such, or such, or such, a pursuit or doing or act? Are not men usually found in the surroundings which they themselves move towards? This is brought about by hunger, by thirst, for what we want — in other words by desire. It is desire, it is thirst, for material life that brings us back to earth, to material existence. These hungers, these thirsts, these yearnings, these desires, call them by what name you like, have been built by ourselves into our own fabric of character as tendencies and biases while we live on earth in human bodies, and they have distorted our fabric of soul, so to speak, so that even after a life on earth and during our devachanic rest period, sooner or later the time comes when these seeds of thought and of emotion, these hungers in other words, begin to make themselves felt in the incarnate ego; and then comes the attraction, the yearning back, to the familiar scenes of earth-life — and the ego slowly descends to the visible realms earthwards, and finally a little child is born, drawn to the scenes (I will use ordinary, easily comprehensible words) and to the parents and to the environment whose vibrations are most akin to its own. It is as simple as A B C.

There are six questions, friends, that I have been asked to answer today:

1. Is it possible to reduce the number of our reincarnations in the physical world?
2. Is there any way by which a man can increase the number of reincarnations in the physical world which he loves?
3. Is reincarnation a result of fate, or can the human individual control the numbers and times of his rebirths on earth?
4. How long a time as an average exists between reincarnation

and reincarnation?

5. Is a man always born in the same race?

6. What happens to the excarnate entity after death and before he returns to rebirth on earth?

That last one is indeed some question, and this kind friend expects me to cover all the wondrous mysteries of death in five or ten minutes at most during the course of a communing with you in one afternoon!

Answering therefore Question 1, it is quite possible to reduce the number of our rebirths in the physical world; and, answering Question 2, it is quite possible to increase them. I have already told you how. If you desire, my Brothers, to live in the fullest expansion of your inner faculties, in the spiritual, in the divine, part of your being, then free yourselves from the cramping shackles of earth existence and live in the sun of the spirit, in the solar splendor of divinity; and your rebirths on earth will be fewer precisely in accordance with the greatness of your yearning for the freedom of the spirit.

If, on the other hand, you desire to return very frequently to earth and undergo all its temptations, to weave the web of physical existence so strong that it is difficult, very difficult indeed, to break the slightest one of its strands, then cultivate — unfortunate wretch! — the hungers and desires and yearnings of material life. This would be indeed an awful choice! All our unhappiness, all our misery, all human misfortune, all human worry, heartache, blindness, come from our lower desires while undergoing life in these material spheres. Freedom lies in liberating ourselves from the shackles of these material hungers, thirsts, desires — freedom, strength, and power.

The gods are in the worlds of spirit; men are here in bodies of

flesh on a material sphere. The atom-souls invigorating and enlivening the grossest part of this material sphere are still more sunken in matter than are we. Who is the freer of the twain — the atom of a stone, of gold or of silver, or of calcium, or of whatnot, or the man with his divine power of intellectual thought, using his free will, and aspiring to lift his soul to the stars? Where lies the greater freedom — below with the atom, or with the man? And then above the man, consider if you can the life of the gods — a vastly greater and nobler freedom which to us is divine, a full and wondrous power, and peace and understanding, power guiding the very stars in their courses, in other words laying down the laws of the universe which the gods inspire with their life and consciousness, and of which all the subordinate entities of the universe are parts. Do you understand this thought?

Just as the atoms of a man's body are in their small way conscious in an atomic consciousness and live in man's greater and grander and more expanded consciousness, which is their Oversoul, just so do we humans and just so do the gods beyond us live in the Oversoul, in the life, in the consciousness, of the supreme hierarch of our own cosmical hierarchy. Is this God? No, it is not the Occidental conception of God, not at all. For the universes in boundless space are innumerable. These sublime hierarchs of the hierarchies which infill and actually compose boundless space are uncountable, so numerous are they. They fill space full with their consciousnesses and their wills.

It is this diversity of individualities which accounts for the diversity so marvelous and so beautiful that we see all around us. It accounts for the fact that one man's character is one, and another man's character is another, and my character is one, and yours is one, etc., etc., etc., for we are all, collectively speaking, sparks of the cosmic spiritual fire. Do you understand this thought? This marvelous diversity is caused by the innumerable

units of the great sparks of the cosmic fire in which those sparks live and move and have their being. We thus come back to the original thought — the unity of all things, of all entities, with all that is — with the universe! What a blessed thought! Boundless space is our home!

Furthermore, great ethical principles repose upon this wondrous thought, universal brotherhood, the feeling of oneness with the All: the feeling that the life, the being, the career, the destiny, of every entity is ours also; the sense that when we harm a fellow, ultimately we harm ourselves in exactly the same way, because we have used our will to make an impression on the surrounding being of the universe, and infallibly there will be an equivalent reaction against us. Such is nature's law: action and reaction are equal, and inevitable is the reaction.

Watch your step! Watch your step! Even from the pragmatistical standpoint it pays to be decent and strong and to do right and to live aright! Not only does it develop your own inner faculties and powers, so that as you exercise them they become constantly stronger, but also you have peace; you inspire love in the hearts of your fellows; you inspire trust in their minds. Believe me, my Brothers, trust a man, trust the best that is in him, no matter how often he may fail you, trust him (using your common sense, of course, and your judgment) and make an appeal to the god within him and you will arouse something grand in him by that appeal. He will yearn to be worthy of your trust. No great matter if he fail! His failure simply shows that the poor fellow is too weak. But one day he will be strong and he will pay you back in the golden coin of grateful recognition. As ye sow, ye shall reap.

Make your own character harmonious; make it symmetrical, make it beautiful, make it strong by exercising those qualities and faculties within you which tend to do this. Abhor those hungers

and desires and passions and yearnings and whatnot, which weaken, which corrode, the fabric of your character.

Don't you see immediately what happens when you follow the path which weakens and corrodes your character — the indulgence of your desires and your passions? You are unbuilding, you are slowly destroying yourself; you are undoing nature's wonderful age-long evolutionary labor. "Work with Nature and she will regard thee as one of her creators and make obeisance." So says one of our theosophical books, and it is holy truth. It pays to do right.

Quite outside of this matter-of-fact viewpoint, turn an instant to a nobler vision. Happiness, peace, strength, grandeur, lie in being a true man — such happiness as naught else in all the world can bring to you. Does not a man's heart beat faster when he hears of a deed which is heroic? Does not he aspire to emulate it? Isn't there a glad and instinctive leaping of the soul when we hear of a thought or of an emotion or of a deed which is sublimely self-forgetful? This is the instinctive homage of the human heart given to strength — to spiritual strength; and we know that all sin so called is weakness; and this is the reason why every normal human being contemns evil doing, has contempt for it. Nobody likes weakness, and all normal human beings love strength, real strength I mean, strength of character, strength of intellect, strength of vision, strength of the spirit.

I have told you, therefore, how to reduce or how to increase your rebirths on earth. To ordinary humans it seems quite right to love this dear old earth of ours. It is right, it is proper; but only when you love it impersonally. The danger is not, my Brothers, in the earth on which we live: the danger lies in each one of us who live. Don't you see what I mean? When a man meets a temptation, or a woman meets a temptation, is the danger outside? No. It is in



your own heart. Therefore love your earth, for it is beautiful to love, it is beautiful to look upon. But try to make it better than it is, better than it was when you found it. There is a spiritual law behind this effort so to do; there is strong reason in so acting. In it there is a great and wise philosophy.

Contrariwise, hunger for material existence because it is material, and then you will reincarnate frequently, and each time weave a web of character which becomes worse and worse as time goes on, because the character will be more and more filled with earthly desires, with the desires of this weak, feeble body where sorrow is and where pain abides; because on earth our desires never can be satisfied. The more we indulge an ignoble appetite the fiercer it burns. Freedom lies in saying no, and in controlling ourselves and using our faculties properly. There lie freedom and peace and strength; and a man who can succeed in doing this and doing it all the time is like a god among men. The doing of it is easy. It is a great deal easier than suffering and suffering and paining and paining and worrying and worrying and being at odds with all your fellows all the time, and finally ending in misery, physically, mentally, and otherwise — a degenerate, broken being. Think it over!

And yet remember this, that the real seat of these material desires and hungers and appetites is not in the body, which is but man's outermost garment, but in his undeveloped and weakly controlled human mind. There it is where our passions and our desires and our hungers and our yearnings ride and build imaginary castles of fantasy which we mistake for life's realities. It is our mind which thus misleads us; and the poor, wretched body, feeble instrument of flesh, can do naught other than obey slavishly what the mind impels it to do. The same bodily passions are easily controlled, for they are after all but reflections of the troubled dreams of our brain-mind.

Rebirth: is it "a result of fate?" It is not, and the human individual most decidedly can "control the numbers and times of his rebirths on earth," just as I have explained.

There are other lives far more beautiful than the lives on earth — in the inner realms, in the inner spheres. The wonder is not at all that these inner realms, to which we shall go after death, exist and that we shall live there, but the wonder would be if life on this physical globe were the only one that the boundless universe could give to us. The mere fact that we exist here is a promise and an intimation of the fact that we shall exist hereafter on other spheres, in other worlds, on other planes. This life exists. It is like a signpost. Do you get the idea?

As the Hermetic saying has it, "As above, so below; as below, so above." So far as this goes, it proves the existence of other spheres, of other planes, of other worlds. Otherwise explain how it happens that we are here. Is it by chance? Show me the man who believes in chance; then I will ask him a few questions, and he won't pry himself loose from my questionings by any fiddle-faddling argumentations about what Tom says, or Dick says, or Harry says. He is going to tell me why, give a reason for his alleged belief, or confess that the great sages and seers of the ages are right.

Rebirth is the result of destiny, the destiny that you have made for yourselves in past lives. You have builded yourselves to come back here to earth; and that is why you are here now, because in other lives you builded yourselves to reincarnate. You are your own parents; you are your own children; because you are yourself. Do you get the idea? You are simply the result, as a character, as a human being, of what you builded yourself to be in the past; and your future destiny — effect of necessity following cause — will be just the result, the karma as

theosophists say, in other words the consequence, of what you are now building yourselves to be. If your present life is beautiful, you will have your guerdon in the future; you will have yourselves to thank for your happiness; and if your present life is full of pain and sorrow and heartache and inexplicable riddles which you cannot solve, likewise you have only yourselves to blame for the condition in which you find yourselves. No God outside, despotically or otherwise, creates or directs our destiny. "Ye are gods"; each one of you is a child of the spiritual universe. Take this to your hearts and meditate upon it; remember that you are at home in boundless space. Each one of you is an imbodyed god.

"How long a time as an average exists between birth and rebirth?" Usually about a hundred times the length of the life last lived on earth. Why this should be so is one of the wonderful studies; but it is the rule. For instance, if a human being has lived twenty years on earth, he will have two thousand years more or less in the devachan before he returns; if a man has lived forty years before he dies, then four thousand years in devachan; if he has lived sixty years, then six thousand years in the invisible spheres, and then he returns; and so forth. That is the rule; there are exceptions, of course.

There are, for instance, the great sages and seers who, on account of their developed spiritual being, can control the length of the period in the invisible realms after death, or indeed can pass from body to body retaining full consciousness, or they can return when they will; they are masters of our phases of life, even as an average man on this earth is a master of circumstances in which he finds himself — if he be indeed a master of them, and there are such.

"Is a man always born in the same race?" Bless your souls, no;

certainly not! The same "race" probably will have passed away before he returns to earth again, unless indeed he be a very materially minded individual hungering for the fleshpots of earth-life; then he returns quite soon. But in his case I say, Pity him.

Don't think for a moment that this earth-life is the only place where love meets love. It is more difficult for loving hearts to meet and to recognize each other on earth than it is in the more ethereal spheres; for we are farther from the heart of love of the universe, than when we are in the more spiritual spheres. In those inner realms we go from planet to planet; we enter invisible and more ethereal realms, and at each such stage we are closer to those we love, to those we love with an impersonal love, with a self-forgetful yearning to serve, to help; and such a love is very beautiful; it is a spiritual thing; and it lives. Such a love will outlast even you as you now are; for you as now you are after a time will have vanished and you will become something greater than now you are. Don't you see?

For evolution is growth, and we exchange our weakness for strength, we transmute our weaknesses into their opposites; therefore we become something quite other than what now we are. Do you know why we are able to do this? Because the core of the core of every human being is a divine entity, is a god, is a cosmic spirit, is a spark of the central flame; and evolution, development, growth, is simply bringing out the faculties and powers of this spark within, of this inner god, this immanent Christos, this inner Buddha. That is growth: bringing out what is within. Is it not thus that a little child grows? Is it not thus that the oak springs from the acorn, bringing out what is within itself?

"What happens to the excarnate entity after death and before the return to rebirth on earth?" I will answer this question briefly,

my Brothers. A man goes whither his sum total of yearnings, emotions, aspirations, direct him to go. How easily understood this is! It is the same even in human life on earth. A man will do his best to follow that career towards which he yearns or aspires; and when we cast this physical body off as a garment that has outworn its usefulness, we are attracted to those inner spheres and planes which during the life on earth last lived we had yearnings towards, aspirations towards. That is also precisely why we come back to this earth to bodies of flesh. It is the same rule but working in the opposite direction. We had material yearnings, material hungers and thirsts, latent as seeds in our character after death; and they finally bring us back to earth.

But after death, the nobler, brighter, purer, sweeter, seeds of character, the fruitage, the consequence, of our yearnings for beauty and for harmony and for peace carry us into the realms where harmony and beauty and peace abide. And these realms are spheres just as earth is, but far more ethereal and far more beautiful.

I touch upon this matter with great reluctance, for the reason that there is so much of an esoteric character about it that I cannot tell in a public lecture the whole truth and I will explain this in a moment. I can give hints, but I cannot explain it, and this is not at all because our Society has any idea that our teaching should selfishly be kept for ourselves, not at all; but because you cannot, my Brothers and Friends, understand the deeper theosophical teachings without having studied. Otherwise you will surely misconstrue them; and just as all the past ages have had esoteric schools where the deeper teachings were given to those who were worthy and well qualified to receive, so have we theosophists. Any human being may join our Esoteric School, may receive the sublime teachings given therein; but first he must pass the tests. Is not this right? These tests are impersonal honesty of purpose,

an impersonal hunger for light, an impersonal desire to help along the good work, an impersonal pledging of the word of honor that all that is taught in the esoteric schools shall remain sacred and guarded in the silence.

The excarnate entity is in its devachan, as theosophists say; that is to say in a heaven world of peace indescribable in human tongue, a world of bliss and utter repose. And yet the spiritual entity nevertheless goes to other realms and spheres, as I have already told you. This is a contradiction, perhaps you say. I answer, No. It is a paradox if you will, that is, an apparent contradiction.

Do you want to know the truth, the whole truth and naught but the truth? Then, my Brothers, come to the Temple door and knock; ask, ask with a loyal heart and ye shall receive. This teaching is yours. All that the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace have in their keeping is their most sacred charge. The wisdom-religion of the archaic ages is yours as your natural birthright as human beings; but in order to receive it you must receive it aright. As I have received it, thus may I give it; not otherwise. Yet all this teaching is yours.

And this leads me directly to a communication that I received today:

Dear Dr. Purucker: Here are some questions which I have received from a friend — a very good friend both of you and of our Society. It is really a series of questions, so I quote my correspondent's words *in extenso*, as they do not lend themselves to being divided into separate and distinct questions, being all intimately interrelated:

"There is a point which has been on my mind since reading the Ninth Circular Letter by Dr. de Purucker in the December *Forum*. We are told in several places that 'the stream of

inspiration and of illumination and of wisdom and of help flows as strongly from them [the Masters] as it ever did' (page 5), and other words to the same effect.

"Now what some of us want to know is, are this illumination and this wisdom simply a repetition of what is to be found in the theosophical literature which we already have? If so, why should one's 'heart go out in great pity, in genuine compassion' towards those who prefer to get this illumination and wisdom out of the books in which it is recorded, rather than from a teacher who is just telling us the same things over again in his own words? On the other hand, if there is really something *new* in this stream of illumination why not tell us what it is, instead of repeating that it is there? Of this, there has not been the least sign so far, as far as I can perceive. Are this illumination and this wisdom, presumably given for the good of the world, of such a nature that the world is not allowed to have them? If not, why not out with it?

"As you know, I have the greatest admiration for G.deP.'s stand for fraternization. This has been so long forgotten that it needs a man with a tongue of fire to proclaim it. All credit be to him for so doing. But even this is not new; it is the old forgotten wisdom which many read every day and forget the next minute. It is that, not the adherence to texts, or 'bibliolatry,' which calls for pity and compassion.

"If, perchance, I am told that this new knowledge is given to ES members, then, I ask: Why place a fence around it? If it is for the world, the world should have it. If it is not for the world, but only for a select few who have either taken a pledge or proved themselves worthy, why talk about it at all? Why tantalize others by talking about something fine which you decline to give them?

"In short, these questions have put me in a grouchy mood. . . . This in no wise affects my attitude towards the fraternization movement, but I am not going into raptures of ecstasy over something which so far appears to have no existence, apart from the knowledge we already have. If this wonderful stream of wisdom and inspiration can be shown to exist, then I shall be the first to admit it. But mere reiteration that it *does* exist, simply makes me laugh."

Don't you see the position I am in? Now, I will try briefly to explain this matter, Friends. I have a deep sympathy with minds like that of this writer, minds which are hungry for light, genuinely sincere and manly, yearning, as this writer does, for some proof that Dr. de Purucker's statement is, after all, holy truth. Let such sincere inquirers knock, and the door will open for them; let them ask and ask aright, and it is theirs. They have as much right to it as the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace themselves have. But can I, who am pledged to the strictest secrecy and silence, throw open the doors of the holy of holies to any who may desire to rush in without due preparation and without understanding what it all means, even granting perfect sincerity and a genuine yearning for truth on their part? You may remember what the Christian text says: "Give not that which is holy" to all and sundry; you may also remember the other Christian saying: "Cast not pearls before" those who as yet have not been prepared to know their value and hence to receive them in the spirit in which they are given.

This stream of illumination and wisdom and help indeed continues to flow, and it flows now as always it has flowed into the world. It flows from the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace, or rather through them from still higher spiritual beings. To use the beautiful metaphor of one of the great Hindu epics, I may remind you of the spiritual waters of the Ganga, the



great Ganges as they modernly call it in India, which, mystically speaking, is said to flow with rippling and pearly splendor from the gods into the dwelling places and habitats of men, the physical Ganges symbolizing the flow of the spiritual Ganges which cleanses men of the stain of faults, and which fills their souls with light and the waters of life. This story of the spiritual Ganga is a very deep and profound one and a very beautiful one.

Truth exists in the world, my Brothers, and can be had. Examine human history; examine the civilizations of Greece, of Rome, of Babylonia, of Persia, of Egypt, of India even today: you will find in all these countries that the schools of the Mysteries were sacredly guarded, the teachings most secretly kept. So sacredly were they guarded in Greece and Rome, for instance, that betrayal of what took place in the initiation chamber, or any unauthorized allusion to the teachings given, was punished by the State itself with the supreme physical penalty of death. I may remind you of the great-hearted Socrates who unintentionally betrayed some of the teachings of the Mysteries, and of the philosopher Diagoras who had to flee for his life.

Now, such an extreme penalty theosophists, of course, look upon with horror and aversion as a horrible degeneration of the original penalty for betraying the Mysteries, which was simply that of exile into a far land, and a man thereafter was called 'dead' because he was dead at law in the land of his birth. He was dead to his fellow-citizens and to the State, and this fact and this phrasing were construed literally by later generations of men; and thus the death penalty for the betrayal of the Mysteries was inaugurated in a later age. This one fact shows that there had come about a terrible degeneration in the original strictly humanitarian spirit of the Mysteries; but it also shows with equal clearness how sacredly the ancient Mysteries were universally venerated and guarded from unauthorized exposure or from

invasion of any kind.

Yes, the holy wisdom has been kept secret, sacred, and apart, from immemorial time; but there always have been teachers of it in the world; "the Lost Word originally given by the supreme Hierarch," as the writers of the Hebrew Qabbalah put it, "to a select company of angels in Paradise" even today can be found and can be told to those worthy and well-qualified to receive it, and actually is so told. The lost wisdom is here; accept the conditions of admission into its portals, apply for entrance in the right spirit, show your willingness to cooperate with those who give all they can to help along the work of human brotherhood and who live for the receiving of light solely in order that they may be the means of passing on the light to others. Do this, and then the holy wisdom is yours for the asking. It is your birthright. But even a child may not claim its birthright until it come of age: a wise provision even in human concerns.

No, this illumination and this wisdom are much more than the mere repetition of what is found already printed in our theosophical books. Such printed matter is of course a part of the ancient wisdom. The great author of the first of these books, H.P. Blavatsky herself, wrote in substance: "What I now give out to the world is only a few fragments of the ancient wisdom of the archaic ages. Other teachers will come and give other fragments; and these fragments will fit in perfectly with what I now and here give." Of course this is the truth, because every educated man knows that no great teacher has ever given all the wisdom of the gods out publicly and at one time, and in no case except under a more or less thin veil of allegory, symbol, and metaphor. This is naturally, inevitably, perfectly right.

But in addition to this stream of illumination and wisdom and help existing, mainly and in its largest part in our Esoteric Section

at the present time, I must also point out to you that, particularly during the last three years or so, there has been a steady emission from us of hitherto esoteric teachings into public channels, such teachings having become proper and fit for publication at the present time; although I admit that these teachings have been very carefully worded, and they have been made so absolutely accordant, even in language, with what H. P. B. wrote and taught, that few perhaps have as yet discovered their existence as new fragments of the archaic Rock of Ages. Yet they may be found by those who are interested enough to read my public lectures, also any articles written by myself and Katherine Tingley jointly and published in *The Theosophical Path*, and in other publications of mine. Actually these new published teachings are most valuable keys in themselves. Were the world ready for it, there would not be any need for an Esoteric Section at all, but every man being ready and fit would be a fit and proper channel to receive the living fire of the ancient wisdom.

The new teachings that have been given since H. P. Blavatsky left this sphere of work are "new" only because for thousands and thousands of years they have been kept secret by the Masters. These new teachings are from the same archaic wisdom whence H.P.B., the envoy of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace, took the teachings which she published. Consequently, my heart does indeed go out in great pity, in genuine compassion, for those who cannot see that truth is a living fire and that you cannot lock it up in books. To change the metaphor: the fountain of truth flows even now with undiminished stream; and any son of man who at the same time is a son of heaven, may drink at this fountain, at this flowing stream, if he will come to the mystic door in the proper spirit. Ask! Knock! This is a promise.

I pity those who think that H.P.B. brought the truth, or at least certain fragments of it, but that when she passed on it was

thereafter impossible for a human being to gain other fragments of that same truth until the end of the present century. I pity them indeed; for I tell you in all the earnestness of my soul that the same stream of illumination and wisdom and help is flowing even today; and this stream is your spiritual birthright. It cannot be given openly to the world; the world would not understand it. It must be given only to those who have been trained by study to understand it, so that they can properly interpret it, so that their lives can be beautified, glorified, made grand and sublime; and thus that they themselves in turn becoming teachers may help others to enter the fields of happiness and peace, of wisdom and compassion.

Yes, this wisdom, this illumination, exists for the good of all the world; but precisely because it is given for the good of the world it is given according to the immemorial manner: *As I have received it, thus only can I give it.* I have labored, labored through many lives, to be able to receive even the little that I now possess and can understand; and I know that it would be very, very unwise to hand to others the treasure that I have received, little as it may be, otherwise than as I myself have received it.

Now, do we "place a fence around it" — to use the language of this highly intelligent writer? "If it is for the world, the world should have it." O immortal gods, yes, the world should indeed have it; but it is not ready for it, it cannot understand it, it won't understand it. So we have to frame a scheme that men may, despite themselves, get at least a little of the living fire of truth; otherwise they won't take it; and that scheme is, as fishers of the souls of men to bait our hooks with bits of the wondrous truth itself. My Brothers, you can have this truth. I can show you how to have it; but first you must pass the tests. What are these tests? An honest heart, a hunger for truth, a yearning for light and for ever more light; and you must show this in your life. It is manly to ask

such a test of your fellows; it is an appeal to the god within them; it is an appeal to the instinctive sense of human grandeur, to the longing in human hearts for inner growth, for spiritual betterment.

It is yours, this wisdom; it belongs to you; it is your human birthright; but you must "come of age" before you may receive it. You will come of age in time; but oh! why not come of age now? This simply means yearning for ever more light, living an honest life, a manly life, and with your heart always filled with the unuttered prayer: "Give me truth and let all the rest go." When that prayer fills your heart full, you will already have passed the test. You will already have knocked at the temple door, and thereafter you cannot be kept out. You will, in fact, find that indeed there is no door.

It is true that I have often spoken of this living stream of illumination and light. I recognize that this writer is perhaps justified by ordinary literary customs in saying that my statement is reiterated, is repeated, perhaps tiringly. Yes; and I do it deliberately. I want my fellow men to know that truth is in the world, that this truth may be had, and I tell them the truth when I speak of it. You may have it, but I say again that you must come in the right spirit. You must show me that your heart hungers for light, for peace, and for the opportunities to labor in self-forgetful service for mankind.

I am a fisher for men. Every genuine theosophical teacher is. Every man who longs to help his fellows and who has at the same time at least a part of a great light to give — not his light, not my light, but the wisdom-religion of the archaic ages — every such human being who longs to give to his fellows what is theirs by right of birth and who searches for ways by which to move their hearts, to open their eyes, he indeed is a fisher for the hearts of

men. I bait my hook with the appeal to the intuition of my fellows, with the statement that there is truth in the world, that the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace live, and that they form a brotherhood of great seers and sages; that this brotherhood has existed from immemorial time; that they possess in its fullness the archaic wisdom-religion of mankind; and that this wisdom can be given today to fit and worthy men. This is the bait which I place on my hook.

I yearn to help my fellows, to give them what I have earned. O my Brothers, believe me, there is no selfishness in keeping this wondrous wisdom secret. It has been so kept from immemorial time by the greatest seers and sages of all the ages; but always has the call gone forth from them: "O man, knock, and knock aright; ask, and ask aright; come, come to the feast laid on the table of the Master: eat, drink." That is my bait, the bait of truth, the bait of the heart of a man who, whatever his failings may be, honestly loves his fellow men. I yearn to help. I live for it. I have given up my life to this wondrously beautiful work; my life is consecrate to it; and what little I have to give, that little is yours, and I long to give it to you.

Answering more definitely, therefore, the question of this querent, I will say that this illumination and this wisdom of which I speak are vastly more than merely "a repetition of what is to be found in the theosophical literature which we already have." It is much more than merely repeating in my own words what H. P. Blavatsky has already so nobly and so adequately set forth in her great works; and furthermore, these other teachings are *new* to the modern world.

Again, all these teachings belong to mankind and are not selfishly kept from any man, but as I have said, I cannot give what I myself have received under the pledge of secrecy otherwise than as I

myself have received it. If there is any quarrel on this point, why quarrel with me who try to be a faithful servant of those who have taught me? If there is any quarrel, quarrel if you will with the age-old rule and custom, and with the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion themselves who, as for instance in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, repeat so often in varying phrases the fact that they cannot give the ancient wisdom to the world indiscriminately and to all and sundry, but only to those who have received adequate preparation.

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[Vol 2, No 26](#)  
[Contents](#)

**Second Series; No. 26 (March 2, 1931)**

**IS OUR UNIVERSE MAD?**

(Lecture delivered January 18, 1931)

CONTENTS: Harmony in both infinitesimal and cosmic spheres. — Universal harmony mistaken for ineluctable fate. — From determinism to indeterminism. — Theosophy shows the middle way. — Our relation to the gods. — Instability of scientific theories. — Extracts from lecture by Sir James Jeans. — He postulates an illogical theory. — Do we exist by accident? — Is universal death the ultimate goal of humanity? — The lost key to Occidental science. — The universe friendly to human life. — Einstein touches theosophical truth. — Theories as to the nature of God. — Tendency to anthropomorphize. — Confusion of meanings of the term 'space.' — Island-universes of modern astronomy. — Impersonal love the heart of the universe.

Friends — old friends and new friends, friends of the ages past and those of you who, mayhap, for the first time hear something of our wonderful theosophical teachings — Greetings and Peace!

The title of my lecture this afternoon is: 'Is Our Universe Mad?' Do you live in a universe which is mad? Are you therefore yourselves crazy? Or is there an instinct within you which tells you that the mighty orbs of space pursuing their revolutions so majestically, so harmoniously, so peacefully with each other, are all symbolic of the fact, indeed are standing proof, that the universe is harmonious with itself, every part with every part, and that a cosmic insanity is the very last thing that human beings or any intelligent, sentient, self-conscious, thinking entity may find in boundless space?



If the universe is mad, if it is a helter-skelter universe, a crazy universe, then we are all crazy. If so, there is then neither cause nor reason for existence; and in the universe there is naught but fortuity sitting supreme as the Goddess of Chance, and ruling, not by irrevocable fate indeed, but by her own essential being — fortuity, chance, helter-skelterism, haphazardism. Where do we see a proof of this anywhere? Search the infinitesimal worlds and you find the same majestic law and order that prevails in the cosmic spheres. In both you find harmony, in both you find cooperation; in both you find everything living for everything else and all working unto some grandiose and predestined end, which we human beings, although we have self-consciousness and intellect, can indeed sense the existence of, but of which we cannot understand all the details as expressed in the cosmic process.

How fine it is that we have this intuition of the cosmic order! How splendid a promise it is of a greater light to come to us, of new realms of being to explore in the future, as our faculties evolve and expand! Think what it means to see before us as our present and also our future destiny the vision of ourselves as inhabitants of a boundless sphere, of an incomprehensibly vast universe, in which of course at present we live and move and have our being, but of which our poorly developed understanding as yet gives us so feeble an image. However, we sense a future before us every step towards which enables us to envisage something grander than that which now we know. How fine it is that, great as we are as human beings, we are growing to an ever expanding realization of how much greater and grander the cosmos is than we are, and how filled it is with wonder and beauty, with harmony and symmetry, with everlasting peace flowing forth from its heart of love, which is the heart of harmony.

A mad universe would mean that it could not hold together for a fraction of an instant of time. No part would cohere with any other part, but everything would be helter-skelter, indeed a crazy universe both in general and in particular. Where do we sense all this? Nowhere. Indeed, we see so much to the contrary that some philosophical minds have actually spoken of the universe as being in the grip of an ineluctable Fate, thereby misreading and misconstruing indeed, but nevertheless recognizing the energy, the power, the consistency, and therefore the majesty, of the laws of the cosmos. All the deductions of the scientific researches and teachings, all the estimated truths that our modern philosophical scientists are bringing to us, are based on the one unquestionable fact that nature in her operations pursues invariable processes, which because they are invariable and work continuously without interruption, men call universal law, or universal laws.

Suppose that our scientists were faced with a picture, with a panorama, of being which had no invariable processes of action at all, indeed no processes of any kind, but only blindly driven atoms flying hither and yon throughout the spaces of boundless space. Could there be any such thing as human science whatsoever? Obviously not, for there would be no basis of regularity, of order, of system; and furthermore, the human mind as a part of the cosmic process would be entirely irregular, unsystematic, incapable of logical and coherent thought. Neither the one nor the other exists.

Yet mark you, there is afloat in the scientific world today a teaching which is called indeterminism, signifying that there is at least relatively disjointed and uncontrolled action of individuals apart from the cosmic process, from which notion the idea seems to flow that there is chance, fortuity, in the universe. How can this be? How can one atom be driven by chance, be governed or ruled by chance, and that same chance not prevail everywhere? That

one atom then would be outside the laws and regularity of boundless infinitude, and it is obviously not so.

The meaning of this last idea is that some of our great scientific thinkers have revolted against the ideas of the scientists of another generation now dead, who taught a rigid physical determinism, implying that the universe is held in the grip of an ineluctable and inescapable fate; and (mark you here the poor logic) a fate — meaning an invariable course of action — working fortuitously, haphazardly, helter-skelter! What is the matter with these particular Occidental thinkers? Let them use the logic of their minds, let them rigidly follow out their own philosophical principles based as these latter are claimed to be on natural laws and processes. Either chance rules the universe or law does; and we see chance nowhere and law everywhere.

Revolting from the bygone materialistic doctrines of a generation of scientific thinkers now dead, and rightly so revolting, some of our greatest modern scientific thinkers have run to the other extreme of fantasy, and now are attempting to preach a doctrine which they call indeterminism, implying that there is chance of a new kind in the universe, a chance existing at the heart of things, thus again implying that the universe is not governed by orderly and systematic processes, ruled by law, which last is but the recognition of harmony, beauty, love, peace, evolution, everywhere.

Some of our modern scientific thinkers are great men indeed. Theosophists call them our best friends; they are doing our work albeit in their own way; they have approached in recent years some of our theosophical teachings wondrously close, but not yet have they found and adopted what is the master key to nature's holy of holies. This master key of thought is the following: all Nature is ensouled; it is a vast organic entity, every part

interworking, interlocked, interrelated, with every other part, and thus all working together towards that same distant consummation, which human beings vaguely sense but obviously cannot fully understand, because the consummation is too great for our presently undeveloped minds; nevertheless our understanding is growing to apprehend it ever more as our faculties expand through evolutionary growth.

How wonderful it is, I repeat, that there are always to be discovered these greater scenes beyond as our imperfect faculties evolve more and expand; that nature with every geological era takes on a new face, portrays a new aspect of herself, and that because of this we continuously are able to see new beauties and new marvels everywhere as we grow. Life is wonderful; growth is full of happiness, for every step in growth is a step nearer to nature's heart.

You have therefore your choice: are you all crazy, my Brothers, the haphazard offspring of a mad, of a crazy, universe, or are you, as theosophists have taught from immemorial times, sons of the gods, self-conscious beings passing through an experience on earth on our long evolutionary pilgrimage to greater and ever greater things — an evolution which is endless, which had no beginning, which will have no end? Choose! I know what your choice is.

Yes, life is intrinsically beautiful and full of mystery and wonder, and the more you see of life the more you realize that beauty, and the less you see of life the less you realize the wonder of it.

Think what it means to be a collaborator with the gods in the cosmic work; and that is just what we obviously are. We are here in this universe; we are self-conscious entities; we have willpower and choice, and we work or fail to work as we choose; but nevertheless we choose — and this is exercising a godlike faculty;

and we abide, we must abide, by the results of our choice. But all the same we collaborate with the powers that rule the universe, that govern it, call these powers by what name you will. I call them by the good old name, gods for that indeed is what they are. Some of you may prefer to call them Angels and Archangels, what not — Powers, Principalities, Virtues, Dominions, and all the other *etcetera* of names. What do names mean after all? Let us not quibble over names. The idea is the important thing.

We are the children of the gods — not children born as human children are born, but their spiritual offspring, living in their vital spheres, which in their aggregate are our universe. Just as the atoms composing a man's body live in his vital sphere, which is the universe of those atoms, similarly in the vital spheres of the gods do we live and move and have our being. Thus are we children of the gods — essentially gods ourselves therefore, in our innermost beings; for the heart of the heart of the heart of a man is a divine spark, a divine entity; and all the work of evolution is merely the bringing out into ever grander expression of the energies and faculties and powers of this god — shall I say *within* or *above* — but at any rate of this divine entity which I call the inner god.

In future aeons when evolution shall have done its wondrous work upon us, then we, my Brothers, shall ourselves have evolved forth the god within us — each one of you will have evolved forth the god within each one of you — and then we shall be not only *as* gods, we verily shall be gods. In the far distant aeons of the future this shall come to pass. Look even now at the almost impassable gulf of feeling and of thought, of consciousness and of faculty, between the beasts and man: man, the proud possessor and exemplification of his fiery intellect which can probe the abysses of space or the equally wondrous abysses of the atom, and also the possessor of feeling which can encompass the

universe in its reach, so that even human love is akin to divine love; for the man who loves greatly is a great man.

Even now these faculties are within us, and evolution will simply bring them forth into ever greater and greater perfection, and more and more of them in all their amazing variety. Thus and therefore in times to come we shall be gods, not only on earth but elsewhere.

Is our universe mad? Or is there law in the universe? Is there harmony in the universe? Is there order in the universe? Are things regular in process and in action? Your own mind tells you the proper answer. Admit any one of these last four questions as conveying a fact, and your inevitable answer is: Yes, the universe is sane, the universe is not crazy.

Let me now tell you something, my Brothers. The theosophist more than any other man recognizes with profound gratitude the wonderful and often self-denying work that our most eminent scientists are doing. As I have told you, science is our best friend. But at the same time we are scientific students and we know that all scientific theories vary from age to age, because the theories and hypotheses of science are merely the teachings, the ideas, of great scientific men who emit them, who formulate them and emit them, at different periods as the years flow by into the ocean of the past; and as scientific knowledge steadily increases, so do these scientific teachings, ideas, theories, hypotheses, grow profounder, greater, wiser, and more impressive as time passes; so that in very truth what is the orthodox (I use the word advisedly) scientific teaching of one century is a forgotten scientific teaching of a thousand years after, or of five hundred years, or of a hundred years after, it may be. Theosophists are profoundly grateful to these self-denying, thoughtful, earnest, devoted, and in most cases kindhearted scientific researchers; but

we don't accept what they say as the whole truth of the universe. We know better.

I am going to read to you some extracts from a newspaper containing a cabled report dated from London, November 29, 1930, giving the views of one of the most prominent and justly renowned British physicists, Sir James Jeans, a man who has come — in one or two ideas of his that I have frequently spoken of from this platform — marvelously close to our theosophical teachings. But now I am going to quote to you some statements of his that seem to me to be strangely inept; and I marvel how a man of his intellectual capacity and evident scientific insight can emit theories that seem to me to fight like the very devil with other theories that he himself has put forth. Is illogic a scientific virtue? I doubt it. Before I make any further extended comment, let me first read to you the following:

The universe is actively hostile to life like our own.

Human life — indeed all life — arose through a mere accident.

An ice age of universal death must eventually destroy life on the earth, and man will leave the universe as though he had never been.

This is, then, all that life amounts to: to stumble almost by mistake, into a universe which was clearly not designed for life [Why are we here?], and which, to all appearances, is either totally indifferent or definitely hostile to it, to stay clinging on to a fragment of a grain of sand until we are frozen off, to strut our tiny hour on our tiny stage with the knowledge that our aspirations are all doomed to final frustration, and that our achievements must perish with our race, leaving the Universe as though we had never been.

Above all else we find the universe terrifying [Don't you pity

him?] because it appears to be indifferent to life like our own [Why are we here? I repeat]; emotion, ambition and achievement, art and religion all seem equally foreign to its plan. [Why do they exist?]

Perhaps, indeed, we ought to say it appears to be actively hostile to life like our own.

Into such a universe we have stumbled, if not exactly by mistake [Whose mistake?], at least as the result of what may properly be called an accident.

For him it would seem that the universe is mad, ruled by fortuity or accident. Life is hostile, he says, cosmic life is hostile to human life, and nevertheless here we are, by accident! How can these contradictions be pictures of natural truth? Use your brains! I tell you that this series of pessimistic observations is a mere theory. Where do we see it corroborated anywhere? Show me an accident anywhere and prove it to be an accident. You cannot; because that which you may call an accident had a cause; and that cause in turn had itself a cause; and behind that cause was still another cause — a chain of causation from eternity to eternity; and where is your accident in such a chain of cause and effect?

It seems incredible that the universe can have been designed primarily to produce life like our own.

Quite so in one sense: primarily to produce men! This is the old Occidental theological theory that the whole of boundless space exists merely in order to produce you and me and our earth, so that I, as one of the race of human beings, can stand and wave my arms at you! Immortal gods! What an amazing return to a worn-out theological nightmare!

At first glance, at least, life seems to be an utterly unimportant



by-product: we living things are somehow off the main line.

What does that mean? What is this main line? A crazy universe producing us because it could not produce us! And yet we are here — here by accident! Cosmic insanity producing accidents which give birth to human life on earth! Chaos producing cosmos, order, system, arrangement, law, method, evolution, progress, harmony, peace! Think! That is what theosophists say to our friends: we try to show them that it is man's first duty to think for himself, to reject that which his conscience rejects and to hold to that which he believes to be true. And now comes the end of this remarkable series of assertions:

It matters little by what particular road this final state is reached; . . . the end of the journey cannot be other than universal death.

Do you think that Sir James Jeans really believes this himself? If he does, then I would like to ask him a question: Why is it that we were not dead long ago? It has *ex hypothesi* taken infinity to produce us and to bring us to this present time all by accident; and I suppose that the human race will disappear through the working of another cosmic accident! The glamour of a great name, such as that of Sir James Jeans, has enormous psychologic power, but no theosophist worthy of the name will ever allow his intellect to be swayed merely by the glamour of great names. It is our bounden duty as men to think for ourselves.

Question: Is universal death the ultimate goal of humanity? Is the universe actively hostile to man, or is man hostile to universal law?

My answer to both these questions is an emphatic No. Now think a moment: how could either the one or the other be? If the universe were hostile to man, how is it that man is here? He could

not have been produced by accident or otherwise if the universe were hostile to him, for the entire weight of the cosmic organism and life would have been against his production by accident or otherwise. Think what this asseveration means: the universe, boundless space, essentially hostile to something which nevertheless is brought forth itself by an inexplicable accident, although as just said the universe is hostile to the production of human life, to his very being! Do you understand me?

On the contrary, our theosophical teaching is and has been from immemorial time (and this theosophical teaching is the same as that of all the great sages and seers of all the ages), that man is essentially at home in the universe; the universe is his eternal dwelling-place and his everlasting home. He is an inseparable part of the universe; and every part of him — spirit, soul, mind, consciousness, all the powers and faculties of him, inner and outer, visible and invisible, are at one with cosmic law, with cosmic harmony, with cosmic love, with cosmic substance, with the cosmic processes, which have produced him strictly and rigidly in accordance with themselves, with their own characteristics, and with their own movements and processes.

Such ideas as these of Sir James Jeans are mere theorizing; they are a theory only. The following is what the ancient wisdom-religion of mankind, today called theosophy, teaches: that man is essentially at one with the universe, which is his eternal dwelling place; that the universe and he are essentially one; that the very core of the core of the human being, his root, is the universe itself. He is inseparable from it; he cannot ever leave it; he is a part of it, he is its offspring. Therefore what man shows or manifests he shows because the universe itself shows it, because it comes from the universe of which he is a child and an inseparable part; and if man shows intelligence and consciousness and love and pity and compassion, harmony and peace and the sense of beauty, as he

undoubtedly does, these therefore are likewise in the Universe of which man himself is an inseparable part. The part cannot contain nor show what the cosmic Whole has not. Do you understand? The part can contain only what is within the whole, the All. This simple fact should be obvious enough to everybody.

This oneness of all beings with the universe is the lost key of religion, of philosophy, and of science, in your Occident, my Brothers, the lost key to natural truth; and this lost key, this lost key of feeling and thought, nevertheless is slowly coming back to thinking men of the West. More and more numerous are the thinkers today in the Occident who are beginning to understand because they have begun to realize this wondrous truth: I am a child of the Universe; I am a child of the universe in all the universe's parts; I am blood of its blood, bone of its bone, thought of its thought, life of its life, flesh of its flesh; It is I and I am it. Out of the womb of being I came, and with expanding consciousness through the ages I evolve. How simple and how grand is this thought! Truly beautiful, because true.

With deep respect to so great a scientific theorizer I must nevertheless recall to his thought, that stern and inflexible logic is one of the outstanding characteristics of the truly scientific mind. Yea, my Brothers, we are here because the universe has brought us forth from within itself. Here we are. Pause and reflect over what this means. Therefore because we are inalienable parts of the universe, the universe is very friendly to us.

Why should so great a scientific thinker set up man, in his present imperfect evolutionary stage or condition, as the standard by which to gage boundless infinitude and all the hierarchies of animate and sentient beings existing elsewhere, and say that the universe is hostile to human life? The two ideas run not together; the two conceptions hang not together at all. The niverse is

friendly to human life, otherwise we should not, we could not, be here — I mean that we could not even exist.

I am the universe; the universe is I. My spirit is a spark of the central fire; my mind is a reflection of the cosmic soul; the very atoms of my physical body are the same as the atoms which vibrate in symphonic harmonies in the celestial bodies which begem the violet dome of night. I am what I am because I am a child of space, a child of the gods, passing through this earth stage on my long evolutionary pilgrimage. I keenly feel my oneness with the All; I sense that the remotest god in remotest space, call such a god a cosmic spirit if you like, is my close kin. I am friendly with him and he is friendly with me. In consequence, I am at home everywhere; I am at home in remotest Sirius, I am at home at the pole star, I am at home in the most distant nebula, because I recognize my kin in them.

One of the greatest scientific theorists that the Occident has known since the downfall of Greek and Roman civilization has recently entered our country and is at present among us — a man who has uttered some scientific theories which have shaken the very foundations of science itself as it existed fifteen or twenty years ago. He is teaching doctrines in a mathematical way, in a mathematical form, that theosophists as modern teachers of the ancient wisdom-religion of mankind have been teaching in the West for more than fifty years. I refer, of course, to the great Einstein.

Einstein is also a man of heart. Perhaps that is why his mind has been led to penetrate so deep into the mysterious recesses of being. In making this statement I do not mean that the theosophical philosophy unqualifiedly endorses all the details of Dr. Einstein's mathematical hypotheses, but I do mean that his essential thought of the relativity of all entities is a fundamental

theosophical conception, for this means that all entities are interrelated and essentially interconnected and all interworking with every entity everywhere. Whether Dr. Einstein in his mathematical demonstrations may or may not succeed in proving his theme, the essential idea, the fundamental conception, I believe to be true. He is quoted in a London paper, *The Sunday Despatch*, as follows, as reprinted in *Public Opinion*, November 21, 1930:

There is one thing we do know: that man is here for the sake of other men — above all for those upon whose smile and well-being our own happiness depends, and also for the countless unknown souls with whose fate we are connected by a bond of sympathy. Many times a day I realize how much my own inner and outer life is built upon the labors of my fellow men, both living and dead, and how earnestly I must exert myself in order to give in return as much as I have received. My peace of mind is often troubled by the depressing sense that I have borrowed too heavily from the work of other men. The ideals which have always shone before me and filled me with the joy of living are goodness, beauty, and truth. To make a goal of comfort or happiness has never appealed to me; a system of ethics built upon this basis would be sufficient only for a herd of cattle. Possessions, outward success, publicity, luxury — to me these have always been contemptible. I believe that an unassuming and simple manner of life is best for everyone, best both for body and mind.

Now, isn't that fine? No wonder this man's genius has been led by the heart of him, by the clairvoyant vision of his soul, to look into nature's mystic veil and beyond it! Result: one of the few greatest scientists living today!

Man ignores at his peril any part of his character. Man ignores at

his peril any portion of himself; for the fully rounded out and developed man will exercise every faculty and energy of his being, and thus he becomes truly great. A man who has a heart and uses it not is a half-man; a man who has a mind and uses it not also is a half-man. Man is composite of both heart and mind; and woe be to any son of man who neglects either of the twain. Man's strength lies in the symmetrical and perfect functioning of all his faculties. It is thus that we know a great man when we see him. It is thus that love is born in our hearts for the love that we sense in others; and love is the parent of our love of beauty; love is the parent of the compassion which moves us to deeds of pity — a divine thing; and love and harmony are one. When a man has harmony in his soul, when a man has music in his heart (and music and harmony are one), then indeed, day by day in ever larger measure, do we see the inner god showing its wondrous beauty.

O my Brothers, realize your dignity as men, as human beings! In the core of the core of you is a god, a divine being, a cosmic spirit — call it what you will — an immanent Christ, the inner Buddha. This is your real self; it is the fountain of all that is great and noble in you; it is the fountain of the understanding heart that the great man has; it is the source of the love which makes you do great deeds. Greatness lies this way.

The world is awakening spiritually, and I have often wondered just how much to the devoted work of The Theosophical Society and of the Fellows of The Theosophical Society is due the new spiritual awakening now so manifest in the world. We see everywhere signs that our theosophical teachings are coming to the front in unexpected quarters; and this makes us happy indeed, because it means that other men are getting the peace, are receiving the inner spiritual awakening, that theosophists have received. It also means that other men are finding their

spiritual freedom, finding the inner freedom of life, which when complete makes a man a god even though living in flesh, and indeed even though his body may be in slavery.

Some of the great essayists and writers of our time now are talking about love being existent in the world as an inherent factor of the cosmic process, love and also poetry; and these lovers and poets who see poetry and love at the heart of things are challenging the mathematicians; and the mathematicians are taking up the challenge. It is a step forward in either case.

But after all, what folly such disputes are! Is not mathematics when rightly understood the very exemplification and proof of harmony and regularity, of order and of system and of quantitative relations and of peace? And what is poetry without harmony and without the mathematical rhythm of its advancing march? Poetry is music, music also is mathematics; they are all one. Why therefore seek for a God whose heart is alleged to be that of a poet or that of a lover and at the same time say that the mathematical view of the modern scientific physicist is all wrong; that the physicist's view in other words is erroneous, because the heart of things is poetry and love? Why deny to the mathematical idea its due place in human thought as exemplifying one of nature's processes? It should be obvious that poetry, and love which is harmony, and mathematics, are all fundamentally one — simply three different phases, or three different ways, by which the cosmic soul expresses itself in the minds of men; for the three indeed are one.

For instance, Sir Francis Younghusband, a capable English writer, who, after the English fashion, writes a letter to a newspaper giving his opinions of things, speaks of his belief that the originator of the fountain of cosmic love must, besides being a great mathematician and a great poet, also be a great lover. The

criticism that I venture to voice here is that so sharp a distinction is drawn between mathematics and love on the one hand and mathematics and poetry on the other hand, as if they were three radically distinct and diverse things. Why clothe the abstract divinity of cosmic being with the habiliments and attributes and customs of humanity? It is as if the Deity were merely "a great big man up there" who loves like a man, who poetizes like a man, and who reasons mathematically like a man; and I say deliver me from such horrors of imagination!

Love is the very essential heart of the universe, but it is a wholly impersonal love. It is the very fountain of all that is, for love is harmony. Consequently this harmony is likewise mathematical in essence and therefore also what men would call of a poetic character; but none of these — love, mathematics, or poetry — should be understood literally to be the restricted human operations of consciousness of a distinctly personal character which go by the same names. The man manifests these principles because the human is a part of the universe, but he manifests them personally instead of in the purely impersonal way in which they exist in the cosmic structure.

To speak of this heart of nature as being human in character however great, and thus to anthropomorphize it, and thus to limit it, is all wrong; and hence it is philosophically erroneous to speak of this heart of nature as a lover, or as a poet, or as a mathematician. Ah, no, my Brothers, the heart of things is infinite love, but is not a lover. It is infinite love because it is infinite harmony and infinite peace and infinite beauty; and hence again we cannot call it either a mathematician or a poet.

The following question has been kindly sent to me by a friend for answer this afternoon. It is a short imaginary dialog between Einstein and Mr. Arthur Brisbane:



Einstein: There is a limit to space, it has its boundaries.

Brisbane: Admitting this, what is on the other side of those boundaries?

Einstein: Nothing.

Brisbane: What is nothing? How much of nothing would it require to create a universe?

Brisbane pauses for a reply.

Question: How shall one solve the problem? Can nothing be done about it?

Ah, but there is no problem. It is all a confusion of language, a confusion of terms. When Occidentals talk about space, they confuse two ideas: first, what they call emptiness on the one hand, supposed to be the cosmic container, which is not a container because then it would be a thing; and, second, extension of a material sphere — in other words a universe composed of a vast number of nebulae, of suns, and all the rest of it.

Now, theosophists also teach that our universe has boundaries, that therefore it is finite because it is an entity; it is indeed an entity, an organic, cosmic entity, just as a human being on our much smaller scale is on earth an entity, or as a tree is, or as a beast is, or as our sun is, or as our earth is, or as any other planet is. But in such case theosophists speak only of our own universe, our own home-universe, of which we are the offspring, or of any other organic entity in the boundless spaces of space. What I mean by our own home universe is all that is comprised within the encircling zone of the galaxy, of the Milky Way: this we call our home-universe, and obviously it has boundaries.

Now then, what is outside those boundaries? Our answer is,

space, intercosmic ether if you like, or call it by any other name you please; we shall avoid haggling over words, and therefore speak of it as the intercosmic ether. Our home-universe is surrounded by what our modern astronomical scientists call island-universes, which are other universes more or less like ours, and these island-universes our astronomers dimly see through their telescopes and discern on their photographic plates as star-clusters or nebulae, or whatnot. These "Sparks of Eternity," as theosophists call them, are sown throughout the boundless, limitless fields of the spaces of space; and space in this our theosophical sense is frontierless, beginningless, endless, the All.

In this question we discern the usual and unvarying quibbling over terms — that is all this question really refers to; and such quibbling is the usual occurrence when men disagree, for they usually disagree not so much about essentials but about differences of opinion arising from misunderstandings of the meaning of words. In an argument both men are usually sincere, usually both mean to do right, usually both mean to be just to each other, but their arguments most commonly arise out of a mutual misunderstanding of words, and therefore their arguments degenerate into mere fightings over words which they mistake for disagreements about essentials. How many quarrels might be avoided if men, when discussing together, would first define the terms that they intend to use.

I now turn to a number of questions on the theme of our study together this afternoon, and these questions I have promised to answer today. I will answer them very briefly, and then our time to part will have come:

Is universal death the ultimate goal of humanity and of the world, as the English physicist Jeans suggests?

I have already answered this question, and I again say that the

answer is No. If universal death, according to this theory, were the end of the universe, then how explain that we are here and very much alive now? We had all the infinity of the past, all boundless duration of the past, in which to experience such universal death coming upon the universe. Yet here we are. Let these theorists explain this one fact, if you please, before enunciating more theories of this kind, for that is really what they are: theories, theories, theories! Don't call them truths until nature herself has been proved to be their author and foundation. Nature is the final tribunal of truth, and when I say nature, I mean not physical nature alone but spiritual nature, divine nature, as well — nature invisible as well as visible.

Here is something to take note of, and it is one of our fundamental theosophical teachings: every entity, no matter how great, no matter how small, in our theosophical doctrines — the ancient wisdom-religion of mankind — has a beginning, has its culmination of power, each has its flowering of faculty and energy, and then undergoes its decay, and finally its death; then ensues for it a rest period; after which it comes forth anew, blossoming anew from out the invisible worlds into this sphere again. Just so a man dies and disappears from earth, but later returns to a new body on earth; exactly so a universe is gathered together, reaches its culmination of power and of expression of what is within it; then its energies begin to wane, and decay sets in; then it dies, and its body is dissipated. But, after long cosmic ages of rest, it comes forth anew — a reimpodiment of a world, just as a man reimpodies when he reincarnates.

Every thoughtful man will instantly see how this system appeals to his sense of consistency, for he feels the logic of it, the logical simplicity of it; and the fact that this universal method of embodiment, then rest, then embodiment, then rest, then embodiment, then rest, exists in all things that we humans can

trace the history of is a standing proof that our intuition — nature's own voice of truth within us — is true.

We men of earth know, if we think at all clearly, that the faculties more or less developed that we possess as humans we could have developed only in this same environment in which now we are, because these faculties are appropriate to this environment. This fact itself is a proof of our having had other lives on earth. We could not have developed the faculties that we have now — being faculties appropriate to this sphere — on some other sphere. We have developed them on this earth in other lives on earth, and that is precisely why we are now here on earth, possessing the faculties that we developed in other lives on earth in this same environment, because such faculties would be inappropriate and unfit for any other field except this in which they were seeded and rooted and grew to manifestation.

Yes, our universe will die, but only because this universe is an entity, therefore a limited organism; but boundless, frontierless infinitude is immortal, nor can it ever pass away. Such an idea is grotesque. On a smaller scale will our sun also die in future time; so will our earth; so will every entity anywhere, because every entity is obviously a limited organism. But is there aught in this for pessimism or despair? Nay, greatly to the contrary. It is thus we grow ever greater; it is thus that we change continually, by these deaths and rebirths, the fields of experience and the scenes of life. Death and life are the two sides of growth, and no growth can take place except as a resultant of these twain.

Death is friendly; death is very friendly! It is through death as well as through life that we grow. When we are tired we lay the tired body down, we cast it off as a garment that is outworn and because its usefulness is gone; and then after a greater or smaller length of time we come anew to earth, a better, nobler, more

evolved character, because in the *post-mortem* period we shall have digested and assimilated the experiences last passed through.

Is space limited and has it boundaries?

This question also I have already answered. Infinitude is frontierless, has no limits and no boundaries. But what do people mean when they speak of space? Do they mean infinitude: frontierless, beginningless, and endless? No; usually they do not; they commonly mean the physical sphere around us, no matter how large, how vast, the physical sphere may be; and of course this physical sphere has boundaries, because it is an organic entity — obviously so. So therefore, construing this question as logically it should be construed, the answer is Yes: space, if by that term you mean any one universe, has boundaries, because it is an entity, because it is an organism, and therefore it is limited and has boundaries; but frontierless infinitude obviously has no boundaries and therefore is deathless.

If so, what exists beyond those boundaries?

Countless multitudes of other universes, called island-universes by the modern astronomers, are sprinkled over the fields of the spaces of space. As the old-fashioned sower of grain wandered forth into his fields casting his grain broadcast, so indeed may we figurate to ourselves the mighty forces and powers of the universe bringing forth these "Lights of Eternity," these "Seeds of Eternity," each Seed being a universe or a world — called a seed because destined to grow into something more wondrous and grander than what it previously was.

Is our universe a chance evolutionary production and therefore is the universe mad, or is there universal law?

Universal law exists because universal law is order, harmony,

symmetry, regularity — all that we see, in fact. There is no such thing as chance. When a man cannot explain something, then he calls it chance. Chance is but a verbal counter, a mere word with which we hide our ignorance. All that we do really know is order, regularity, harmony, all of which proclaims law. That is all we really know; all the rest is theory. Consequently the universe is sane, and so are you.

You are not insane nor am I insane, the fortuitous offspring of a crazy universe. We are children, we are offspring, of ourselves — of ourselves, for each one of us in his inmost is a divine being, and as such a divine being is a spark of the cosmic fire. Therefore are we our own productions; we are our own forefathers.

Likewise we shall be our own children, for we are ourselves; we make ourselves to be what in future we shall be; we are now what in the past we have made ourselves to become. We are the creators of ourselves, and we are the creatures of ourselves.

What a grand view for a man to have this is! I tell you truly: let a man really understand our theosophical doctrines, and then no matter what temptations he may have to face and how often he may fall, he will grow to greatness in time, because our doctrines arouse a hunger for truth, a passion for truth, in our hearts, and this hunger, this passion, can never be gainsaid, for they are spiritual movements of our consciousness, and will lead us onwards as a pillar of fire before us on the path.

Is the universe run according to mathematical principles? If so, is there no possibility for essential poetry and inherent love in the universe?

O my Brothers, essential poetry and inherent love dwell in your own hearts. Do you not know this? Consult your own heart: it knows love; it beats in sympathetic response to love in the hearts of others. Look within; ask yourselves if love is there. You will

have an immediate answer in the affirmative. And essential poetry? Love is the very parent of poetry, for love and harmony are one, and poetry is harmony, and poetry and love are mathematical because they are regular and harmonious. Love is the very heart of things; spiritual consciousness is this also, and they are both one.

Love then with the love that abides in your heart for all. So doing, you will ally yourselves with boundless space, which is your own home, because it is your spiritual self, your essential fundamental being. Cultivate also your intellectual faculties, for thereby you enter into harmonious vibrations with the mind of the Oversoul, of which your mind is a spark. But above all things, cultivate love, impersonal love, love which takes within the reach of its all-embracing compass everything, both great and small. This love is divine. In proportion as a man or a woman can do this, just in the same ratio is he or she great.

Commune continuously with the god within you. Then peace will come to you past all understanding. Harmony will beautify your life, and beauty therefore will shine forth from your very being — the beauty and harmony and love which are one. Find yourself, your real, your spiritual, Self. Find the wondrous thing that inwardly you are. Learn to know yourself.

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[Vol 2, No 27](#)  
[Contents](#)

**Second Series: No. 27 (March 9, 1931)**

**GLIMPSES INTO THE UNSEEN UNIVERSE — I**

(Lecture delivered January 25, 1931)

CONTENTS: Are human beings exceptions to cosmic law? — Boundless space our home. — Man an invisible entity. — Scientific generalizations unsatisfactory. — One fundamental doctrine in world literatures. — Unconscious use of inner faculties. — The man-plant of eternity. — Laya-centers of theosophy. — Questions answered by Sir James Jeans. — Fortuity and fate. — Proofs of consciousness in the universe. — Conflict between religion and science impossible. — The path to immortality. — Plato and the ancient Hindu teaching.

Friends: come now with me; come with me into realms which are far removed from this fevered sphere of human ambition, of human joy and disappointment; and let us wander together a little while into those other realms of human thought and into those actually existing parts and places of the universe which have been adventured into and described by the great seers and sages of the past. In thus wandering for a while together, we may find at least for a short period a temporary surcease from our pains, our sorrows, our disappointments, and our heartaches.

What a grand thing it is to realize that this mere physical sphere is not all that there is of the boundless universe: that it is, so to speak, but one plane, one world, one veil, beyond which man's enterprising spirit may go out on the greatest adventure that it is possible for a human entity to undertake: the search for light, for truth, for wisdom, for knowledge of the supreme self.

From time immemorial the great ones of the human race have



taught — and have taught with one voice and after one way of speaking although indeed in different tongues — that behind the outward veil of physical existence there lie vast ranges of cosmic consciousness, and vast ranges of cosmic being which that cosmic consciousness invigorates; and that in these ranges, on these planes, on these spheres, in these worlds — call them what you like — there live vast and incomputable multitudes, armies, hosts, of living beings, who are there because they are passing through their respective phases of their long evolutionary journey, precisely as we human beings here on this earth are passing through the earth phase of our own long, aeons-long, evolutionary pilgrimage.

We human beings are but one host of these countless hosts of hosts of hosts of hosts. We human beings are by no means solitary and inexplicable exceptions in the boundless universe. We entities here on earth merely exemplify one phase — our earth phase — of what the universe does and of what the universe brings forth from within its bosom. Do you get the thought? Admitting our own existence and our own powers and faculties as we must do, we thereby prove the rule, for we could not be here except by reason of cosmic law and cosmic energy and cosmic life. Our own existence automatically proves the existence of other hosts of entities living as well in the invisible as in the visible spheres.

Say you that we human beings are exceptions, and that our earth is an exception, in boundless space and in all the infinitudes of cosmic being and throughout endless and beginningless eternity? Say you that we are exceptions, that we are merely chance products of a crazy universe, producing order fortuitously out of an irrational cosmic disorder? If you say this foolish thing, then prove it to me, if you can. Such a thought I can never accept, for it would be accepting something against which my very spirit

rebels. My mind is a logical one, and must follow logical processes; and logic invigorated by the inner spirit is illuminated. Where lies wisdom? Where lies knowledge? Where lies understanding? All lie within. Why should this dust-speck which we human beings call earth be the only dust-speck in boundless eternity and in boundless infinitude to bring forth sentient, self-conscious, and aspiring entities? Obviously the supposition is an absurdity. But the fact that we are here, proves that we by that fact exemplify and prove a general rule. One single rose proves the existence of the entire rose family.

We human beings essentially are kin to the gods, kin to the cosmic spirits. The universe is our home. Isn't it obvious? Here we are in it. We cannot ever leave it. We are its children, its offspring, and therefore all that there is of boundless space is we ourselves in our inmost. We are native there, and boundless space is our home, and our instinct tells us therefore that "all is well."

Man has will, and he exercises this will in choice. He can do, or he can refrain from doing. He has the vision of mind: he can discern, judge, discriminate, set apart and put together — and analyse, and synthesize — and these are godlike faculties. Where do these faculties exist? They exist in him, because they are intrinsic parts of himself: they are his faculties expressed through the physical body. Man *per se* is an invisible entity. What we see of him in and through the body is merely the manifestation of the inner man, because man essentially is a spiritual energy — a spiritual, intellectual, psycho-material energy, the adjective depending upon the plane on which you choose to discern his actions, for indeed he may be said to exist on all planes, inner and outer.

The heart of the heart of a human being is a god, a cosmic spirit, a spark of the central cosmic fire; and all evolution — which means

unfolding what is within, unwrapping what is within the evolving entity, bringing forth what is locked up within — all evolution, I say, is merely bringing forth ever more and more into a more perfect manifestation, the infolded, inlocked, wrapped up, energies, faculties, powers, organs, of the evolving entity. And *pari passu*, with equal step, as these faculties and energies become more able to manifest themselves, more perfectly evolved forth, does the organism through which they work — the body — show the effects of this inner evolving fire, of this energy within, and thus also the body itself so evolves, because automatically reflecting in itself each inner step taken forwards.

Man is an invisible entity, but he needs a physical body in which to live and with which to work upon this physical plane. He is a pilgrim of eternity. He came forth from the invisible part of cosmic being in aeons so far bygone in the past that mankind, except the great sages and seers, has lost all count thereof. He came out of the womb of cosmic being as an unself-conscious god-spark, and after wandering aeon after aeon after aeon after aeon through all the various inner worlds, passing at different stages through our own material sphere, and out again into the inner worlds, he finally became man, a self-conscious entity; and here we are. Future aeons of time will bring forth even on this our earth, into a far more perfect manifestation than at present, the locked-up faculties and powers existent in every human being; and in those days of the far distant future man will walk the earth a god, and he will walk this earth communing with his fellow gods, for he will then have brought forth the godlike powers now unevolved but nevertheless within his essence.

What is the difference between the beast and the man today? Even the beast has all the potentialities of the human being, but they are not yet evolved forth as they are, although imperfectly, in man today. The human being has to a certain degree evolved

them forth, but nevertheless the human being has passed only a part of his way through this present earth stage of evolutionary experience. He will finish this earth stage of experience in the distant future, by growing, ever growing, improving, evolving, progressing ever more forwards — for such is Nature's way — until the god within him shall shine forth in native splendor, and then all men shall not only be like gods but verily shall in fact be gods, and shall walk the earth as gods, and they will think godlike thoughts and feel like gods. Yes, such is our future destiny. These faculties and powers in the future to be evolved forth are existent in the invisible spheres even now, and they are parts of us because we are essentially invisible beings. We are inhabitants of these inner realms and spheres even more truly than we are, physically speaking, inhabitants of our physical earth sphere.

Do you realize that the greatest men of science today are teaching that the real world is an invisible world, and that this our physical sphere is a sphere of illusion? That the real physical sphere is not at all what we see with our physical sense apparatus, because that apparatus is so imperfectly evolved that our vision of what surrounds us is not a true vision; but that the real world is an inner and invisible world, in other words an invisible universe, wholly composite of interlocking and interpenetrating energies.

It used to be a common scientific teaching that energy was a mere offspring of the material world, no one knew how born; but now the ideas of our greatest scientific minds have run to the other extreme and have reversed themselves, and now these minds say that the material world is but the fruitage, the effect, the result, of invisible energies ever operating and cooperating.

Eddington and Jeans — to quote only two of such great scientific intellects — and even the great Einstein, talk about the

fundamental thing in the universe as being mind, as they call it, or mind-stuff — consciousnesses I say — and that our material sphere is merely one of the effects of the incessant activities of this invisible agent.

Now, mark you, my Friends and Brothers, theosophists don't care to satisfy our minds by generalizations in that easy way. We gladly admit the general truth of the statement that mind is the fundamental essence of the universe, but we follow the old wisdom-religion of mankind which has existed in all ages, among all men, and which has been proved by every great Sage and seer whom the world has ever known, and we say that instead of mind or consciousness, which are merely generalizing terms, the background of the universe — in other words, the invisible spheres — is essentially composite of hosts of consciousnesses and wills, *i. e.*, of living entities, just as we humans are.

We human beings on this earth merely exemplify the rule that the universe is filled with consciousnesses and wills, and the fact of the great variety of entities that exists in our sphere simply exemplifies once more the same rule of natural being: that consciousnesses are innumerable in the universe and are of all-various kinds. Just so are the varying consciousnesses of men exceedingly numerous in their great variety, and we know they are of various kinds: as for instance, the consciousness of the poet, the consciousness of the seer, the consciousness of the philosopher, the consciousness of the artist, the consciousness of the musician, the consciousness of the scientist, etc., etc. Endless variety in universality is nature's law. Therefore we as a human host are essentially invisible beings, because our consciousness is essentially an invisible energy. We inhabit the spheres, the vast spaces, of space; and I now and here allude more particularly to those invisible spheres where in very truth we are incomparably more at home than we are even in this physical universe, which

we understand so ill, and where we have to work through a gross physical body which actually dims the inner fire and which cripples the expression of the inner faculties, the inner energies.

It is like the glory of the sun shut out from human eyes by veil after veil surrounding the divine splendor; but as we go behind veil after veil after veil we approach ever closer to the sunlight of the spirit within, which is the inner god.

We are more at home in the invisible spheres than we are here, because these spheres are closer to the essence of our being.

All the great sages and seers of all the ages have taught one common doctrine. Prove this for yourselves: search the sacred writings of the peoples, of the nations, of the earth, and search with an unprejudiced and a seeing eye. Cleanse your mind, wash it free from prejudice and preconception, so that your vision may be clear and strong; and I tell you that throughout all these different literatures of mankind you will find in them one common, fundamental, basic doctrine. Prove this statement. Don't believe what I say merely because I say it. Prove it for yourselves. I have proved it.

This fundamental doctrine is the doctrine of the great sages and seers, of those men who are farther evolved than the average man is, and who were initiated in the ancient Mystery schools; who, consequently, being more evolved than the average man is, had become more ready in the exercise, more exact in the exercise, keener and stronger in the exercise, of the interior or spiritual and intellectual faculties and powers; so that they could send the percipient mind, the percipient consciousness, deep into the womb of being, pass behind the physical veils, penetrating thereinto in full self-consciousness. What they brought back from this sublime adventure they formulated into human tongues as this fundamental doctrine I have spoken of, and taught it to their

less evolved fellow men.

Such were the great sages and seers of humanity. Doubtless you know the names of some of them. I have often recited them here. Let me now repeat the names of a few who are perhaps the best known to Europeans: the Buddha-Gautama, Jesus the Avatara, Pythagoras, Empedocles, Apollonius of Tyana, Krishna, Sankaracharya, Lao-tse, even Confucius, the original Zoroaster, and many more; and all were founders of the greatest philosophical and religious schools that the world has known.

It is pathetic that Occidental professors so often rend and tear the teachings of these great ancient sages and seers, merely because they do not understand those teachings. Brought up as they have been in Occidental religions and scientific theories they are blinded to misbelieve that man has a percipient spirit which can cognize truth instantly, immediately; that man has an inner faculty which, so to speak, can go to the gates of the sun, or drink of the Pierian springs of the primal wisdom. Yet indeed man so can do if he be trained to do it, and the great sages and seers do this and always have done it. All of you can do it, my Brothers, if you will undertake the training and will live the life that will fit you to do it. And in future ages, when you shall have evolved forth what are now locked-up faculties and powers within you, and shall have developed keener inner senses than now you have, then such wondrous and mystical adventures will be common and natural and instinctive operations of the consciousness of all men.

But even now, even now I repeat, whence come the great works which mankind produces? Whence come the works of genius? Whence comes that intuitive vision which sees, and which in seeing transmits to others? All comes from within, from the exercise conscious or unconscious of the developing inner eye, of

the evolving inner consciousness. Even now, more or less unconsciously to himself, man is using these inner faculties and powers, feebly evolved as they are, and he calls them by various names such as intuition, instinct, vision, genius, 'hunches,' and whatnot. Or intellect, or psychic sight — a horrible phrase — and by other terms. He uses these imperfectly evolved faculties even now, and by their use produces works of genius, and yet in most cases knows not self-consciously what he is doing or the source of his inspiration.

Whence comes the mathematical and philosophical vision of an Einstein? How did Newton, the Englishman, come to have his almost universal sense of mathematical proportion and cosmic law? From what source came the world-shaking power of a Buddha or of a Jesus? Again, whence spring forth all the great works of human genius? All come from within and in every case. All come from the invisible worlds. Out of the invisible into the visible, like the growth of a plant, comes man, the man-plant of eternity. Beginning in one life on earth as a human seed, which grows to maturity, and produces or evolves forth what is locked up within; and then, with the natural decay of power, sinking to earth the body dies; and after a long period of rest and assimilation of experience in the invisible worlds, the inner spiritual flame comes again to earth for a new reincarnation here.

Such in brief is the history of man, the man-plant of the ages. He is born and flowers a while and then dies down and rests, and with the returning life-season he springs anew into existence and again flowers and again dies down; but always the golden thread of self — the sutratman of the ancient philosophers of Hindustan — passes through both time and space.

Yes, my Brothers: what I am trying to drive home into your



consciousness is the fact that each one of you is not only a spiritual energy, in other words an invisible being, but that actually each one of you is a child of the universe, a spark of its central fire, and therefore life of its life, bone of its bone, flesh of its flesh; an inseparable part of boundless nature is each one of you, and of invisible nature especially.

The greatest men both spiritually and intellectually that the world has ever seen, no matter what line of activity their genius may follow, the greatest men the world has ever seen in any line of human thought or effort, have taught these identic truths. Some have taught them in one way, some have taught them in another way, but they all have taught the same fundamental truths. They taught that this physical sphere is but the outer garment, the veil, the body, of invisible spheres; that these invisible spheres together compose the invisible universe, just as our physical spheres in their aggregate compose what we call our home-universe, which is all that is included within the encircling bounds of the galaxy, the Milky Way.

They further taught that these invisible universes are as incomputable in number as are the sands on the seashore; and this is just about what our modern physical-astronomical scientists are likewise coming to teach us, to wit: that every galaxy in distant, all-surrounding space is akin to our own galaxy, and is a Universe, an island-universe they call it, akin to ours; and of course it is so, because universal nature is one vast organic entity.

Just as this physical universe has its inhabitants, and is divided into spheres and various elements, so indeed is the invisible universe builded on exactly the same plan and in exactly the same order. This is not because our physical universe originates this earth, not because our physical universe is a standard by

which to judge all else and after which all else is copied; but, on the contrary, my Brothers, our physical universe is as it is because itself is a reflection of the powers, energies, within, which come pouring forth into our physical universe and make it just what it is.

When Sir James Jeans, for instance, speaks of the existence in the nebulae of Space of what he calls singular points — which theosophists for ages in the past have called laya-centers — through which come pouring into our physical universe energies and matters from another dimension — to use his term — from other worlds theosophists say, from other spheres, from the inner and invisible universe, he merely repeats unconsciously to himself what the wisdom-religion of mankind, today called theosophy, has taught from immemorial ages.

What a declaration for an Occidental scientist to make! Our whole argument is thereby admitted: his singular points through which come pouring into our physical sphere the energies and matters of an invisible universe, are what theosophists call laya-centers, channels, canals, open doors, through which they pass upwards out of this universe into the invisible universe and inversely from the invisible universe downwards into this physical universe, the beings and energies and matters resident respectively in either. This is an old idea with us theosophists and also with the theosophists of other ages past, in Hindustan, for instance.

Furthermore, these great sages and seers taught that these invisible worlds of the invisible universes are as varied and as multiform and are as fascinating in their all-various differentiations as are our own — and vastly more so.

You know the old saying of the Egyptian Hermes, of the Hermetic School: "As above, so below; as below, so above." Why is this true? Because the universe is one organism with one fundamental law

or system of laws, one fundamental mind-stuff or consciousness, so that whatever the whole has or is, in other words whatever the cosmic aggregate has or is, every minutest entity, every minutest part of the whole, also has. Do you understand? Inversely therefore, whatever the part has, the whole has: the vast, incomprehensible to human minds, boundless, frontierless space, invisible and visible, inner and outer.

Therefore it is that our physical sphere is but a reflection of what is above; and if you know how to read the cosmic riddle, if you know how to construe the cosmic enigma, you will understand that what we see here — if you know how to read it — will show you what the gods are and have and pass their lives in.

We are essentially kin with the gods; and therefore I say that the universe is very friendly to us. We are children of it; all that it is in each one of you. All the emotions of your soul, all the movements of your intellect, *on a cosmic scale and in spiritual qualities* exist in the gods. Do you follow the argument? It is really very simple. Reflect how beautiful and inspiring is this picture. Discern how full of hope it is, how easy to understand. Children of the gods you are, therefore gods yourselves manifesting, oh so feebly as imperfect man, the divine faculties which nevertheless you do manifest in some degree at least, thereby proving your divine origin.

Give me the man who can see and who can clearly think; whose mind is not crippled and enslaved by the scientific or philosophical or religious ideas of some passing age. Give me the man whose heart can beat in tune with the universal pulse, and who, when he examines the literatures of his fellows of whatever age of mankind, can sense the working of the great human heart in them, and in reading them can say "Ay, that have I seen; that do I also know."

In the London *Observer* of Sunday, January 4, 1931, there appeared the report of an interview with perhaps the most prominent British astronomical physicist today, Sir James H. Jeans. From this report I have selected two questions which were asked of Sir James by the reporter and Sir James's answers; and I am going to read these two questions and their answers to you.

*Question:* Do you believe that life on this planet is the result of some sort of accident, or do you believe that it is part of some great scheme?

*Answer:* I incline to the idealistic theory that consciousness is fundamental, and that the material universe is derivative from consciousness, not consciousness from the material universe. If this is so, then it would appear to follow that there is a general scheme. My inclination towards idealism is the outcome largely of modern scientific theories — for instance, the principle of indeterminacy may provide an escape from the old scientific doctrine that nature is governed by strictly deterministic laws. In general the universe seems to me to be nearer to a great thought than to a great machine. It may well be, it seems to me, that each individual consciousness ought to be compared to a brain-cell in a universal mind.

How familiar these ideas seem to us theosophists! They were as familiar to past ages as the face of your beloved is to each one of you today. Old, old, old, old thoughts are these; nothing new. And now our great scientists are beginning to think them again, for these thoughts are in the air; and modern scientific thinkers emit them anew as wondrous thoughts, new thoughts, inspiring deductions from scientific research and discovery. We are glad of it. No matter how they come, if only they come again into the consciousness of men, theosophists are thankful for these new-old doctrines. It is the thing *per se* that we want, not the method

of its coming.

This so-called principle of determinacy, this supposed principle of determinacy or of indeterminacy — you know what these ideas are, I suppose. The scientists of the last generation or two managed to persuade themselves that nature was a vast cosmic machine, unimpulsed, uninigorated, unenlivened, by either mind or thought or consciousness or spirit or soul — call it what you like — and that the marvelously intricate and mathematically founded universe had run itself from all eternity, and would, mayhap, mayhap not, run itself through all the eternity of the future — how they did not know. How can a machine run itself forever? They answered: "We do not know. It may, perchance, have periods of 'life' and periods of cosmic 'death'; but we do not know." They said that this cosmic machine was fatalistic in character: that every cog fitted into every other cog, and that thus it ran by itself and for itself, without guidance, without governance, without thought, without consciousness — that it was but a physical machine, in fact; and this rigid concatenation of physical cause and effect is now called the principle of physical determinacy. Men said there was no escape from it; and that because it existed and because evidences of consciousness in it were lacking, *de facto* there was no inner or spiritual principle involved in it at all. Pathetic and futile conclusion.

To a theosophist, this very existence of ineluctable order and regularity in cosmic structure and operations, based on rigidly mathematical principles, announces an inherent life and consciousness in the universe.

Fortuity — curiously enough another scientific dogma of those days, strangely contradictory of the physical determinism so popular then — was the other pillar of the Temple of Scientific Theory.

The ideas were worshiped in this Temple, rather than truth, and the ideas were the offspring of the high priests of the Temple, and on its altars incense was raised to the mind-born children of its high priests rather than to the indwelling spirit and life of our cosmical universe, which is the spirit of truth, of order, of regularity, the fountain of consciousness, the source of all that is great and noble and holy. The modern hunger to throw off the shackle of the so-called principle of determinism, the bastard child of the materialistic nightmare of our forefathers, arises in the hunger to find soul or spirit, in other words free acting will and individual consciousnesses, in nature. This hunger is a natural one and a right one but, let us ask, why not do as the theosophist does, find that soul and spirit are and must be concordant with and part of universal nature and the cosmic scheme of things rather than something contradictory to it and out of causal relation with it.

This last supposition to the theosophist is the summit of absurdity. Souls, that is to say individual consciousnesses and wills, exist throughout universal nature physically separate as the atoms of being, for indeed universal nature is composite of them; but by this very fact these individual souls and wills are wholly concordant with natural processes of which they are inseparable parts and with the cosmic structure, rather than existing in opposition thereto or by virtue of an accident — a flash of rhetoric which is as idle as it is inept.

No wonder that our modern scientists, with a wisdom which has been evolved by the obtaining of a greater knowledge, are breaking away from the nightmare of materialism of our immediate forefathers. There was not one solid substantial proof of these old materialistic theories regarding the universe, for they were only theories; and Occidental men, in scrutinizing the outside universe so carefully as they thought, forgot the key to

that outside universe, which key is for each man himself — his own spiritual selfhood. Man forgot his own spiritual soul, the movements of his own consciousness, the spiritual motions of his own inner being. If the universe has them not in any wise whatsoever, how is it that they exist in man, a part of that universe? And how can they be restricted to men alone? Obviously, what the part has, the whole must have.

Theosophists teach the existence of a rigid concatenation of cause and effect which is as strict as that of the old physical determinism which our modern scientists have so wisely cast to the winds; but we say that this rigid natural concatenation of cause and effect, cause and effect, cause and effect — every effect in turn immediately becoming a new cause — is itself but a manifestation of consciousness, the fundamental element or energy in the universe, or rather that this concatenation is the resultant or manifestation of hosts of consciousnesses pervading and permeating the visible and invisible universes, and existing in all grades or degrees on the beginningless and endless ladder of life.

Some of these cosmic movements are very great because the cosmic consciousness moves in universal sweeps, and within universal reaches, motions which are difficultly discernible by man's as yet imperfectly evolved mind. Do you understand? Just so might a man's pet dog or his beloved horse see what the master does in whistling and in calling, but does not understand. Just so we humans seeing the vast movements and motions in the universe think that because they are so majestic and take such long time periods to pass from their beginnings to their ends, they are but the working of a cosmic machine. So you see, my Brothers, that this passing from the principle of physical determinism to what they now call the principle of indeterminacy, is a willing effort to free themselves from the

older materialistic nightmare; and may the immortal gods bless the effort!

But here is a danger that I see: in jumping from the frying pan of physical determinism, modern scientific thinkers may cast themselves into the fire of mere fortuity, mere chance. What will save them is such a teaching as this now held up by many scientific minds, that the fundamental element of the universe is consciousness. How indeed can anyone doubt it? You yourselves, my Brothers, are consciousnesses, sparks of the universal fire, children of the universal parent; you are what you are because the universe is as and what it is.

Here is the second question:

Do you agree with Einstein's remark that modern scientific speculations spring from a profound religious impulse?

*Answer:* I agree with that remark if the word, religious, be sufficiently widely interpreted. I think that the greatest achievements generally spring from what may be called a religious impulse. . . . And in science I think that the best work is that which is undertaken purely for the truth's sake, or undertaken wholly for the benefit of humanity. I suppose one could describe both these motives as religious impulses.

And so indeed they are. When will you Occidentals come to understand what the wisdom of the children of men has known from immemorial time, that science and philosophy and religion are but three operations of the human mind or soul or spirit — call it what you like — in any case, of the human constitution? Therefore they spring from one entity, one consciousness, and you cannot understand any one of the three without understanding the other twain, for they are like the three sides of one thing. You cannot understand true religion without



understanding true science and true philosophy; you cannot understand true philosophy without understanding true religion and true science; and you cannot understand true science, which is ordered knowledge of the universe, unless you understand true philosophy and true religion. There can be no such thing in theosophy, I may add in passing, as a conflict between religion and science. It simply does not and cannot exist.

It is true that theosophists, in common with all men, hunger for a greater light; it is true that we want ever more light. But is not this the divine hunger of the human heart and can there ever come a time when no more light may be had — in other words, when evolution shall cease? Of course not. Immortal gods, give me more light! That is our theosophic prayer. No matter what it costs me as a person, I cast the cost aside if only the gods help in bringing to me light and thus satisfy the divine hunger of my soul. Remember this, that light for the mind, love for the heart, understanding for the intellect: all these three must be satisfied in every man before he has real peace.

Our universe is run according to law: in other words, it is strictly orderly, systematic, rigidly in accordance with the movements of the consciousnesses which infill and actually compose the universe both visible and invisible. The innumerable hosts of the gods in their thoughts and in the motions of their constitutions produce what appear to us as the laws of the physical universe. Consequently justice rules, because harmony is nature's own heart.

Everything is well ordered; everything is orderly and harmonious, for love, almighty, impersonal love, which is the noblest thing that human hearts have ever felt, is the very core of things, and impersonal love is harmony. Therefore, wipe the tears from your eyes; raise them aloft from the ground and look to the

Mystic East within; for on those distant mountain peaks o'er which the spiritual light of the rising sun ever breaks, there is your home.

There is a law of compensation in the universe, meaning that all evil-doing has its own retribution by nature's own act. Leave it therefore to the gods to avenge you if you have suffered, and suffered wrongly. "Vengeance is mine," said the Scriptures claimed by the Christians, merely re-echoing an ancient truth, a teaching of the sages and seers. Harmony is at the heart of things, for all nature is orderly, and beautifully moves in system and stately measures. Give justice when you receive injustice. Ally yourselves with the gods, with your own inner god. Requite never hate with hate, for thus you but add fuel to an unholy flame. Requite hatred with compassion and justice. This is the ancient law. Thus also you make no evil karma for yourself; thus you ally yourself with nature's own spiritual procedures and you become a child of the cosmic life, which thereafter will beat in your own heart with its undying pulses.

This is the path of immortality: allying yourself with the universe, with its spiritual essence. What prevents man from doing this, in other words from becoming at one with the god within him, with the inner Buddha, with the immanent Christ? It is selfishness — self-seeking, the hunger to satisfy the petty, personal desires at the cost of others' pain.

The path to immortality and glory is unselfishness; it is the path of forgiveness and of compassion; it is the path of impersonal love. Is not this the teaching of all the sages of all the ages? And why is it so? For this reason: that by so acting you act in accordance with nature's own most secret and recondite operations, laws, habits, procedures. And as I have told you, you are each one of you an inseparable part of the universe, and

consequently — listen carefully to this wonderful ancient deduction — you are in the essence of yourself that very universe. Do you understand? That universe is you, for all your being is but the cosmic fire. You see now the pathway to follow, the pathway of the spiritual self, of this inner flame, of this god within? Follow it then, and your consciousness will ever expand more and more until it attains cosmic reaches.

Do you see the logic of this? Remember the teaching of the sages of Hindustan: *Tat twam asi*: That (boundless infinitude) thou art! It is true. Those sages used this technical word 'That,' rather than give to it some human descriptive title limiting it; therefore they simply called it by the demonstrative pronoun *That*. Even so did the divine Plato speak of 'This and the Other' — "This world" and "That world." Just so said the ancient Hindu: *Idam* and *tad*: "This" and "That." Thou art in very truth a child, O son of man, of the heart of things; and that heart of things is the core of the core of you. Follow that pathway. It is the pathway of immortality; it is the pathway of the spirit.

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[Vol 2, No 28](#)  
[Contents](#)

**Second Series: No. 28 (March 16, 1931)**

**GLIMPSES INTO THE UNSEEN UNIVERSE — II**

(Lecture delivered February 1, 1931)

CONTENTS: Spiritual not psychic faculties desired. — Growth from within outwards. — Comprehension of the path. — Looking within not an unwholesome morbidity. — Signposts to the interior worlds. — Is man an exceptional event in the universe? — Every man a potential seer. — Cosmic hierarchies interlocked. — When life becomes a grand adventure. — A lesson in occultism. — Woofle-birds among men! — Contradictions of modern scientists. — Are consciousness and matter fundamentally different? — Theosophy not a new-made theory.

The unseen universe! I am wondering, friends, how many of you may think that I am going to talk to you this afternoon about something weird, strange, uncanny, unwholesome for the intellectual and spiritual life of a human being. But I am not. I could not do so as a theosophical teacher, because theosophy warns us strongly against the misuse of the interior psychic faculties and powers, and directs our attention to the spiritual faculties and powers by which we may realize our spiritual unity with the boundless.

We learn from the ancient wisdom-religion of mankind to use our spiritual powers and the manner of becoming self-consciously at one with the cosmic life; and just because the knowledge so taught is definite, and applicable by every sensible human being to his own life: just because the knowledge is such do we learn how to avoid the pitfalls, the mayavi psychic will-o'-the-wisps which mislead men and which have produced in the world today

so many differing branches of thought, and which have caused the average modern man to feel, and feeling to say, "Where, immortal gods, may I find truth?"

What is the truth? Is it something outside of you? How so? No indeed: the truth is within. Who is the finder? It is you. Truth is within; the finder is within, because it is your self. Therefore the truth is in you, in the spiritual nature of every son of man. Within is the pathway to the gods. Seek not the keys of truth outside of yourself. Search for the light divine within your own essence. Then your whole inner being will open as the flower opens to the morning sun, and you will know truth, because you yourself will *be* it. Do you understand me?

Do you understand that each one of you is a child of the universe, born out of its spiritual heart, and therefore that the universal pulse beats within you, that the universal substance is within you, and is in very truth you yourself, and that the energies of the universe are in you and actually are you yourself? Therefore I say again that the pathway to truth is within you — your self is your pathway. There is no pathway to truth outside of you, because the only path that you can tread is the pathway of selfhood, and unless you follow that path you cannot walk upon it. That which is "outside of you" is merely yourself inverted. Therefore grow, expand, become greater, and the energies interior and invisible of your being will finally take in all the outside; for being an inseparable part of the universe, that universe in the core of its being is yourself; and we look outwards merely in order to check, as the scientist does, detail by detail, what we have learned from the inner experience.

This is the lost key of all Occidental thought, my Brothers — the lost key that opens all the riddles of existence; and the application of this key to the lock of each man's own inner character is so

simple: "Man, know thyself!" That is all there is to it. It is the beginning of the path and its midway point and its end; and, strange paradox, these are but figures of speech: the pathway of the spiritual self never had a beginning; it will never have an end, for the self divine within you in its essence is the self of the universe. You have no selfhood without it, outside of it. An inseparable part of the boundless All is each one of you; therefore the boundless All is yourself and your eternal home. You are native there, and are kin of the gods. The universe is your eternal dwelling place.

"Man, know thyself," proclaimed the famous old Delphic oracle of Apollo. All the great sages and seers of all the ages have taught the same truth. If you can find this key, all doors thereafter will fly open at your will. What is this key? The key is you, for yourself; and the doors that fly open are the enveloping veils of the lower selfhood which shut in the light or shut it out, whichever expression pleases you the better. Do you understand the meaning of this wondrous teaching? Do you begin to grasp some of the reach of it? Veil upon veil you will pass as you progress and will leave it behind, but always will there be a more beautiful veil beyond to pass behind into a greater glory.

What does all this imply? It implies that growth is endless, that evolution is endless; and that an end comes never at all. I would that I could drive this sublime truth home into human hearts and minds, for it gives such ineffable peace, and to those who mourn it brings unspeakable comfort; and as a rule of conduct it is so sure. Each one of you may test it for yourself, indeed must test it.

Each one of you must follow the pathway for himself. Can I gain truth for you? No. You must for yourself gain the light. How simple all this is! Can I learn for you? No. You must learn for yourself. Can I grow or evolve for you? No. You must grow and

evolve in and for yourself. How? Is it by looking without and seeing the marvelous phenomena of existence around us, only to check off the details of your own inner growth in expanding mind and in an ever-broadening consciousness? No. It is by first looking within. There is your pathway to the heart of the universe, because that heart of the universe essentially is your inmost self. Do you now see what this means? It means a continuously growing spiritual selfhood, which blends finally into the very essence and substance of the cosmic or universal self.

This one thought, my Brothers, is the open sesame to the doors of all the treasuries, and the destroyer of the veils hiding the mysteries of the unseen universe. Become at one with your spiritual self and you are at peace. Become at one with the god within you and you have light. Become at one with the divinity within and its very strength and vigor flow through your veins. Then you vibrate synchronously with all that is outside, for that outside is simply the universe of which you are an inseparable part. The way, the manner, of achieving this is by going within.

Please do not understand this phrase "going within" to mean some morbid and unwholesome brooding upon one's woes and sorrows and troubles. O immortal gods, no! Those woes and sorrows and troubles belong to the lower selfhood, belong to the man who has not found himself, who has not come into the possession of his spiritual being, who has not found the pathway.

Find this inner light! Every one of you can and must do so; and when it is found then sorrows cease; pain becomes pain no more; peace, light, enter your heart and your mind; death vanishes. For the very fundamental thought of this teaching is man's oneness with the universe of which he is an inseparable part. So that even the death of the physical body is but a change, the casting off of a veil — the outermost veil, the outermost garment — and living

freer than before: resting indeed, as regards the human part of us, but ever so much freer than when shrouded in these gross physical encasements we call physical men.

Theosophists speak of the unseen universe, and I wonder if you wonder what I mean by this term. On last Sunday afternoon I tried to set forth just what was implied by this term, the unseen universe. I mean all those invisible, inner planes, worlds, spheres, — call them what you like — which fill boundless space, and of which our gross physical sphere or universe is but a mirroring or a reflection. Try to get this thought. It is easy to understand.

What makes a rose a rose in all its beauty, grace, and warmth? What makes it so? Chance? Immortal gods, who believes in chance? Indeed, if chance ruled this Universe then the seed of the rose, the clipping of the rose, might bring forth a palm, or a cherry tree, or an oak, or whatnot. But invariably does the apple seed bring forth the apple; the life behind it produces *itself* on this physical plane, and of its own type, and of its own kind. It can but produce itself. It cannot produce what is not itself. Do you now begin to get the thought?

It is this same principle at work to which we allude when theosophists say that this physical sphere is but the reflection, but the reproduction, of the inner, invisible, hid worlds, spheres, planes; and the aggregate of these inner worlds, spheres, and planes, we call the unseen universe. This unseen universe you can easily understand something of. Check off your intuitions as I have said before, by examining the wondrous physical sphere around us in all its majesty, beauty, order, symmetry. The energies that make this physical sphere flow forth from within, out of the invisible worlds, and flow through this physical sphere that our senses tell us somewhat of; and these energies can work only according to their own types, produce only what those



energies themselves are. Isn't that fact obvious? So that the physical sphere as thus produced by the aggregate workings of these invisible energies — *lives*, theosophists say — but reflects, shows forth, manifests, what is within it. The physical sphere is but the body expressing the inner life and soul, or rather lives and souls, of the unseen universe.

Hence, as we see order, symmetry, system, beauty, harmony in the physical sphere that surrounds us, so likewise, because this physical sphere is a copy of what is invisible, harmony, order, system, beauty, are in the inner worlds — the causal worlds — of which our physical world or universe is an effect or production.

The invisible universe is composed of celestial bodies just as our physical universe is composed of worlds and spheres and planes; and furthermore the unseen universe is filled full with its appropriate inhabitants, just as our physical sphere is, as exemplified in our own Mother Earth. Otherwise, why should earth be an exception? I repeat the question: why should earth be the only exception? Pause a moment in thought. Think for yourselves. Enjoy the noblest privilege of manhood and think for yourselves. Explain to me how one exception in boundless space, an exceptional event different from everything else, should exist and exist where we are. How could it exist if it were so utterly contrary to the universal law? Is it not obvious that our notion that we are exceptions and that our earth is an exception arises out of our own ignorance and our own foolish egoism?

We are here and things are as they are here merely because it is all in accordance with the universal plan, with the universal energy, with the universal consciousness. Yes, as even the greatest of our scientific thinkers now are beginning to teach, that universal consciousness is the fundamental of the cosmos, and we must remember that it is infinite. Theosophists applaud these

latest scientific pronouncements, for it is exactly what we ourselves have taught, although phrased in language other than our own technical Theosophical terms. But nevertheless theosophists say, echoing the ancient wisdom-religion of mankind, that this word consciousness is merely a generalizing term; theosophists much prefer to be more definite and instead of consciousness, to say *consciousnesses*.

Just because mankind is composed of more than one man, therefore mankind or humanity is merely a generalizing term; and we know that humanity is composed of men, of human individuals; and let us not forget that the earth is populated with other entities, too. All space is filled full with sentient self-conscious, quasi-self-conscious, quasi-conscious entities in all-various grades of evolutionary progress; and we human beings, as only one hierarchy of entities presently existing on our earth, merely prove the rule that prevails everywhere. We could not be here if it were not the universal rule elsewhere, if it were not an exemplification of the law that prevails everywhere. We humans are no exceptions whatsoever in the cosmic plan, but merely exemplify a singular instance of this universal plan.

Wash your minds free of the old ecclesiastical superstition that mankind on earth is an exception to the general rule of things, and that our little dust-speck, which we call earth, is different from other dust-specks. It is different in details, assuredly, just as men differ among themselves in details; yet just as all men manifest the same general principles of energy and substance beneath the wealth of confusing details, so likewise does the universe. We men are merely a special instance, so to say, of the cosmic rule prevailing everywhere.

Yes, the invisible universe is filled full with hierarchies of intelligent, quasi-intelligent, self-conscious, and quasi-self-

conscious entities, existing in infinitely varying grades of evolutionary progress; for evolution prevails everywhere. It is one of nature's fundamental laws, or rather operations; and let us remember that evolution is growth. Do you know what growth really is? It is the bringing out of what is within. Do you get this important thought? Link it up with what I told you a few moments ago, that within is everything, in germ or in activity, potentially or actually manifest.

Every human being, therefore, whether having evolved to the point of expressing it as yet or not, is the vehicle of a divine being, of an inner god; and furthermore every human being has within him the capability of being a sage, a seer, a genius, a spiritual leader. It is all a question of bringing out what is locked up within. The way by which to bring out successfully what is locked up within you is by working with nature's laws — the way of harmony, the way of peace, the way of brotherhood, the way of kindness. Those entities who set themselves against the swiftly flowing stream of growth, against the river of evolutionary progress, sometime will rue the day when they made the choice, for they will be swept away with the mighty current and, after ages of suffering, mayhap, will learn the lesson of unity, learn the lesson of growth, which means following nature's laws; and then they will begin to advance forwards again.

Ethics, therefore, as you see, are founded on nature's own structure. Ethics are real; they are vastly more than mere conventions useful for men to follow. The man who does right, lives harmoniously with his surroundings, with the beating heart of nature; and the man who does wrong, who violates nature's laws, pays heavily for his error and to the last iota.

Out of this invisible universe we came; thither into that invisible universe we shall again go — but only to return here again. Every

entity follows a cyclical line of lives, which are strictly enchained, and which exemplify a chain of causation, of cause and effect. Every cause immediately produces an effect, which instantly becomes a new cause, which immediately in turn produces a new effect, it becoming a new cause, and so on forever. This is growth. This is change. Therefore this is likewise variety. This means learning, progress.

My Brothers, it is our theosophical teaching that this invisible universe — which expression is a generalizing term, as I have just told you — consisting of many worlds and spheres and planes, and what not, itself is divided into corporate entities. We may call them home-universes. These home-universes are builded on a hierarchical pattern or plan, just as our physical universe is. Have you ever thought about it? If not, pause a moment in thought over it.

The electrons build the atom; the atoms build the molecules; the molecules build the cells; the cells build the bodies — entities if you like; the bodies live on earth or elsewhere; earth is one of a family of planets of the solar system; our solar system is one of a vast family of other solar systems comprising our galaxy, the Milky Way, our home-universe; and our galaxy, our home-universe, is but one of other universes sown like seeds of life over the infinite fields of boundless space. This illustrates the hierarchical system: the less contained by the greater, a greater still containing this greater, a much greater one containing a still greater, and so forth.

It is our teaching that this hierarchical system is not only unilateral, so to speak, *i. e.*, embracing one side, one plane, one world, but also is inexpressibly interlinked, interlocked, with all other hierarchical systems composing the boundless universe; and furthermore that any universe or hierarchical system is

invisible as well as visible. Every universe contains its inner constitution just as man does; and all these various universes — which means of course all these various worlds and planes — are all interlocked, interworking, interlinked, all joined together by irrefragable bonds, by the unbreakable bonds of the cosmic life and substance. So that, as I told you when I began this study with you this afternoon, my Brothers, the universe is one, and every entity everywhere is an inseparable part of this universe; and therefore we are akin with all that is — akin with the gods in all their wide ranges of being and of growth and in all their vast hierarchies of existence; akin with the inhabitants of all other planets in all other solar systems; akin with the inhabitants of the planets in our own home solar system; because all are formed out of the same cosmic principles, all are enjoying the same cosmic life, the same cosmic energy, bathing in the same cosmic essence, and therefore all have the same origin and are all marching forwards towards the same ultimate grandiose destiny. We are all inexpressibly linked together forever.

Deduction: What I do sooner or later reacts upon me. What I feel, what I think, what I bring forth into act, will react upon me. I get just what I have sown. As the sower casts forth his seed, so does he reap what forth he cast. As ye sow, so shall ye reap. Man is a child of the invisible universe. Man is a child of this physical universe just because he is a child of the invisible universe. All that is in the universe is in you — everything; because you are an inseparable part of it and cannot ever leave it. Inversely, what is in you is everywhere. Make your own deductions.

Do you see the reaches of thought in this and the peace which they bring to the mind? Do you see the spiritual and ethical and intellectual surety in it? Do you sense what it means in your being conscious of your absolute unity with the cosmic life, with the cosmic consciousness, with the cosmic essence? Death henceforth

has no terrors whatsoever for you; life henceforth becomes continuously joyful; it becomes a grand adventure; for we move on from stage to stage, from world to world, from sphere to sphere, from plane to plane, learning ever, and responsible each man to himself, but also each responsible to all others. See how this clothes our human species with dignity which we never can lose.

At the heart of each one of you is a god — *a* god, not God, *a* god, a divine being, your inmost essence, your inmost self, a spark of the central fire, to use a popular expression, a flame of that central cosmic life, the Divine Fire. Being an inseparable part of the universe, each one of you, this flaming spiritual fire is your inmost self.

I tell you this on every Sunday afternoon when I speak to you here, because the thought is so important. Considered as a doctrine it contains such great hope, such unspeakable inspiration. It leads on the mind to ever greater visions of glory and understanding; it opens the case-hardened lower self so that the inmost self may shine forth even into the physical man. It fills his heart with peace and his mind with hope. It was the teaching of all the great seers and sages of all the ages. It was the teaching of Jesus; it was the teaching of the Buddha; it is the teaching of them all.

"Man, know thyself." How? Do you realize that none but an Occidental audience would be puzzled as to the how? The answer is: by being your inmost self: the best, the loftiest, the noblest, that is in you. That is all; and that effort, continuously followed, will lead you — now listen carefully — behind all the veils shutting you out from the invisible universe; for it means becoming at one with your inmost spiritual self, which, as I have just told you, my Brothers, is the heart of the universe.

I am now going to give you a little lesson in Occultism; and I am going to have the pleasure of wondering how you will like it. The little lesson is the following: do you want to penetrate behind these veils? Do you want to know something of the wondrous mysteries hid behind them? Then, be forgetful of yourself and as severe in correcting your own faults, as you must become kindly and forgiving as regards others. Check yourself from following wayward impulses. Be determined to follow the path of self-conquest. "Take it with strength" — a better translation of the teaching of the Christian New Testament that "the Kingdom of Heaven must be taken by violence." Take it with strength; in other words, conquer yourself. And the next time you pause before a temptation — eh? The first little test!

A man who cannot turn successfully from a temptation is usually the man who wonders: "Why can't I go beyond and myself see these wondrous things that I hear about?" The obvious answer is that he can't even protect himself, can't even control himself. How would he fare in those invisible realms, peopled as they are with their own hosts among whom he, this human weakling, just because of his weakness, would be an unprotected outsider? Think of the situation. If he cannot even care for himself here on earth where his present home is, how could he possibly protect himself and care for himself in what are to him, as an earth-child, regions unknown and strange and filled with unusual temptations and pitfalls and terrors as well as beauties both marvelous and seductive.

As you now must see, there is a very definite, very common sense, very strong, reason for the old teaching: the way to power is by self-conquest. The man who can control himself can control other men — for their good. Any other kind of control is tyranny and wholly and radically wrong. If you want to control the elementals, if you want to control the living beings inhabiting other worlds

and spheres, merely in order to protect yourself, then you must control them in the sense in which a good man will control his horse or his dog: control yourself first. Gain strength in other words. That is the key thought.

You have the powers of a god within you. You have a key within you which can unlock for you every closed door that the universe contains. That key is your spiritual self, a spark of the cosmic fire that I have told you about, flowing from the heart of the universe. Therefore, be that spiritual self of yourself, and then the universe is yours; for then you will be as a god. This is a long stage of evolution ahead of us considered as a race, but it is coming because we are moving steadily forwards towards it.

Meanwhile, if you want to explore the invisible realms, if you want to know what they are, how they are, where they are, what they look like, what are the beings who inhabit them, then take the first step at the next temptation that comes to you: exercise your willpower, and say No! In other words, strengthen yourself. The rule as you see is as simple as can be. There is no other way. It is the way of safety; it is the way of glory; it is also the quick way.

You see, as I told you, my Brothers, when I began our study with you this afternoon, the wonderful theosophical teachings do not contain anything that is weird or uncanny or unreasonable. They show a man how to attain his noblest best. They show him the path that he should follow, and it is so beautiful, this path. In following it a man grows, he expands. In this growth he gains feelings that to him at present are but very vague, inchoate dreams. His inner faculties begin to grow. He becomes inwardly greater; he feels much more keenly; he enters progressively more and more into the inner life, because in fact he is slowly becoming it. His inner senses awaken.



On the other hand, look at the man who cannot even say No to the least temptation. Is he admirable? A man with a human physical body, with all the divine and spiritual faculties within him lying untouched, unevoked, magnificent treasuries of power and faculty within; and he is so weak, so flabby of will, so lacking in lofty aspiration, that he cannot even resist the first little temptation that occurs. He falls. Is this admirable? Is such a man a beautiful picture of virile manhood? Is such a man manly? Let every man in this auditorium look into his own heart.

How we admire a man who can control himself — quietly, unostentatiously, without bragging about it! It is grand to know a man like that, or a woman like that. I am not preaching, my Brothers. I am a man like you, but I have been taught. I know what I am talking about. I, too, have my troubles; I too have had my temptations; and I have had to conquer — myself: yes, conquer, or go down. And at least, whatever my failings may have been or are, I have found the road to ineffable peace, the path to unspeakable bliss; I have found the way to the mountaintops, and I have begun to tread it. I know what peace and happiness are. I know how these may grow within me. And oh! that I could give to you the little that I have gained, so that you also might have the peace and the vision that have come to me!

Think of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace, the elder brothers of mankind: they who are much farther evolved along the path than we are — demigods (I will not withdraw the term) — demigods in human flesh, but yet men, and called by me demigods merely because they have become more manly and have evoked more of the inner divine powers within them than the average man is and has. They have found the path within themselves and have also evoked their own spiritual faculties and powers, and in consequence their whole being is suffused with love and compassion and pity and wisdom and knowledge, and

power is in their strong hands and is wielded with justice and in compassion for erring mankind.

The trouble is that most men and women so continuously look backwards. Is it not an amazing paradox, my Brothers? Everyone knows that progress is forwards and that forwards lies the Light. They know it well; you know it well. But we will persistently turn our backs on the light and look to what is behind us. It all reminds me of a humorous little story I read of the woofle-bird. Have you ever heard of the woofle-bird? It's a real thing, too. The woofle-bird is a real entity. I wonder if you will be able to find that bird after I read to you this little story. This is it:

Well, we heard a new expression over the radio, or new to us: the discovery of a new species in bird life, named the woofle-bird. It always flies backwards, and the reason is that it doesn't give a darn where it is going but wants to see where it has been.

Can you locate the woofle-bird now? Nearly all of us are woofle-birds. The average man doesn't give a darn where he is going, but he is continually looking backwards, so to speak, because he wants to see where he has been. This is because it is exactly the same with his thoughts. It is the same with our teachings — scientific, religious, philosophical, and whatnot. I desire to contribute my little mite to change this psychology. I was taught to give men hope and peace, to fire their hearts with a flame of holy, impersonal love; and that work I shall continue trying to accomplish until my time comes to pass out. I too may be a woofle-bird, alas, but at least I am trying to fly forwards instead of backwards; and I want your company.

Just like woofle-birds, we are so apt to think of the universe according to the stories that we have heard about it in the textbooks of our schools: a universe which runs by itself, all

alone, nobody knows how, which just came, which just grew — like Topsy. Nobody knows where it is going, and they think the universe doesn't give a darn where it is going. But just the same we are all looking behind to see where it came from, and we cannot see any farther in that direction than if we looked forwards along the path whither we are going. I suppose that you all have sat on the back platform of an observation car where you are always looking at the scenery that has passed. As for me, I like to sit in the front, at least to look forwards, and to see whither I am going.

The only way, my Brothers, for a man really to know where he is going and what he is, is by looking within himself — within his spiritual self. Study yourself — not the physical, picayunish, petty, little selfhood that makes our life a torment and often a hell, but the real inner man, the self within, which is a hero, which thinks sublime thoughts and has lofty aspirations towards the stars, and whose very being is love and wisdom. Study it. It is the god within you. It is you and the fountain of all that is great within you. O my Brothers, why not try to become at one with it? Therein lie strength, wisdom, peace, vision, happiness, ability to help, genius, growth. All that is great is there.

I have spoken of our scientific views, as well as of our philosophical and religious ones, as being those mainly of the past. I do not mean this discourteously, for there are some very eminent scientists whose gaze is forwards. No one more than the theosophist has a higher respect for the best work of our modern scientific researchers. Theosophists have a habit of saying that they are doing pioneer work for The Theosophical Society; and an increasingly large number of our great scientific thinkers are continuously approaching more and more to our age-old Theosophical doctrines — yes, approaching them more and more. I could recite instances to you of what theosophists have taught

during the fifty years last past, since the present Theosophical Society was founded, teachings which are now commonplaces in the highest scientific quarters. We are very happy about this.

But because science is growing, because our scientists are gaining new visions, are these facts reasons why we should stop at one point, when they themselves are moving forwards, and, staying at that point say: "This is the teaching of truth"? No! Let us move forwards with the great ones of science themselves, and keep our minds fluid, and thus advance. Or, if you want to be simple wobble-birds, where are you going to build your nest in peace, with the feeling that the place you select will remain forever undisturbed and yourself remain forever in undisturbed peace?

These scientists are doing wonderful work in many instances. My favorite reading at the present time is scientific works, and I read in order to provide myself with material for my lectures to my audiences, so that what I tell them as having been discovered by the greatest of scientific minds is true reports. And I have found this: that science *per se* does not exist, but that there are scientists. Science is a body corporate of collected facts, which body corporate changes with every two or three years. There is a continuous overhauling of the stock on the shelves, so to speak. Old things are taken down and cast into the discard; new ideas are put into their places.

In view of this fact, are you going to pin your faith to changeable theories, or are you going to think for yourselves, to find yourselves, to realize your oneness with the universe in which you live and of which you are an inseparable part, which is your closest and most intimate and most important concern? Think, I repeat.

I have before me this afternoon a few citations of remarks by some of the most eminent modern scientific thinkers. Let me

quote first from Sir James Jeans:

The new planet may compel us to abandon our views as to the origin of the sun's family.

Fine! Here again our scientists are learning something new, and discarding the ideas of our fathers and grandfathers. This is excellent! Most excellent indeed! But how about those poor minds who accepted the scientific teachings of our fathers, of our grandfathers in other words of the last generation or two, to the effect that the present constitution of the solar system will in all probability prevail forever and that it cannot be changed? Is not this a typical example of a scientific dogma? Jeans again:

The Universe is melting away.

But what does Dr. R. A. Millikan say:

Creation is always going on in the Universe.

And yet these gentlemen are two of the greatest thinkers in scientific circles today! Then comes Bertrand Russell:

There are various reasons for doubting whether Einstein's universe is quite right.

Well, why not so? Did anyone suppose that the wonderful Einstein was infallible and could not make a mistake and had reduced every possible fact of nature to fit into its proper niche in his otherwise scientifically fine theory of relativity, etc.? Obviously, the greatest human thinking apparatus can attain only to approximate truth. Einstein says:

Nothing is faster than light-waves.

But Professor G. P. Thompson utters a quite contradictory statement when he says:

The waves that accompany an electron do not travel with the speed of light, but much faster.

Sir A. Eddington says:

The electron is a dummy.

Sir J. J. Thompson:

The mathematician may play all kinds of tricks with space; with a few strokes of his pen he can create a space with almost any properties you may order.

And a writer, Arthur Mee, commenting on these remarks, says:

There never was a time when the men who lead in scientific thought were so doubtful of the ground on which they stand. . . . Let us entertain a philosophic doubt as to the inspiration of dicta on the heavens and their affairs, their constituents and boundaries, and their ultimate destiny, which pursue one another down the columns of our journals. . . . As Cromwell said, "Gentlemen, remember, in the name of God, you may possibly be mistaken."

Nevertheless, and after stating these few words of warning, let us also remember what wonderful advances our greatest scientific thinkers are making! They are now teaching that the fundamental thing of the universe is mind-stuff, consciousness. Compare this with the scientific teachings of thirty, forty, fifty years ago. Pause a moment in thought. Don't be woofle-birds all the time, but look ahead. Give wings to your creative thought, and think! Consciousness, life, is the heart of the universe, the essential of it; and all the rest is but illusion, appearances, phenomena. Sir James Jeans finely says — and I am quoting these men, so that you will have just what they themselves say:

There is a wide measure of agreement, which on the physical

side approaches almost to unanimity, that the stream of knowledge is heading toward a non-mechanical reality; the universe begins to look more like a great thought than a great machine. . . . We discover that the universe shows evidence of a designing or controlling power that has . . . the tendency to think in a way, which for want of a better word, we describe as mathematical. . . . It may well be, as it seems to me, that each individual consciousness ought to be compared to a brain-cell in a universal mind.

Compare thoughts like these with what our textbooks even today are teaching in our public schools and universities! Jeans continues:

I incline to the idealistic theory that consciousness is fundamental, and that the material universe is derived from consciousness, not consciousness from the material universe.

And the great American scientist, who did such magnificent work on the cosmic rays, Dr. R. A. Millikan, speaking at the American Association for the Advancement of Science, said recently:

Evolution raised doubts about the theory that the universe will come to an end through 'heat-death' when all the heat and energy of the suns and planets has been radiated into space beyond all recovery. Instead, it tends to help support the belief that new energy and heat are being created somewhere out in space, to replace that which is lost. . . .

. . . acceptable and demonstrable facts do not, in this twentieth century, seem to be disposed to wait on suitable mechanical "pictures." Indeed, has not modern physics thrown the purely mechanistic view of the universe root and branch out of its house?

It most certainly has. We live in a new time indeed; we live in a

new era; we are coming back to the old teachings of the archaic wisdom-religion of mankind, today called theosophy, that the universe is filled full, not only with consciousness, but with *consciousnesses*: cosmic spirits, super-gods, gods, demigods, etc. — call them what you like, — and then such beings as we men are, and then those beneath us; and where may you pause and say: "Here the ladder of lives begins and there it ends"? You cannot say so. There is neither beginning nor end in infinitude.

But this means that all entities and things fundamentally are consciousnesses — divine consciousnesses, spiritual consciousnesses, human consciousnesses, beast consciousnesses, plant consciousnesses, and even the consciousnesses of the stones if you like — each class of its own kind, but all evolving, all progressing, all changing because all are growing. Are men the sole exception, in being consciousnesses in boundless space? No, of course not. We men are just one family-host passing through the earth phase of our long evolutionary pilgrimage. Out of the invisible worlds into this sphere we come; and when we have done our part here, played our part on this stage of life, we leave it and go back into the invisible spheres, there to play other parts on other stages of life, but only to return here again whither we are attracted by what we have lived here and done here and been here in other lives.

Here we have sowed seeds which we shall have to come back to reap. We come together because we have loved each other and hated each other in other lives, because we have wronged each other and done each other right. We have built up links of karma, as theosophists say, links of destiny, together and among ourselves. And leaving all else aside, because my time for speaking is passing quickly, this is the explanation why those who love find each other again. I say literally that they cannot be kept apart. Yea, and those who hate inevitably also will come together



again; they cannot avoid each other, because hate in a sense has as strong an attraction as love has.

Therefore, build yourselves aright; build nobly; build well; build yourselves divinely. Adventurous lovers of life, dreamers of dreams, hearken! The universe is yours, for it is you. Its life is your life; its mighty pulse beats in your heart; its substance gives you your bodies and its consciousness is you. You are at one with the boundless All. It is you and you are It.

Question 1: Our modern scientists are beginning to dream of invisible or unseen universes. Is this also the teaching of theosophy?

It most emphatically is, as I have tried this afternoon and also on last Sunday afternoon to set briefly before you. Most decidedly do theosophists teach it; and furthermore we say that the unseen and invisible Universes are the roots of things, are the causes of things, on this and in this our physical universe. The real man, for instance, is invisible, unseen; and the body merely shows forth, expresses, what comes from the real man. The real man is a spiritual and intellectual energy; and the body does what this energy says: "Up, arm! Forward, leg! Point, finger! Write, hand! Think! Speak! Act!" Our physical body could be made so helpful a friend, if only we treated it halfway decently. Remember that ye are the Temple of the Most High and that the spirit of the divine dwelleth within you. You remember the saying in the Christian Scripture.

Question 2: If such an invisible universe exists, what kind of an affair is it? Is it like our own physical sphere, or greatly different from it?

It is both like and unlike. Our physical sphere is like it because it is a copy of it on this gross physical plane. The worlds and spheres

and planes of the invisible universe also differ greatly among themselves. But you know the maxim of the ancient Egyptian Hermes, one of the profound maxims of the Hermetic school. I repeat it to you today because it is true and it is so pertinent to my present remarks: "What is above is the same as what is below." Now, hearken to what follows: "What is here below is the same as what is above" in the spiritual worlds; the reason for this being that universal cosmos has one fundamental life, one fundamental law, one fundamental consciousness, which run through all and through every part of the All. Therefore every part reflects somewhat at least of the life and law and consciousness which permeate the whole. Must not every part shadow forth what the whole of which it is a part contains? Obviously.

Question 3: What relation has our physical world to a possible universe which is invisible?

It has every relation to it. Our physical world is simply the clothing, the garment, the outermost shell, the body, the reflection, the mirroring, of the inner universe, just as man's body is the outermost shell, garment, clothing, reflection, mirroring, of what he himself is within.

Question 4: Is consciousness different from matter in the universe, or are they one at root?

They are one; at root fundamentally one. Matter is, so to say, consciousness crystallized, passing through the material phase; or in other words monadic entities imbedding conscious entities passing through the material phase of their long evolutionary pilgrimage; and, conversely, spirit is, if you like, substance etherealized. Theosophists prefer to say that spirit or energy is the cause, and matter or substance is the effect.

The last question that I have to answer today is the following:

Is man a "lost child" in a chapter of cosmic accidents, or is his being here part of nature's scheme?

Let me ask you a question: Man is here; if he is not here according to nature's scheme, then how came he here? How exists he here? The obvious answer is that he is here because such is nature's law. He is here therefore harmoniously; obviously he is a part of cosmic being. Man is no lost child! Wash your minds clean of those old scientific and theological superstitions, for that is just exactly what they are.

Man is a god manifesting in a physical body but through an intermediate psychological apparatus. To put it briefly, he is a divine flame encased in gross substance or matter, manifesting feebly at the present time in his evolutionary journey the wondrous faculties and powers of the god within, but showing them nevertheless at least somewhat; for man can think, and thinking is a wondrous faculty; he can cast his thought beyond the stars; he can reason; he can draw deductions from premises; he can raise himself aloft on the wings of his imagination, and, guided by reason, soar beyond the confines of the polar star. Man can feel; he has compassion; he has pity for the helpless, pity for the hopeless, a yearning to aid those who need aid. All these are divine faculties. Even in so small a degree as these examples testify does man show forth the working of the god within him.

Now then, my Brothers, in closing I ask you to reflect that all that I have told you this afternoon has been laid before you not as a theory, not at all. That is not our claim; for we claim to possess the ancient wisdom-religion of mankind, which the most titanic intellects of the human race in other ages formulated into human tongues. What I have laid before you is for your earnest thought, for you kindly to think over and to judge of it, realizing the imperfections which your speaker this afternoon has in

attempting to give you the wondrous truth which at least in part has come to him. Take therefore this sublime system of thought; think upon it; ponder it; brood over it; and my earnest prayer, my Brothers, is that you may have the peace, the light, the hope, that have come to me, to us theosophists, who have found as I have found. To those who mourn are these words in particular addressed; for your tears shall be wiped away, and love, almighty, impersonal love, with its healing balm, will come stealing into your being to soothe and to bless.

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[Vol 2, No 29](#)

[Contents](#)

**Second Series: No. 29 (March 23, 1931)**

**OCCULTISM: GENUINE AND IMAGINARY**

(Lecture delivered February 8, 1931)

CONTENTS: Dual aspect of nature. — Wholesome teachings of the true theosophist. — Genuine occultists of the ages. — Occultism defined; its counterfeits pointed out. — Theosophical Movements throughout the ages. — Imaginary occultists. — Modern science and occultism. — On making claims. — Persecution of envoys from the Masters of Wisdom. — H. P. Blavatsky and her message. — The Tibetan term, hpho-wa. — Wisdom not picked from trees. — What is meant by occult powers? — Relation between psychic and occult powers. — Which first: the spiritual or the psychic? — Self-consciously at home in the universe.

A genuine Theosophical lecturer, Friends, is not a crank; and if he be a true theosophical lecturer he will not talk to you about things which are weird, uncanny, strange — which give you the creeps; for why should any real understander and therefore expositor of nature's great and wondrous mysteries, in however small a degree, have to rely upon the so-called weird and uncanny in order to produce a sense among you that back of what he says he is in communication with planes of being beyond the ordinary ken? Such efforts are of course purely artificial and proclaim an attempt to arouse a belief in what are probably merely fictitious powers in the speaker.

A theosophical lecturer, if he be truly such, will tell you of the wonders of the universe: what is hid therein, how the universe is builded, what its structure is, what man is and what relation he has with the boundless All — that universe — of which he is an

inseparable part. A theosophical teacher will tell you of man's origin, of the present character and nature of man's being, and of human destiny. In other words, his talks — his studies together with his audiences — will be descriptive: expository only in the sense of giving forth what he himself has learned.

I ask you to believe me when I tell you in all sincerity that the genuine theosophical teacher will lead you into realms which are not only very beautiful but will give to you teachings that are essentially wholesome, clean, and sane. This does not mean that such a lecturer, if he be indeed a genuine theosophical teacher, is ignorant of what may be called the dark side or night side of nature; but it does mean that he realizes that a study of nature's shadowy veils or shadowy side is one that should be deferred until a later date in the student's life, when the proper foundations, spiritual, intellectual, and ethical, shall have been strongly laid.

It is quite true that there is a side of nature which to us human beings seems horrible, just as there is a side to nature which is inexpressibly beautiful, lovely and sublime. Is it not thus also in ordinary human affairs? We see the dual nature manifesting even in man himself: we see in one man the hero, self-sacrificing, self-forgetful, strong, clean, and in every way grand; and in another man we may see the opposites of all these fine qualities, such as meanness, hatred, evildoing, and all the horrors that break forth when the lower nature of man is unleashed. So is it likewise in the Great Mother, nature herself: there is what we may for brevity call the light side, the spiritual or heavenly part of the universe, the causal roots of all that is lovely and harmonious and inspiring in our studies of nature. But we are likewise cognizant of the other side of natural being.

I tell you truly that the genuine occultist — a term which I will

describe and clearly define in a moment or two — is a most wholesome being to know, for he is more or less filled with the inner spiritual light, the light of the god within him. If he is a genuine theosophical occultist, not only can he communicate this light to others and arouse in them the same fire that burns in his own breast, and thus give to his fellows peace and joy, and arouse in them the sleeping sense of beauty, and above everything else that strange, wondrous, intimate feeling of man's essential unity with the universe, of his essential oneness with the All, but he is in duty bound to do this.

The position of theosophical teacher carries with it great and heavy responsibilities, and these he can never at any time ignore or pass by, nor would he indeed ever desire to do so, for his greatest joy is in helping others, is in giving the same light to others that he himself has received and in passing on that light as he himself has obtained it.

Show me one of the great sages and seers of the ages whose teachings have ever been uncanny, or have aroused hatred, or a moral rebellion of spiritual instincts in any human breast: you cannot point to one; and all the great sages and seers of the ages have been genuine occultists, genuine theosophical teachers of high degree, real thinkers — knowers indeed; because they have gone behind the veils of the outward seeming, each one with his own percipient individual consciousness, and thus themselves seen at first hand — seen nature's inmost structure, operations, laws, and all the wondrous inner beauty of things of which the inspired poets of the ages have sung. These great sages and seers have brought it all back with them on their return from this noblest of adventures, and have formulated their knowledge in human language and have taught it to their fellow men. Thus indeed have the great religions and philosophies and philosophical sciences of all past ages originally been delivered

unto men. For the founder or originator of every one of these great ancient systems of thought was a genuine sage and seer — called a *sage* because he *knew*, and called a *seer* because he could *see*.

*Occultism* is a much misunderstood and much abused term. If you look the word up in the dictionaries, you will almost certainly not get the proper definition of it as occultists themselves understand it, for the simple reason that lexicographers themselves are almost certainly not Occultists; mayhap you may find something about it in the encyclopedias, if they are generous enough to include this hitherto tabooed subject of thought in their pages; but it is extremely probable that you will find the same total misunderstanding of the real meaning of *occultism* in the encyclopedias that you will meet with in the dictionaries.

What then is *occultism occultism*, I say, is the study of the things which are occult, hid — realities in other words: not imaginary things. If we accept this definition of the word — and I assure you that it is the right and proper definition that occultists themselves employ — it becomes immediately obvious that occultism must be the most serious and important branch of human knowledge; and as genuine occultists always say that occultism is founded on nature herself, it therefore must be the very cream of natural philosophy — using the words natural philosophy in the sense of including all realms and spheres of the universe and particularly those of the inner, invisible, and causal realms.

Occultism is the descriptive science of the things that are causal, and therefore of the things which are in most instances invisible — nature's fundamental structure, operations, and laws; and anyone who studies these realities and who has reached some understanding of them from individual experience and insight and who delivers what he knows to his fellow men, is a true and



genuine occultist. But do not confuse this wide range of experience possible to human beings with merely one or two or three more or less disputed psychic faculties such as clairvoyance, clairaudience, thought-transference, etc. Do I believe in clairvoyance, for instance? Bless your dear souls, of course I do — but in genuine clairvoyance, using the word in the largest sense as meaning *clear-seeing*, insight behind the veils, inner visioning.

Every true coin, it is said, is or can be counterfeited; and if a thing were not true, in other words had no value, were not genuine and real, there would be no possibility of its being counterfeited, because no one would have a use for it. Therefore, wherever you see a counterfeit it is paradoxically enough a testimony to actual values existing somewhere which are the realities; hence, wherever you see spurious coin you may be assured that a hunting for the pure gold will not be unrewarded.

Occultism is the science of the things which are invisible. This grand science actually exists. It is an operative science but also a descriptive one. There is a way of going behind the veils of nature; there is a secret, a sacred, science, and this science is occultism. Occultism bears the same relation to theosophy that wisdom bears to its works among men. Occultism is that part of theosophy which pertains to the secret and sacred science; and theosophy is that part of occultism which pertains to the operations and descriptive work of the secret and sacred science among men. When parts of this secret and sacred science are delivered to men in formulated fashion, more or less openly and clearly so that any who are worthy may receive and understand, that is theosophy — the wisdom of the gods, as given to mankind.

All through the ages there have been searchers and seekers after this secret wisdom. The instinct of the human heart has told all

thinking and intuitive men in all ages that there is an explanation of the riddles of life, and that this explanation can be had, that it may be found. Always the problem has been the How, the Where. Blind sons of men, the great sages and seers have always told you the how and the where! Every one of them has given to you the hint, has shown to you the beginning of the path. Their message has always been, although variously voiced and differently phrased: "Come unto me, all ye that are weary with the world and heavy-laden with its sorrow, and I will give you wisdom, which is also peace. Look within, O son of man, for there begins the mystic pathway of Wisdom for each one of you, a pathway which leads to the heart of the universe, for each one of you in his inmost, in the core of the core of his being, is a divinity, a deathless god; and the very heart of the heart of the heart of the core of the core of every living entity is a spark of the eternal central fire; so that if you become at one with this spark, you are at one with the central fire, its fountainhead; and then all wisdom is yours, and all knowledge is yours, and all love is yours, and all power is yours."

This is so simple that a child may understand the rule; and every theosophical movement in every age has been founded with the main intent of bringing to men the realization of the truths of life — of the nature, structure, and operations of the universe of which all men are inseparable, individual parts. Every theosophical movement throughout the ages has been founded in order to bring back to man the realization of that which is essentially man's, to awaken in his heart his spiritual instincts, to light the divine fire anew in his soul, so that, inflamed with its glory, he may press onwards, find this pathway, and in following it to its end — which is indeed no end, for it is endless — he may reach the realization by individual experience of his complete oneness with the universe of which he is a child. That universe is you; every part of it is yours; it is your eternal home and your

everlasting dwelling place. There you are native; and not only are you, each one of you, the heart of the universe in the manner that I have just set forth when speaking of the inner god, but that universe itself verily is you yourself in your inmost.

Do you get this wondrous thought so filled with inspiration and hope? There, then, is the pathway. Beginning to tread it, you begin the study of genuine occultism; and it is dependent upon your own selves, your own souls, individually speaking, how far you advance along this pathway, which "begins" in you and which reaches forever and forever and forever in constantly enlarging reaches throughout the beginningless and endless spaces of Space. "Man, know thyself!"

Do you now begin to see the idea? Thy self, thy spiritual self, is the universe itself. The heart of being is your heart of being. You are in the universe, you live in the universe, always will you be in it, you cannot ever leave it, you have never been out of it, because you are its child, and here now you are. Is not this thought a very simple and easily understood conception? Do you not begin to catch a glimpse of the glory that lies back of it, and of the inspiration to a nobler and a grander life that it contains?

Any man who pursues this study — in other words, any man who follows this pathway — is an occultist, a genuine occultist; and precisely in accordance with the advance that he has made along this inner, wondrous Path of mystery and peace and wisdom and beauty, is his inner spiritual standing — whether he be a mere beginner on the path or a master of life.

This inner god within each one of you the mystical modern Christians call the immanent Christos; and the Buddhists call it the inner Buddha; and the Brahmanists call it the Brahma within — all different words for the same thing; and the European mystics always have spoken of it as the inner light.

Now anyone, however much his mind and heart may feel inclined to the study of things which are hid, who does not follow this spiritual pathway is not a genuine occultist. He studies a pseudo-occultism, indeed, in the sense of studying mysterious and weird things, but his occultism is imaginary; he is studying more particularly the curiously complex and perplexing psychological operations of his own mind. I do not deny and in fact I affirm that even this pseudo-occultism is a particular, albeit unimportant, branch of the genuine occultism, because the student in occultism must first of all study himself; but unless he has the larger teachings and is under the instruction of a genuine progressed occultist he is following a dangerous because misleading pathway. He is attempting to run before he can crawl.

Such men as these are pseudo-occultists, imaginary occultists. Some of them are sincere even if ignorant; but some of them also are frauds, conscious or unconscious — frauds, because claiming pretensions to a wisdom which they possess not. Are there not conscious and even unconscious frauds in other walks of life also? But because there are frauds shall we turn from the realities? Because there are bad men shall we eschew the company of the good? Shall we avoid the companionship of men whose hearts are noble, whose instincts are lofty, and whose word is truth itself, because we happen to know that there are men in the world whose hearts are ignoble, whose instincts are base, and whose claims are mere pretensions? Of course not! Even these unfortunate ministers of deception are unconscious and perhaps unwilling witnesses of the existence of the pure gold of the genuine occultism to which, despite themselves, they are drawn and which they attempt to copy.

Occultism, therefore, is the science of the things which are invisible; and this means, as I have already said, the coordinated

science of the structure, operations, and so-called laws, of universal being.

Do you realize that our modern Occidental science is becoming occultist? Do you realize that some of our greatest scientific researchers are distinctly and properly to be called occultists? They most certainly have a right to the name. They are penetrating behind the outermost veil of the outward seeming, and moving forwards towards another invisible veil which is behind the veil of the outward seeming. They have as yet advanced but a short way, it is true, and they really don't know whither they are going; nevertheless, they are students of the things which are invisible in nature's structure and in her operations and energies and laws; and by the definition that I have already laid down they are entitled to be called genuine — but unconscious — occultists. Theosophists don't call them by that name because we prefer to restrict this term to men who have been trained by genuine occult teachers who have been taught how to unlock the inner percipient self, so that it may, if one like, leave the body and enter into the very womb of natural being. This indeed can be done; it is in fact done every day; and those men who can do this are the genuine occultists, those who have the best and largest right to this noble title. Our modern scientists, wonderfully as they are working, are nevertheless unconscious occultists.

All the great seers and sages of whom I have already spoken, and their pupils who have been taught by them to do what I have told you — to unlock the inner self and to send it out into nature's heart — they indeed are the genuine occultists; and they never talk in public about it; they don't advertise themselves even. But there are rare exceptions to this rule. There are occasions, indeed, when the association of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace sends out one or more of their pupils with instructions

to proclaim the glad tidings of spiritual truth once more to the hearts and minds of men, and to do so with the voice of authority, as Jesus did, as the Buddha did, as Pythagoras did, as Empedocles did, as Lao-tse did, as Krishna did, as Apollonius of Tyana did, and as did many others; and as I have often before told you, their teaching has always been fundamentally one teaching, however that teaching may have varied in form because given in different ages to different races of men; it has always been fundamentally the same. It matters not at all in what language they spoke, nor in what age and under what conditions and in what circumstances they delivered what they had to say: the essentials were always the same — the same identic formulation of natural facts, and the same identic system of natural verities.

There are false or rather imaginary occultists in the world today, and in recent times they are growing to be a small host. They advertise themselves more or less openly. Can you blame the theosophists for often feeling suspicious, for doubting, when they hear these claims? I cannot blame them.

People say that I make claims. I have never made claims. They don't understand. I have never made a claim in this respect in all my life, nor could I be guilty of so gross a violation of the fundamental law of the occult training. I have, however, made certain statements which are true; I have made them because I was told to make them; but I didn't make them in order to be accepted as an occultist nor as a theosophical teacher, but in making them I realized that there was a profound purpose in my so speaking or writing, and that what I said I laid before the conscience of my hearers, which conscience would dictate the acceptance or the rejection of the statements made by me. I have asked no man or woman ever to believe a word that I say merely because I say it; I have said just the contrary and have said it very vigorously. What I may say at any time, I call upon you to

examine for yourselves, to search it, to analyze it; and if you find that it is good and true, then I ask you to hold to it with all your strength. Be honest; and if you find that what I say to you is wrong and false, then reject it, abhor it. It is the only honest thing for you to do. I have spoken of this on many other occasions, and what I have on these other occasions said I now refer you to if you are interested.

When H. P. Blavatsky, the envoy of the Masters of Compassion and Wisdom and Peace in our age, came to the Occidental world, did she come as one who had no authority? Did she write books and send them forth to be accepted or rejected, as merely interesting or curious specimens of mystical theorizing and without any reference to a greater authority by far than her own? Like all envoys from the Great Lodge of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion she laid her literary works on the altar of truth and left it to the conscience of her readers and to their intuitions to judge of it. But running all through her teachings was the declaration in substance as follows: "There is an association of great seers and sages now living on the earth. This association or brotherhood has lived throughout all the ages of past time. It will live on into the future. They are the guardians of the mystical wisdom of mankind, the wisdom and knowledge of the initiation chambers. I have come as their envoy. I have been sent to do a certain work in the world, a work embodying a sublime purpose. I have something of great value to give to you. I can show to you the pathway to wisdom and peace and love. Examine what I bring, and if it appeal to your heart and to your mind, then come — come to me. I stand ready to give to you what I myself have received; but only as I have received it may I in turn pass it on to others."

She was exceedingly chary of proclaiming anything that might have caused her to be thought of as a false or imaginary occultist.

Her whole instinct of decency and her character as shaped by her esoteric training revolted against such action, just as the instinct of every honest and decent person would so revolt.

Let me ask you, my Brothers, and in asking this I ask you to examine your own hearts before you answer: If you have something wondrously beautiful and grand that is for all the world and that is the common spiritual and intellectual heritage of mankind, are you going to be afraid of what people will say about you because you try to give this ineffable treasure to others? Are you going to hesitate and pause and turn from your task and refuse to give what you were told to give, merely because people will say of you: "Ha! ha! He makes claims. The world is sick at heart with false claims. That is just what ails the Theosophical Movement today — an abundance and a superabundance of mere claims and pretentious asseverations of possessing a mystical knowledge which others have not." No! You will give what you have to give to all who are willing to receive it in the proper spirit and you will give it honestly and courageously, and you will not turn from the task before you because you may fear unpleasant consequences to your own personal self.

Every new bringer of truth has been persecuted — every one has been especially persecuted (strange and melancholy paradox!) by those who were nearest to him, nearest in belief to his teachings. This also is a paradox full of pathos, that men from a sense of caution and prudence — noble virtues in themselves — and from a love of holy truth itself, hesitate, draw back, are suspicious, when they hear a thing which seems to them new, albeit beautiful and full of spiritual inspiration. Isn't it pathetic? Then comes Time, the great solver of all problems, the healer of all wounds, and pours his soothing balm over men's hearts and minds, clears away the mists, and finally brings understanding; and after the



death of the envoy, mayhap, they say: "Verily, verily, a son of the sun has come to us and we recognized him not." But even though such be the fate of most of the envoys of the great ones, in the end it matters not at all. The envoys come, knowing what they will meet with; but they come to give, and to give up their life if need be, to give of themselves, all that they have and all that they are, in the giving; for they come not for self but for others.

Yes, as you must now see, there are genuine occultists and those whom we may perhaps call imaginary occultists. Let us be charitable in our judgment regarding these latter. Some of these imaginary occultists are not at all bad men. Some of the teachings that they give are good. But whence take they them? Where do they find them, when they give them out? They have found them here, in the theosophical philosophy! That is the fountainhead whence they draw all the good that they gave: they find it all in the genuine teachings of theosophy as brought to the Western world by the envoy of the great teachers, H. P. Blavatsky — her whom I so love and revere for her life of martyrdom. She was a genuine occultist indeed. She was the envoy of the great ones, as others have been before her. She brought the teachings of the age-old wisdom-religion anew to mankind; and it is from this fountain of wisdom that men of later date have drawn for their own purposes.

If now they had given out these teachings and had said: "These truths have I drawn from H. P. Blavatsky; to her is due the credit, and also to them — the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace — who sent her forth," then I would not utter a word of blame. Indeed, I should even applaud. But when I find people taking credit unto themselves, and not giving credit where credit is rightly due, then I call such action a spiritual theft, and such people I qualify as imaginary occultists. The woods are full of them today. Our cities today contain a small army of them, and

our newspapers contain column after column of their advertisements. I have not the slightest desire to throw mud at anyone nor to utter a word of unmerited reproof. But my instinct of justice and my sense of right revolts sometimes when I ponder over these matters, and I feel that it is my duty to tell you the truth.

"Come unto me," said the Syrian initiate-teacher, "Come unto me, and I will show you the pathway to wisdom, to peace, to love, and to power." Such was also the declaration of the Oracle of the Delphic Apollo, who, in other words, said: "Man, know thyself: this is the pathway to wisdom, to peace, to love, to power."

And H. P. Blavatsky said, in language which no thoughtful mind could misinterpret: "Come unto me, my Brothers. I have been taught. Only as I have been taught am I authorized to give; but what I have been taught I can give, and it is my duty to give it."

She gave, and gave lavishly. What she gave was not her own; it is not mine own; it is not your own; because it is ours and belongs to all of us. It is the common spiritual and intellectual heritage of mankind; it belongs to you as human beings, to every son of man; and anyone who studies this common heritage of mankind and who follows the pathway that it opens, is a genuine occultist; and if he follow this pathway leading him to a greater chamber of wisdom and then later still to chambers more lovely by far, he is a greater occultist. The pathway, remember, is endless, for it leads over and through the spacious fields of the spaces of invisible space.

I have a number of questions before me this afternoon that at different times have been sent to me for answer, and as they all bear on the topic of our study I will now take them up seriatim.

Just what do you theosophists mean by occultism? Many

people use this word, but there seems to be little agreement among those who use it.

I have told you its meaning: occultism is the study of the things which are invisible, secret, sacred — the study of the inner structure, operations, powers, and so-called laws, of the universe. This is a definition which is exact and which is therefore true; and, of course, since man is an inseparable part of the universe, therefore the secret powers, energies, and operations of the inner and invisible human being form a part of the study of the genuine Occultist also.

For instance, there is a strange and mysterious energy in man, which few men consciously know anything about, and in connection with this there is a secret and wonderful key which enables him to unloose, to unlock so to say, the chains which bind him into the gross psycho-astral-physical encasement. There is this key by which to unlock the lock which locks this inner man in; and when the inner man is thus loosed or unlocked, he can go forth into the inner realms of being, into the secret and invisible places of space. In Tibet this power, this key power, is called the *hpho-wa*; it is called by other names in other places.

All races of people have known of this wondrous fact; they have thought much about it; they have wondered greatly about it. Their instinct has told them that it is a fact. When this inner man is thus unloosed, he can send himself or project himself or, if you like the phrasing better, he himself can go whither he will, not only anywhere on the surface of the earth or to the center of the earth or to the higher regions of our atmosphere, but also to the moon, to the planets, to the sun. It depends upon what part of the inner constitution of himself he unlocks. The spiritual part is at home in the solar spaces. Thither at will it goes like a flash of thought. The more material part of the constitution of man is

earthly and clings to the earth, but nevertheless is more ethereal than is the physical body; and he can send this more ethereal but yet material part of his being to any portion of our own rocky sphere that he may please to dispatch it to; and there he can function in all his powers and faculties self-consciously and with full volition and do what he pleases. His ability in each case depends solely upon his grade of advancing in the sacred science, which also means living the life.

Would you like to test this yourself? Would you like to do this yourself? Would you like to know by personal experience of these things? You can, if you will obey the law and follow the rules. Ah, yes, the same old stumbling blocks — laws and rules! But such is nature's way. There's the rub, my Brothers: obeying rules and following studies. And yet is it not everywhere the same in life? You can't even run an automobile without learning how to do it. How can you work a problem without learning the rules for its solution? How can you practice chemistry without having studied the science?

Here then is the secret: you must give yourself, if you desire to find yourself. Do you see the point? "Give up thy life if thou wouldst live." Do you grasp the idea? Give up the small life, the petty life, the mean life, the restricted life, the little personal life which shuts you in, which binds you close — give it up and follow the light of the star within you. Expand from personality into impersonality and take your place as a master of life! "The kingdom of wisdom must be taken by strength" — *violence* is the usual English translation. It must be taken by strong will. Wisdom cannot be picked from trees. It must be won by self-effort. Oh! the blessed thought that it is to be won, that it can be had, that there is in man this wondrous faculty of learning and of knowing, of being able to do all that is lofty and sublime! This thought itself, what an encouragement it is, and how strongly does it work upon

man to live a nobler and better life!

If people developed their occult powers would it not be a good thing for themselves and for mankind in general?

What do you mean by occult powers? If you mean what I have already told you, then I enter a caveat: it depends. There are powers within the human being at the present time which are invisible and which are evil. They are occult powers, just as there are also other powers within him which are lofty in spirituality, which are divine. Shall we talk about cultivating occult powers before we define what we mean by the term? No.

Cultivate the powers which give you freedom, which release you from the shackles and chains of the lower selfhood. Be free spiritually, and intellectually free; then you can be trusted with all the occult powers within you and within the universe surrounding you, of which you are a child, because then you will be a Master of Life, and all the powers that then you will have you will wield only for great and noble and unselfish and impersonal purposes.

But were I to say that everybody should cultivate occult powers merely because they are occult, I should be failing grossly in my duty. Therefore I say, No. You should cultivate your spiritual powers, yes; your intellectual powers, yes; your intellectual faculties, yes; but when it comes to cultivating the astral and psychic powers, then I say, No. The average man is totally unfit to have complete command of other powers than those which he already has; and as a matter of fact, those which he already has he cannot even control. Is this not true? Indeed, the average man cannot even control himself, the ordinary psycho-astral-physical powers that he commonly uses today; and then, forsooth, to have people talk about cultivating occult powers, simply shows that they don't know what they refer to. Their minds are clouded as

regards the facts. Look at the average man: I repeat that he cannot even control his own feeble little appetites.

Think the matter over; and you will agree with me that people who talk so glibly of cultivating occult powers are the people who are hardly to be trusted as guides, for before they can crawl themselves they seem to desire to teach other people how to run. And, mark you, my Brothers, what most people really mean when they speak of "cultivating my occult powers" is "I want to get power over other people." I tell you that such people are totally unfit to wield occult powers of any kind, for the motive is in most cases selfish, and their minds are beclouded with ignorance.

It is one of our theosophical duties to show men the way to wisdom, to peace, to happiness, to strength, and to spiritual power — the real powers, the powers which are safe and clean and sweet, which make a man lovable, which make him compassionate, which guarantee that power put into his hands will be wielded never for self but always in order to benefit others. Do you see what I mean? Before occult powers of any kind are cultivated, man must learn the first lesson of the mystic knowledge, which is to control himself; and all powers that later he gains must be laid on the altar of impersonal service — on the altar of service to mankind.

There are great men, noble-minded men, men who can be trusted; and they are entitled to have powers, and they have them. They are *chelas*, as we theosophists say; it may be unknown to themselves sometimes in the beginning, but nevertheless they are pupils, disciples, of the great teachers — of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace.

O my Brothers, unlock the divine in your own being! It is very easy to begin this effort. Aspire, forgive, love impersonally, control yourself, exercise your spiritual faculties, cultivate your

intellectual powers, do good to others; but always learn to love, to love more, to love still more greatly, to love more grandly still, and let your compassion reach even to the stars in thought and in feeling. Then you are indeed on the pathway to the gods. You are becoming a genuine Occultist, and some day great powers will be yours and the vision sublime — that vision which will enable you even while yet in the physical body to look within and beyond and to see truth face to face. Distance then will matter not, for you will be seeing with the spiritual eye.

What relation have the so-called psychic powers to what you theosophists call occult powers?

They have the same relation that baby talk has to the discourse of a wise philosopher. The psychic powers are the lowest powers of the intermediate nature in the human being, and we are exercising and using them even now — yes, now, and we cannot even control them. Men's thoughts are vagrant, wandering, uncertain, lacking precision, without positive direction, and feeble. The average man cannot even keep his thoughts in the grip of his self-conscious will. His weakest passions lead him astray. Such as these are psychic powers. It is man's work to transmute them and to turn them to uses which are good and useful and holy.

But there is one thing that he can do even now, and it is a grand thing: he can cultivate his spiritual and intellectual faculties and powers. Why waste time on these lower things which are so restricted and weak? "Expand!" is our theosophical teaching; and in this connection always remember: your spiritual being is coextensive with the universe. There is where you should live in thought. There is where you should dwell, and there is where you do dwell every time when you do a heroic act, every time when your thought and feeling rise out of the sphere of the restricted

and narrowed person: then you live in your spiritual being; and mark you the wisdom that comes with it, note the peace that you obtain: that strange and wondrous atmosphere which seems to surround all your inner being and which gives you such high self-confidence, such lofty self-trust in the best sense of the word. This is not vanity, this is not conceit, but it is a sense of your spiritual value as a man. In so striving in thought and will you gain other things too, but these I dare not speak of in public. But nevertheless these words point to the pathway.

You seem to discourage the development of occult powers. Why should we not develop them when the more power we have, the more we can do for humanity?

I have already told you my answer to this. It would be fine indeed if every man could infallibly control himself and in all circumstances. Then nature's own barriers would be let down, and the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace themselves would come before the public and teach — teach men how to unlock the mysterious treasury of the spiritual selfhood which all human beings have within them including powers of many and various kinds. Men cannot trust each other today, simply because a man does not trust even himself. Is not that fact true? What a pathos there is in it all! It is indeed pathetic.

Nevertheless human beings are growing; they are advancing; they are learning ever more and more; and in future ages, as I have so often told you from this platform, men will walk the earth like gods, and act like gods, because they will think and feel like gods. This will be because the god within will then be manifesting itself, just as even now it does in small degree when a man's heart is filled with pity for others, when he rushes to help, to aid those who call for aid, when compassion and love and understanding fill the heart full.



No, I do not discourage the development of occult powers, but I do discourage the development of powers which man as yet is totally unfit to control because he cannot even control himself. The occult powers are not at all wrong in themselves.

Ah me! What a restricted life most men lead! They don't know what they have within them; they have never looked within themselves; they have never felt themselves really living; they have never really lived; they don't know what they have locked up within them: a god! a divine spark of eternity!

Consequently the only way in which I can answer this question, is as it was answered before: We don't discourage the development of occult powers, but we say that the only occult powers that it is safe to develop at the present time and the only ones which will bring adequate rewards to men in their present evolutionary stage are the spiritual and intellectual powers; therefore that the rewards of cultivating these are enormous: increased intellect, increased understanding, increased intuition, increased power to love — which means to enter into sympathetic vibration with surrounding nature. Do you grasp what that means? Warnings of danger, sense of coming help, sympathetic vibrations! Grasp the thought! "It pays!" — a commercial phrase to a commercial age!

Recently in the Middle-West I heard a lecture on psychic phenomena by a noted speaker who does not call himself a theosophist, although he lectures on similar subjects. There were perhaps two thousand people present. His lecture was much more interesting than ordinary theosophical addresses, and that is why he had such a great crowd.

That's pretty good, I think!

There are many deep students who are intensely interested in the mysteries of nature, but the theosophists seem to be more

concerned with subjects like the divinity of man than practical occultism.

Isn't this an extraordinary inversion of facts! What can be more practically occult than the realization in human life of man's essential divinity?

You say we should seek the inner god. Can the god be reached in one bound? Don't we have to pass through the astral and all other intervening planes before we can mount so high? I am not opposed to your noble sentiments, but do you not begin at the wrong end?

No, my Brother, we do not "begin at the wrong end." We begin at the right end, we assuredly do. We begin at the end where all the great sages and seers of past ages have begun — at the beginning. You don't have to "pass through the astral and all the intermediate" stages. That idea is childish. Why, men and women of earth, don't you realize that every one of you is a composite entity: that there is a divine part of you, a spiritual part of you, an intellectual part of you, a psychic part of you, an astral part of you, and last your physical body? You are living now in your physical body, and your emotions and common thoughts are in the psychic or astral parts, and you cannot control either.

Now, our theosophical call to you is to live in the higher part of your being, which is there, which is waiting to help you, where all real energy lives and where titan forces reside: to live where life has its fountain, to live where intellect, intuition, the spirit, live.

I tell you that the powers that the man who lives in that part of his being wields and can wield at will are incomparably stronger, mightier in every sense of the word, than are the feeble little powers that man wields today because he lives only in the lower parts of his constitution. These mightier powers are the powers of

the spiritual nature. For instance, I know of one power which, if it were translated into physical action, could rend a rock by an effort of the human will, and in as brief a time as a snap of the fingers could pass all its atoms into the etheric blue. It is the spiritual powers which are the ones terrific in strength and energy, because they are the causal powers. Try to understand that thought.

Yes, seek the inner god, the divinity at your heart of hearts. This is the logical beginning of all occult and esoteric training, because it is the efficient way to do things. It is the path of least resistance; and when you have awakened the inner god then everything else is added unto you automatically. You have then become at one with the divinity outside of you. You are then self-consciously at home in the universe. All powers of wisdom and love are then yours.

I want to know if anything could be a greater and more practical occultism than teaching a man to become at one with the god within him — the source of all he is, the source of all his energies, of all his powers, of all his faculties, and the entity which ages of evolution will bring forth into visible manifestation as his future self. I ask you this question plainly. Gaining this, it will never fail you. It will be with you always. Even such a small thing as death then will have no terrors for you. You will then have become wholly at one with the universe.

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[Vol 2, No 30](#)  
[Contents](#)

**Second Series: No. 30 (March 30, 1931)**

**INVISIBLE WORLDS AND THEIR INHABITANTS**

(Lecture delivered February 15, 1931)

CONTENTS: Shifting brain-mind theories. — Unvoiced intuitions. — Theosophy no new-fangled thing. — Repetitions of key doctrines. — What is energy? — Means of cognizing inner worlds. — The pathway of chelaship. — Advances of modern science. — Consciousness is spiritual energy. — The cosmic ladder of life. — An eternal pilgrimage. — No ape blood in human veins. — Relation between visible and invisible worlds. — Spiritism not theosophy. — Is humanity an exception to universal law? — Destiny of the human dead. — Interchange of life-atoms. — Locations of invisible worlds. — The consistency of nature.

Friends: If I belonged to a certain class of people — and I don't — I would tell you that my habit of looking at my audiences for a moment or two before beginning to speak to them is because I desire to come *en rapport* with them — I with them and they with me; but actually I follow this habit of looking at my audiences in order to discern, if I may, within your faces, expressing itself there, and also in your eyes, some touch of the inner splendor, that inner light of wisdom and peace, which theosophists call the buddhic splendor or the buddhic glory, which arises from the deep fount of divinity dwelling in the heart of each human being. It is to this divinity within that I endeavor always to appeal.

I care not a snap of the fingers for the brain-mind asseverations, dogmas, ideas, and popular thoughts which govern the world today, because all these are but transitory and represent fugitive stages in mental development and they will pass. Not a snap of

the fingers do I care for them, although naturally, my Brothers, they are to be taken into account, because they form the one thing that any theosophical lecturer must meet — yea, and overcome — when he speaks to his audience: he must overcome these mental prejudices or views by the power of his strong human sympathy and by virtue of having an understanding heart.

As a matter of fact, we are *en rapport*. You and I already understand each other on inner planes. I have already told you in the few words which I have said to you this afternoon something that you won't forget, a verity that I repeat on every Sunday when I stand here on this platform: that my audiences are human beings and therefore are human in body, but that they are composed likewise of spiritual energies. It is these inner spiritual entities whom, with the inward eye, so to speak, I can see sitting in solemn conclave on the azure seats of the gods — a poetic way of speaking, it is true, but nevertheless declaring a great principle; for every son of man, every human being, is allied in his inmost to the very heart of the universe of which he is an expression; and all that is noble and fine in a human being, all that makes him truly man, springs forth from this fount of divinity within each one of us. It is to that fount that I appeal always.

Your brain-mind thoughts and theories change with every lustrum of five years. New brain-mind thoughts and theories then come into vogue, and the old ones pass out of fashion. Why should any theosophical lecturer waste his time in appealing to those brain-mind prejudices and fashions of thinking? A theosophical teacher, a theosophical lecturer, a theosophical writer, has truths to give to the world — not *his* truths, not *our* truths, but the truths belonging to the common wisdom-religion of mankind, which is as old as thinking men, which is ancient of days, and which is living even yet in men's hearts as unvoiced intuitions; and it is these intuitions which I wish to evoke in your

own hearts; it is these intuitions which I wish to bring out to your own recognition, so that you yourselves in thinking may see the truth, may see the light. In other words, I desire to appeal to the Master of Wisdom in the core of each one of you so that that Master of Wisdom may become your own preceptor, your own teacher, your own infallible Guide.

Every one of you has an inward eye, an inner vision; and you have forgotten it: most of you, many of you at least, have forgotten that you have inner senses with which you can contact the inmost secrets of being; and I remind you that the physical senses are but the outermost expressions of these inmost ones.

This teaching is not new; it is as old as the ages. Don't accept it merely because I tell you it. Accept it however if it appeals to you as true. If it appeals to you as false, then reject it, abhor it, discard it. All through the ages there has been taught in varying ways, in different times and to different races of men, the same fundamental system of natural verities, which today, formulated as we now have it, is called theosophy.

People really don't understand what theosophy is. So many of them think that it is some new-fangled thing, a new-fangled scheme of interpreting nature and man. It is not. Test it yourselves; examine the ancient literatures; read them; study them; compare them; test them; and then you yourselves be the judges of what you find. That seems to be a fair proposition. I say this because I have often told you that you will find as the heart of all these ancient literatures, embracing the religious, philosophical, and scientific thought of all past time this one fundamental original stream of natural verities or truths of which I have just spoken and which today is called theosophy.

What then is theosophy? It is the formulated system of natural religion-philosophy-science, embracing the verities of infinite

nature, and teaching therefore of the structure, operations, and laws of nature as they have been and are visioned, seen, experienced, witnessed, by all the great sages and seers of the ages past and present. All of them through an ascending series of initiations have sent the percipient part of themselves, the seeing part, the visioning part, the thinking part, the intuitive part, the self-conscious part, behind the veil of the outward seeming of nature which surrounds us. They have gone behind the veils into new and marvelous realms of being and there themselves at first hand have quaffed of the waters of truth. Drinking of those sublime Pierian springs, they bring back to their fellow men and formulate in human tongue what they themselves have seen and have found; and these various formulations were, in past ages, the original sources of the ancient philosophies and religions. All these great sages and seers having seen the same verities, having found the same truths, in the invisible spheres of being, and having formulated this same body of truths which they had discovered, it is clear then that behind all the literatures, within all the literatures, under the words, in the words, behind the words, you will find this one fundamental system of natural scientific religio-philosophy.

I have often before from this platform told you these same facts, first because they are very important and their repetition is exceedingly good because it accustoms Occidental minds to ideas which to these minds are relatively new; second, because these few fundamental ideas are very decidedly important keys opening up other more difficult and more recondite aspects or parts of our theosophical philosophy; and third, because on every Sunday when I speak to you from this platform, in addition to the many who come either frequently or continuously, I realize that there are always many newcomers among my audiences, and it is only fair that in order to make what I say more comprehensible I

give to those newcomers also the same key doctrines so frequently mentioned.

All through the ages, and in all the ancient literatures, even as we have them today, you will find the declaration made by the noblest intellectual thinkers, the greatest and sublimest spiritual seers, of the human race, that this physical universe of ours is but the outer garment, the veil hiding others within it or behind it, which latter are invisible to physical eyes, unheard by physical ears, untouched by any physical senses, because belonging to spheres of energies and matter which are not those of our physical world. All our various sense apparatuses are builded to contact only the physical world as it is around us at present. It is for this reason that we cognize this physical world by means of our senses.

This teaching of the existence of these inner and invisible worlds is a very, very old one. It is a teaching or doctrine that has stood the test of the most searching examination of the titanic intellects of all past ages. Pause therefore a moment in thought over this fact, for it proves that at the least, it is a teaching worthy of our most serious consideration. The greatest men who have ever lived have taught it; and they all taught their fellow men also how to find themselves the pathway so that for themselves they could prove what they were told by their teachers and preceptors, the great sages and seers.

Yes, verily, the invisible worlds exist; and this outermost world of ours is but the veil hiding the inner worlds, just as man's body is the veil hiding the energies, substances, which pulse and pulsate and work and express themselves through him. It is obvious, therefore, that these inner worlds are the causal worlds, that they are the causes of even what we see in this gross material physical world. This material world is the effect, the aggregate effects, of



what takes place in and on the inner worlds and spheres and planes. These inner worlds and spheres and planes you can call worlds of forces or energies if you like.

But what is energy as taught even today by the greatest of ultramodern scientific researchers? It is matter; or conversely we can say that matter is but crystallized or equilibrated energies. This is an old theosophical doctrine, actually as old as the ages of mankind, and it signifies that matter or substance on the one hand and spirit or energy on the other hand are fundamentally one thing. So, when one speaks of inner worlds composed of energies or forces, it is exactly the same as if one were to speak of inner worlds composed of substances of a more ethereal type than those which our sense apparatus can cognize on account of the latter's imperfect stage of evolutionary development having brought it to the point only of being able to perceive substances and energies on its own plane.

Furthermore, a human being *can*, by means of his inner faculties and powers, cognize and recognize these inner worlds. There is a means of leaving this outermost garment or veil, of leaving it deeply entranced, if you like, sound "asleep" if you like — call the condition by whatever name pleases you — but in any case there is a means of casting off for the time being this outer veil of physical selfhood, leaving it and going upon the most marvelous, the sublimest, adventure which it is possible for a human being to undertake — the journey in and through some, at least, of the invisible worlds, spheres, planes, call them what you like.

That is what the great seers and sages of the past have done; that is what was taught of and achieved in the initiation chambers of the past; and there are men on earth today who have gone through the tests, who have passed them successfully, who have been over the borderline and who have entered into the sublime

things of the inner life — yea, and also into those things which are not sublime, but which must also be known if man's knowledge of nature is to be complete. Theosophy shows you how to do this, among many other things.

Every normal human being has energies, faculties, powers, within him or her, that he or she wot not of; they wit not what they have within them; and do you know what is the master key to finding out what you have within yourselves, ultimately leading you to become a Master of Life? Do you know what this master key is, I ask? I have told it to you so often already from this platform. I now repeat it in the words of Apollo of Delphi: *Man, know thyself!* Do you now begin to understand?

You are a child of the Universe, inseparable from the universe, your cosmic parent. You are in it forever; you cannot ever leave it, being an inseparable part of it. You are throughout of its essence. You are born of its blood, born of its flesh so to speak, bone of its bone, life of its life, thought of its thought, substance of its substance, energy of its energy. Consequently, all that the universe contains you contain either in germ or more or less developed. Those parts of you, of your constitution, which yet lack development, you can develop; and as you develop these inner parts you come into synchronous vibration — to use a term popular today and easily understood — you become synchronously vibrating with those parts of the inner worlds which now you cannot cognize, because your present vibrations are different from them. Coming thus into synchronous vibration with these inner worlds, you immediately cognize them and recognize them and can begin to understand them. There is the master thought, the master key to achieving the beginning of this sublime adventure.

Know thyself, O son of man! For in thee lie all the mysteries of the

universe. Thou art its child; inseparable from it shalt thou ever be; for it is thou and thou art it. This is the pathway to all wisdom, to all knowledge, to all achievement. It is also therefore the pathway of evolution — of evolving, of unfolding, what is folded up or latent within you.

Do you know that you are in a certain sense inhabitants of these inner worlds even now? In this sense just as much so as you are inhabitants of this rocky sphere we call earth, a child, physically speaking, of the physical universe which surrounds us. Your spiritual roots pierce infinitude. You as a physical man hang like a pendant, as it were, like a jewel, from the root of your spiritual selfhood, the heart of the heart of you. The origin of this spiritual selfhood is the cosmic soul, the divine spirit. You in your inmost are a spark of that central flame, each one of you. Have I made this wondrous thought clear?

These few words point to the pathway sublime: knowing yourself, following the self of you ever more and more inwards, you become ever more and more in self-conscious connection, and you vibrate ever more and more synchronously with, these inner worlds and spheres.

Is there anything weird about all this, anything uncanny, anything cheap, anything that even the average man cannot at least understand the fundamental thought of? There is not. And yet these few simple key thoughts, key doctrines, that I have already laid before you this afternoon and on so many other occasions, are the genuine master keys by which you can open the most secret chambers of the invisible universe. What I have told you also briefly outlines the pathway of discipleship, of chelaship as we theosophists say.

Now, how are you to find this inner part of yourself? Is it by concentrating upon the part of yourself in which now you live —

upon this very part which shuts you out from the inner worlds, which hides the vision sublime: the personal selfhood which restricts and limits and condenses your thought around the petty brain-mind self? No! It is by casting all this aside, in order to go inwards, more and more inwards, to the spiritual center at the core of your being.

A most excellent rule to find this spiritual self is the following: Whenever you have impulses to indulge in selfish action, refrain. Whenever you seek purely personal self-advancement, and particularly when others lose by it, then "abhor" the temptation, as Shakespeare says. Ah! This alone is a spiritual exercise which requires a true man's strength, the willpower and energy of a true man. Weaklings cannot do it although indeed they may dream of doing it, and this dream is a good thing because some day they will pass from dreaming to action.

How merciful nature is! Imagine weaklings who cannot even control their own little petty personal passions and desires obtaining the mysterious keys to nature's wondrous secrets, and going into her inner chambers where they as weaklings belong not yet!

You know the old, old saying of the ancient sages: *Forget the self if thou wouldst find the self. Cast aside the limited, small, personal self, if thou wouldst find the impersonal, cosmic self in your heart. If thou wouldst find thy life, abandon thy Life — lose it.* Such also was the teaching of the great Syrian sage, Jesus, echoing the words of all the sages and seers of all the ages; and it is utter truth.

By following this rule of action you exchange the small, the restricted, the petty, those things which make you limited and blind — you exchange them, I say, for the grand, the sublime, the great, the universal, and come into self-conscious possession of your spiritual self, or rather your spiritual self comes into

possession of you, the personal man, and uses it as a vehicle through which it can manifest its transcendent faculties and powers. You cast off the garment of the petty personal selfhood and by so doing come into active possession of energies and powers now lying latent within you, which energies and powers are springs of consciousness and action which are the noblest part of your constitution, and which at present you know not how to use.

An ethical teaching, do some of you perhaps say? By the immortal gods, it is an ethical teaching! By the immortal gods, it is indeed ethics! I tell you that ethics are no mere human conventions however much man may clothe them in conventional thoughts, but are based on the harmony and love at the heart of the universe, which are the very essence of the universe, the very soul of the cosmic flame which keeps all things together, working together, hanging together, harmonious and cosmically peaceful. Ethics are very real because based on nature herself. Ethics means doing aright; right means harmony; right means law; and law is cosmic justice which is universal love.

I know by my own experience that what I tell you is true; and I too have found out how devilish hard it is sometimes to control the personal self. I know it well. I have been through it; and I have no blame at any time for any brother who fails. All I say is: Rise again! Set your face forwards, and march! Every time you fall, pick yourself up again and go at it with a newer and a stronger will. That is the way of success; and every one of you can succeed — can succeed in bringing out these wondrous faculties and powers within your heart, within your mind, within the inner part of your constitution — the spiritual and intellectual and psychic part; and you can then use rightfully and properly these various powers which thus you awaken, but only for impersonal ends; for the instant they are abused, then you lose

them. You lose them because they are of cosmic character and reach and therefore require a consciousness having a cosmic reach to control them.

The man whose convictions and thoughts are centered around his petty personal self cannot wield the scepter of the gods; but the god within you knows its own, and one of these days it will seize the scepter of power, it will claim its own — what is within; and thereafter you will live like a god among your fellow men, act like a god among your fellow-men, because you will think like a god and feel like a god. The divine within you will have come forth into active being in your life.

Look at the papers, the magazines, the remarkably interesting scientific books, that are printed today voicing the new dreams and visions and intuitions of our greatest scientific men. Consider how our greatest scientists are now teaching truths belonging to the ancient Occultism of the ages, today called theosophy. These great scientific men now tell us that the fundamental thing in the universe is not matter, but consciousness — mind-stuff some of them call it; and they say that the material sphere, the material universe, is but the flowing forth, as it were, from within of this fundamental consciousness or mind-stuff — in other words, that the physical universe is the resultant or consequence of the operations of the cosmic consciousness. Excellent! Most excellent is our thought; only theosophists, following the ancient tradition of the wisdom of the ages, say *consciousnesses*; for our teaching is that the cosmic consciousness is more truly explained by saying that it is plural, not singular, and that it is composite of all the innumerable hosts, multitudes, armies, hierarchies, of intelligent and conscious and self-conscious and quasi-self-conscious, beings living in these invisible worlds and spheres and planes and universes.

They are of all-various degrees or stages in evolutionary development, these inhabitants of the invisible worlds. There are those which (or who) are very high, and there are others which (or who) are very low, lower even than mankind; and the intermediate stages of cosmic existence visible and invisible are filled with beings appropriate to those stages or planes of the universe. Are you human beings so dense of understanding, are you so blind to what nature proclaims on every hand, that you cannot understand the significance of *variety*, *differences*, *differentiation*, in the universe? Are you so blind that you think that men are the only self-conscious, thinking beings in boundless space and the only ones that have existed or can exist throughout endless and beginningless eternity?

Mind-stuff is the fundamental essence of the universe — consciousness, others say. Are we human beings on this little dust-speck of earth the only products of this infinite 'consciousness'? What a fantastic perversion of truth and fact! Why, my Brothers, the fact alone that we men exist proves the rule of what I have said; for there is no explaining why human beings should be the sole exceptions in infinite time and space. One rose, as I have said before, proves the existence of other roses. One thinking man proves the existence of a race of thinking men. What nature produces in the instance she produces because it is merely a law, a rule, and consequently what she follows in the instance or in the particular she follows because it is the rule in the universal.

The consequence of this thought, then, is that just as our earth is populated not only with human beings but with all the hosts of entities beneath the human, just so also wherever nature builds mansions of life, she populates them; and the invisible spheres and worlds are filled with such mansions of life, each one carrying its hosts or inhabitants, each kind of inhabitant, each

kind of hosts of inhabitants is appropriate to the world, inner or outer, visible or invisible, on which it is, appropriate to and fit for life on the inner plane on which it is, on the inner sphere on which it lives and exists and has its being.

Life is universal. If life is not universal, then life is restricted. What proof have you of that fantastic idea? Some people say they don't know whether life exists on other planets. Of course they don't. You have not been asked to prove it. But merely because you make a statement declaring your ignorance, what kind of logical sense have you to suppose that such a declaration of ignorance is an argument against the opposite proposition that because life is here and life is universal, therefore it must exist elsewhere? Not only on the physical planets which we can see with our eyes, but in other solar systems of our physical universe and also in the inner and invisible worlds do hierarchies, armies, hosts, multitudes, of living beings exist.

Do you realize that our ultramodern scientists are today actually hinting at the existence of these inner and invisible worlds, perhaps without realizing what they are doing? Indeed, they are so hinting. They are beginning to talk about the possibility of an ether within the atom and therefore universal, because atoms are everywhere — an old, old, old thought, ancient as thinking man; and this etheric world is an inner world, an invisible world, a world or plane permeating all physical existence; and nevertheless it is but the shell of worlds still more ethereal: it is the garment of the cosmic life next in grade of ethereality to our gross physical sphere. It is what theosophists call the lower astral world.

But within this inter-atomic ether, there are other ethers, other and more ethereal grades of substance and being, leading directly inwards, or upwards if you like, to the realms of spirit, and spirit



also is substance; for, as I have already said, energy and matter are fundamentally one; spirit and substance are fundamentally one; and as I have already told you the fundamental essence of the universe is consciousness, which is therefore likewise substance, because consciousness is spiritual energy.

Often on other occasions when speaking here, friends, I have adverted, always briefly, to certain facts, to which I allude again today. I have tried to show you how the inner structure of the universe is: that the entire cosmic system of universes is of a hierarchical type, extending from what men call spirit, in other words from the most ethereal, the most spiritual substances and energies, "down" through constantly thickening veils of matter until we reach our own physical sphere; and then descending still lower than our physical sphere on the cosmic ladder of life.

Because we human beings happen to be living on this one particular rung of that ladder of life — on this plane, in this world, of this series of worlds and planes — we are living as it were on only a cross section of the real universe, comprising, as the real universe does, the inner and invisible as well as this outer and visible range of existences; and this outer and visible universe is visible to us only because our sense apparatus has been builded through evolution to cognize the vibrations appertaining to this physical sphere. That is all.

All these different worlds and planes and spheres are inhabited, whether they be visible or invisible, each with inhabitants of its own kind, who are entities that vibrate synchronously — to use this expression so popular today — with the energies and substances which make these inner and interior and invisible worlds. That is why they are conscious there as we are conscious here.

We humans are merely pilgrims on this plane, in this world; we

are merely staying here for a time, for one reincarnation on earth. We have been here often before in other reincarnations, and we shall come often again, but each such passage through this sphere is like stopping off at an inn of life. Yet the pilgrim passes on, goes to other worlds, to other spheres, to other planes, and does just as he does here, learning, learning, learning, in each; building up experiences, strengthening character, gaining wisdom, gaining understanding and, noblest and most beautiful of all, perhaps, evoking almighty love and sympathy out of the fountain of his inmost being, which fountain is his own inner godhood, the essential divinity which is his own heart of hearts.

Just as the Christians today, who are of a mystical type of mind, speak of the immanent Christos, the immanent Christ, or as the Buddhists speak of the inner Buddha, so do theosophists speak of the inner god. It is the same thought exactly in all cases, but expressed in differing words. All evolution, all development, all growth in every line and in every way, is simply bringing out what the evolving, growing entity has within itself — for the word evolution means just that: unfolding; and unfolding is growing, growth; and growth is evolving. As I have so often said to you from this platform, future ages of mankind here on this earth will have evolved, brought forth — that is unfolded — the divinity within; and this earth will be populated by a race of human gods in the far distant aeons of the future.

It is populated today by a race of beings — who are you and I — who are very far from being gods, and who are overgrown apes, some people think; but I don't so think; for there is not a drop of ape blood in human veins; although there is human blood in the veins of the ape, and that fact accounts for the ape's close physical likeness to man.

I have a number of questions this afternoon which I have been

holding for answer. The first of them is as follows:

What relation have the invisible worlds, that theosophists speak so much of, to our world?

Every possible relation. Our world is a part of the universe; these invisible worlds are other parts of the universe. They are as real on their own planes as this world is on this plane. These worlds are all interconnected, interlocked, interrelated, interworking, interchained; for all together they form one vast hierarchy on the cosmic ladder of life. Among them there are ranges of worlds which are far higher than ours, and there are other ranges which are inferior; but all are interconnected.

Our world is the result, the effects, of the lives, operations, entities, energies, of other and invisible worlds, just as a human body, a man's body, is the result, the garment, the effect, of what that man himself is, considered as an energy, as a consciousness; and consciousness is a substance, albeit spiritual substance. The real man is invisible; he is in fact a bundle of energies, which means a bundle of spiritual and ethereal substances. His consciousness is centered in the ethereal, invisible part of his constitution; and the human body is but the deposit, the lees, the bark — as I have already said, the effects — of the inner causes. The man himself is his inner energies, his inner substances, his thoughts, his feelings, his emotions; and these are energies; matters therefore are they, but spiritual matters, for energy and matter are one fundamentally; spirit and substance are one fundamentally, each expressing itself in its own way. Do you get the thought? Therefore man's body is the outermost expression of the inner entity, of the ethereal-spiritual entity. Man's body is the deposit, the lees, of what the man inwardly is.

Our physical sphere, considered as a physical body, analogically is exactly the same, making the necessary changes of facts and

circumstances; for it is the inner worlds, corresponding to man's inner constitution in his case, which are the causes of the physical universe, and our physical world therefore is the effects, the effectual world. Therefore our world has every possible relation with the inner worlds. It is inseparably connected with them all. As the monads of human beings leave their bodies, they go into these inner worlds on the pilgrimage, the wondrous adventure, that I have already spoken to you about; and again they come from these inner worlds into reincarnation here and thus become men again.

These inner worlds, therefore, are very closely connected with us; they are the sources of the movements of the physical sphere, just as the sources of the movements of a growing thing, of a plant, of a beast, of a man, lie in the invisible atoms which compose that growing entity. Growth is from within outwards. Yes, a lovely flower is born out of the invisible realms into its physical expression; it is an expression of energies, energies of a certain type, as this lovely pink flower before me is representative of one type of energy, and this other flower is representative of some other type of energy, and these other flowers at my side again represent other inner energies.

Thus it is that men differ among themselves in character, for each one is the expression of the energies and substances of an individuality, of an ego, which produces the differing characters that men have; but all such productions are from within outwards. A lovely rose, the gentle violet, are expressions on this plane of the lovely rose and gentle violet on the inner planes working themselves outwards into this physical plane. So also as regards a human being.

The real men are invisible, my Brothers; and please don't confuse what I am telling you this afternoon, and what I have already told

you, with the doctrines of certain people who are today very numerous in the world and for whom as individuals I often have high respect: I mean the Spiritists. I say not one word in criticism of their beliefs; they have as much right to their beliefs as I have. I only ask you not to confuse our theosophical teachings, the teachings of the archaic wisdom-religion of mankind, with the teachings of modern Spiritism. In many instances there are close likenesses between the two, but there are also very fundamental, very radical, differences.

If these invisible worlds exist, are they inhabited, and what kind of inhabitants have they?

*"If these worlds exist."* Do you doubt it? Why does the questioner say "if"? I have known philosophers to say, "If man exists." Do you doubt the fact of his existence? Now, such views as those implied in this question come from the state of thinking and the kind of thinking common and popular in the times of our fathers, of our grandfathers and great-grandfathers, who thought that they knew pretty much all that the universe could tell them, and that modern Occidental science had said very nearly the last word possible of all human experience. And then come along Roentgen, and Becquerel, and Mme. Curie, and Einstein — and among them all the props are completely knocked out from under the structure of the sacred science of the previous age. Ideas new and startling to the Occident came into men's minds, and they began to wonder. Now they are beginning to say, "Why, these ideas which seem so new are in reality very old; they have been taught for ages." Yes indeed, in modern times these old ideas have been given a new expression with new turns; but that is all. It is verily so.

Modern scientists like Eddington and Jeans and Planck and Einstein, and the great American Millikan and the rest of them —

I mean the greatest men among them — are beginning to talk about consciousness being the fundamental reality of the universe; but may I ask you: has no one ever heard that thought before the present day? Indeed yes; for it is the commonest philosophical postulate that the race has ever known. Our modern great scientists are beginning to rediscover what in ignorance our forefathers had discarded; and all this is very fine.

May I however remind you, my Brothers, that theosophists say, not consciousness, but *consciousnesses*; for the world is filled full — the universe, boundless space, with all the universes within it — is filled full with hierarchies, multitudes, hosts, call them what you like, of conscious, sentient beings, more or less like us humans; some of them are higher, and some of them are lower, than we; but all are advancing, all are learning, all are growing, all are evolving, all are pilgrims on the evolutionary journey from eternity to eternity.

Man has no unique position at all in the cosmic scheme. Humanity is but one hierarchy, one kind, one type, of beings, among the hosts of hierarchies with which the Universe is filled full. The Universe, my Brothers, is filled with gods — gods of all kinds, of all classes and types, high, low, intermediate; and beneath them, less evolved than they, are other armies, other hierarchies, classes, hosts, of entities, which we may perhaps call demigods, or cosmic spirits; and then again beneath these in evolutionary progress, are still other hosts, until we reach men and beings like men on other planets in our own solar system and in other solar systems; and then beneath men there are beings like the beasts and the plants and the rocks; and beneath these again are other beings in the invisible worlds not so evolved even as they are.

"If these invisible worlds exist, are they inhabited?" Indeed they

are inhabited just as ours is. I would very much like to hear some time the explanation of some man, or woman mayhap, who would attempt to prove this thesis: "Man is the only self-conscious or conscious being in the Universe, and the planet Terra is the only inhabited globe in boundless infinitude." He would have no easy task, would he? In fact the thesis is something that he could not prove. Among other things it would mean saying that this globe and its mankind, its inhabitants, are the only instance in infinitude and in eternity of the existence of living, conscious, self-conscious creatures. The thesis in fact is folly.

I tell you the very fact that men are here proves the existence of similar beings, entities, elsewhere. One man proves humanity; one rose proves a garden of roses — aye, and many gardens of roses. One speck of gold proves the existence of gold elsewhere.

"What kind of inhabitants have they?" All kinds of inhabitants. Don't think for an instant that the inhabitants of these other worlds must be just like men in shape, with two eyes and a nose and a mouth, two ears and two hands and two legs, and all the other appurtenances. Not at all. Our physical bodies are shaped as they are shaped merely because our evolutionary growth has brought us to this particular present type. In other ages even our physical bodies were far different from what they are now; and in future ages our physical bodies as then they will be will be far different from what now they are. Our bodies are changing slowly, just as and because of the fact that the inner man is changing slowly — improving, evolving, growing, because continuously bringing out in fuller measure what is within. In fact, these inner and invisible worlds are populated with beings in each case appropriate to such world or sphere or plane, just as is the case with men on earth.

In the spiritual worlds, the beings there are more spiritual than

we are; in worlds less ethereal and less spiritual, the beings there are less ethereal, less spiritual, than the former class; and, furthermore, many of these worlds, inner, invisible worlds, are populated by entities far grander than man now is or than he will be a thousand million years from now; and, contrariwise, there are other worlds which are populated by entities less progressed than man is. It all is a matter of relativity. There are worlds of many kinds; but each is populated or inhabited by its own kind, appropriate to it, with bodies appropriate to it, just as is the case here on earth.

Are these invisible worlds and planes populated by the human dead?

No! Immortal gods! Just think for a moment: infinite space, infinite time, to be populated by the offspring of this little dust speck! — existing for perhaps only a few thousand millions of years in the past which is as nothing in infinite duration! The idea is ludicrous. Nevertheless the human dead are well cared for. I would that I could draw aside the veil hiding our esoteric teachings and tell you somewhat of our esoteric doctrines which are so satisfying in these respects and so beautiful; but I cannot do this. I can only repeat the words that you have already heard this afternoon: "Ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and knock aright, and it shall be opened unto you."

The human dead are at rest; they live in a state of the utmost peace and bliss, in happiness beyond all human compare; they toil not; they labor not; there are no tears in their eyes; they are in perfect rest, resting in ineffable peace and bliss, until they return to this earth — children as they are, physically and psychically speaking, of this earth — until they return to this earth again to take up human bodies anew, to work off old debts, to pay off old obligations, to help those they have injured, and



also to receive the help that is rightly due to them from their fellow men.

These inner worlds and spheres and planes are not populated by the human dead. These last are at peace. There is, however, an intercourse — continuous, steady, uninterrupted — of other classes of entities between our world and the inner worlds. It is all very wonderful. It is a study which is unspeakably fascinating. For instance, the life-atoms of all entities on whatever world they may exist are interchanged; but also there are other entities besides life-atoms which furnish the intercourse, if you like the word, as among the various worlds and spheres invisible and visible.

There is a part of man's constitution which is an inhabitant of every sphere in our own solar system, visible or invisible; and this part of our constitution we call the monad. But that part of us which is human, that is to say which we call man, the human being — the child of the monad — it rests after death and is at peace, until it comes to earth again.

Where are these invisible worlds located?

My Brothers, they are everywhere, literally everywhere. This very air which we breathe is permeated, is filled, with worlds, spheres, planes, which we cannot see nor hear nor taste nor touch, because our sense apparatus is not fitted for such cognition, not evolved to do it. Even as a man moves, as he walks the street, he passes through, it may be, the buildings, the countries, the lakes, the hills, the dwelling places, of entities inhabiting some of these inner worlds.

Do you think that the way in which we live on this earth and the manner of our existence here is in either case an exception in the universe? Clear your minds of that moldy old superstition that

our world and that man are exceptions in the universe. We and our world are but instances of the universal rule, and merely exemplify it and prove it by the fact that we are here.

Remember the old maxim of the Egyptian Hermes: "As it is above, so is it below. What is below, the same is above." The reason is that universal nature's, fundamental law prevails everywhere, therefore providing a uniform rule of life, consistent, coherent, equal, the same everywhere; because this fundamental law permeates everywhere. This is a simple thought, yet it is a wonderful key for your hours of quiet meditation.

These inner worlds are everywhere, I say, and they are of many and various kinds. Some of them are so near, so to speak, to this, our own physical world, that the veil separating them from us is almost diaphanous, extremely thin. Mankind in the future will develop a new kind of seeing eye, the inner eye, and a new kind of inner feeling or sense, and then he will not only see and become conscious of these beings of the inner worlds, but he will be able, so to speak, to reach out a tactile finger and touch them.

Is it possible for human beings to have personal contact with the invisible worlds?

Nature's laws are very merciful and kindly. The average human being is utterly unprepared to have any conscious intercourse whatsoever with these inner worlds. He could only have such conscious intercourse at great risk to health — mental, psychical, physical. These inner worlds are ruled by energies of their own, and are inhabited by beings of their own — some friendly to man, very friendly, others hostile, deadly hostile. That fact need not surprise you. See how you men, men with consciences, ill-treat and mistreat the beasts — your own lower brothers. No, nature is merciful; she prevents the great multitude of men from having any cognition or intercourse with these invisible worlds, filled as

they are with entities which in some cases are friendly but in other cases unfriendly, and with energies and powers that no human being, unless initiated, would know how to control, and which could easily tear him to pieces.

But there are some human beings nevertheless who can have this intercourse at will: some human beings who have followed the pathway of the inner god, the pathway to wisdom unspeakable, that I have already spoken to you about — and these are the great men of the human race and their disciples, their *chelas*, their pupils. These indeed, in the initiation chambers, have gone behind the veils. As a matter of fact they must do it, so that they may know, and knowing protect their weaker brothers. They indeed have followed this wonderful pathway leading ever more within. They have followed the pathway of initiation, which is the pathway to the gods; and they have been on the most wonderful adventure that any human being can undertake. They have left their humanity behind and, traveling through the spheres, have confabulated with the gods.

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[Vol 2, No 31](#)  
[Contents](#)

**Second Series: No. 31 (April 6, 1931)**

**THE SECRET DOCTRINE OF THE AGES**

(Lecture delivered March 22, 1931)

CONTENTS: The pathway to the Mystic East. — Extract from Browning's *Paracelsus*. — Were the Mystery schools of antiquity institutions of priestcraft? — True nature of uncivilized tribes of today. — The complexity of their languages. — Modern evolutionary theories at fault. — The Chinese and Egyptian languages. — The case of the Negroes an exception. — Similarity of traditional teachings. — Study of folklore profitable. — Preparedness essential to initiation. — Why are Teachers necessary? — H.P.B.'s words on the necessity of teachers. — Guerdon of a true theosophist. — To those who object to being joiners. — Consecration of the life to service.

Speaking to hungry hearts, human hearts which have suffered and through suffering have learned to hunger for more truth and to understand somewhat; speaking to human souls which have undergone the pain of learning and through undergoing that pain of learning have had the inner senses opened at least somewhat; such speaking is not an easy task, Friends. But there is a lofty delight in it — a feeling that I also vibrate in synchronous harmony with the human hearts and minds to whom I speak; that I, too, have gone along the pathways of life down into the valleys of suffering and pain, and out of them have climbed up, up, still farther up, along that mystic pathway concerning which I have so often spoken to you, which leads to that Mystic East which is not a geographical locality, but which is found within you: the Mystic East towards which all human spiritual feeling is orientated, that

inner directing power of the spirit, which leads us, if we follow faithfully its mandates, directly to the heart of the Universe. Any human being can follow this path, and indeed every human being must some day follow it; for there is no other path to truth than that which the individual himself treads, the path of self-learning. It is the mystic pathway leading to the Mystic East.

It is because, Brothers, Comrades, and Friends, my feet have trodden this pathway a little that I can speak to you, knowing that what I say from an understanding heart will reach other understanding hearts also, and that you will vibrate sympathetically to what you hear. Every one of us human beings is a pilgrim on this pathway; every one of us is treading it always; and think of it, Friends, Comrades, and Brothers, as a pathway which has had no beginning, for it is the pathway of our spiritual essence — I mean, in other words, that that spiritual essence of us is itself the pathway — our innermost consciousness. This pathway, in other words, is a developing, an evolving, a bringing out, of what is locked up within; in fact, it is the pathway of learning, of growing, of becoming, and finally of being.

"There is a center of truth within us all," as Robert Browning, the English poet, so beautifully puts it. Let me read to you a few lines from his *Paracelsus*:

Truth is within ourselves; it takes no rise  
From outward things, whatever you may believe.  
There is an inmost center in us all  
Where truth abides in fullness; and around,  
Wall upon wall, the gross flesh hems it in,  
This perfect, clear perception — which is truth.  
A baffling and perverting carnal mesh  
Binds it, and makes all error: and to KNOW  
Rather consists in opening out a way

Whence the imprisoned splendor may escape,  
Than in effecting entry for a light  
Supposed to be without.

Browning in these beautiful lines merely echoes the teachings of all the sages and seers of all the ages. "Man, know thyself," said the Delphic Oracle of ancient Greece — voicing a truth that I repeat to you again and again and again and again from this platform; because in knowing yourself, ultimately you will know all others and all things. Your self is the spiritual child of the universe; you are therefore an inseparable portion of that universe; you are rooted in it; you are of it: blood of its blood, bone of its bone, essence of its essence, life of its life; and therefore, in knowing yourself, you come through endless stages of greater learning to know the outside universe; and therefore we see how it is that truth is within us — the entity cognizing truth is within ourselves.

But do you think that the learner on life's pathways knows all or even can know all without help? The very fact that he learns, that he is growing, that he is a learner, implies the necessary existence of teachers, preceptors, guides, helpers, on the upward way. Isn't it so even in human existence and in all walks of our human life? Men must learn as well as grow, and the learning is within, because the consciousness is within, and because the pathway is within, and hence all that is great and noble, sublime and holy, in human existence takes its rise within because the roots of it all are within. But in his opening-out process, which is the real meaning of evolution, the human race needs guidance, it needs teachers, it needs preceptors, it needs human living signposts, so to speak, pointing the way; and this verity has been proclaimed in and by the history of every religious and philosophical organization which has ever existed on this earth.

This is the heart-meaning of the great teachings given in the past by the great seers and sages, the teachers, the leaders, who were and are the preceptors, of their fellow men; and these great sages and seers were and are merely men who have advanced farther and more quickly than the average of men — a simple truth that I tell you again and again and again and again from this platform.

Do you think that you could learn anything unless you had the capacity to learn it? This capacity itself implies the existence of growth, of improvement, of evolving, of bringing forth what is within the learner and grower; and it is the teacher's sublime duty to bring forth the imprisoned splendor. He cannot put it into you from without; just as Browning sets it forth so finely, it is in you already; and every man and woman here, in fact every human being, is an imprisoned splendor — a god working poorly, oh! so poorly, through human flesh, through the human mind, but in its own realms a god nevertheless; and all evolution, all development, all growth, all progress, in human life is simply the bringing out more and more in ever greater measure the spiritual splendor imprisoned within every human being.

You have heard of the great Mystery schools of antiquity. What were they? Institutions of priestcraft? No; pity the Occidental scholars whose mental habit it has been to suppose that. They judge from their own unfortunate experience, my Brothers. But theosophists say, judge by your self; judge by the heart-hunger of your own heart for truth, for light, for peace, for a greater and a larger life. Judge by your own soul, and you will not be so ready to accuse other human beings of a desire willfully to deceive their fellow humans.

No, I repeat: the ancient Mystery schools were founded by the great sages and seers of whom I have spoken — in each case founded by one or more of these great sages and seers; and in

those Mystery schools of the archaic wisdom of antiquity was taught the sublimest knowledge that men can have: first, learning to know yourself, the imprisoned splendor, the god within you. Quoth the Delphic Oracle: "Man, know thyself!" Spiritual self-knowledge is the royal road, the road leading to the Mystic East.

In addition, in these archaic schools, there were taught the wonderful teachings concerning the nature, structure, and operations of the universe in which we live and move and have our being. These great sages and seers themselves had been initiated by their own greater teachers; and before these great sages and seers had become what later they became, when undergoing the initiatory ceremonies they had sent the percipient, the perceiving, the conscious, part of themselves behind the veils of the material universe, yea, into the very womb of cosmic being; they had sent the cognizing consciousness, each one of himself, deep, deep, deep into nature's heart; and bringing back what there they had discovered, what there they had found out, what there they had learned, they taught these sublime truths to their fellow human beings — to each neophyte or disciple or pupil according to the latter's capacity to receive.

My Brothers, as there is but one fundamental truth in the universe, simply because there is but one boundless All, all the great sages and seers therefore of necessity taught that one truth: felt it, experienced it; and hence the teaching of all of them was one in every essential characteristic. No matter in what age these great seers and sages taught, no matter what the languages they used, no matter what the figures of speech that they employed, in each and in every case the essentials of their teaching were the same, because the truth was one. This truth regarding the nature, structure, operations, and laws of the boundless All, visible and invisible — that not only *was* but today *is* the secret doctrine of the ages, the archaic wisdom-religion of mankind, of which faint



echoes even today are heard in every human mind which is not wholly asleep and in every human heart which is not dead.

Do you imagine, you men and women of the Occident, that you are the only human beings who have ever felt aright, who have ever thought deeply, who have ever cognized truth at first hand? Of course not. We of the present day are merely the children of past ages. I tell you that all the so-called barbarous and uncivilized and so-called savage tribes of men on earth today are not at all young tribes, young peoples, just beginning their evolutionary journey towards greater things: they are old with the ages, and are now decrepit if not dying out; they are races whose representatives experienced the lofty heights and culminations of their own respective racial glories in ages far past; and of those once proud and haughty races, in their respective times the kings of the earth, there remain today but their degenerate descendants, whom we men of the West in our proud Occidental fashion call savages and barbarians — and really that is what they now are.

Do you know that some of these savage and barbarian races ages ago constructed languages which can stand on a par for flexibility and ability to express the most abstract operations of the human mind — can stand on a par, I tell you, with the most highly developed languages of the white men — Sanskrit and Greek, for instances; and yet these present-day barbarians and savages still speak, however inadequately, the tongues they have inherited from their great sires of ages ago; savages, barbarians, at present incapable of using adequately the linguistic instruments for expressing human thoughts that their ancestors used so grandly. There are the languages still existing as linguistic fossils. How did it happen that savage and barbarian peoples come to possess languages so intricate in grammatical structure and so evolved in certain instances as instruments for the expression of

human ideas and conceptions? How does it happen that these races still speak, however inadequately, tongues which contain the power of expressing the most recondite operations of the human mind as successfully as do the majority of our European languages today?

According to modern evolutionary theories these savages and barbarians are young races, and yet here in the instances which I have in mind some of these so-called barbarians and savage peoples possess languages, instruments for expressing thought, and seem to have always possessed them, which are perfectly fit and capable of voicing the profound and abstract conceptions of the human intelligence. The theory and the fact when thus brought together are seen flagrantly to contradict each other. There is something wrong in the modern evolutionary theory because such supposedly young peoples should be speaking languages of the most elementary character linguistically speaking, and the contrary is the case. Is it not obvious that these savage and barbarian peoples are descendants of once mighty and highly intelligent sires? That they are the mere remnants of races once possessing high spiritual and intellectual attainments and who thus gave birth to languages adequately and fitly expressing the inner spiritual and intellectual faculties?

It is time, evolution, growth, the working and strivings of the human soul, of the human mind, which develop languages fit to express the higher powers of the human mind; and this takes time and could only have been accomplished as the ages flowed by into the ocean of the past. This is the real explanation of the fact that some of these dying languages are such marvelous instruments of human expression, and why some of them are highly complicated in grammatical syntax, far more so indeed than certain ones of our present European tongues.

Again, mark you: look at the languages of some of the other peoples — the ancient Egyptians and the Chinese, for instance, all peoples which have evolved high and intricate civilizations. The ancient Egyptians and the Chinese spoke languages formed mainly of linguistic roots alone, languages which are without the linguistic graces of the highly inflected tongues of the earth. Such languages as these two last show all the elements of linguistic fossils which have come down, as in the case of the Chinese, to our own day. And yet even they, the ancient Egyptians and the Chinese, speak or spoke languages which enabled their users to express all the thoughts, however complicated or intricate, that we moderns can with our own highly inflected tongues.

What does this all mean? There are barbarians using languages incomparably more evolved, linguistically speaking, than the Chinese, for instance — a family of tongues composed of verbal roots only; and, on the other hand, the tongues of these barbarians in certain instances compare favorably from the standpoint of linguistic evolution with the highly inflected ancient Greek and Sanskrit. The reason is that they whom at present we call barbarians and savages are, as I have already told you, remnants of races who long ago passed their racial culmination. Their records lie in the far distant past, and only the ethnological remnants of once great peoples survive today. But the Chinese and the Egyptians spoke or speak tongues which ceased their evolutionary development and survive to our own day as linguistic fossils in an elementary stage of growth.

There is one great racial exception to my statement that all the so-called savages and barbarian peoples are remnants, remainders, of former great races, and the racial exception to which I refer is the family of peoples originating in Africa — I mean the so-called Negroes. Generally speaking, the Negroes are a race with a future; instead of being a mere racial remnant, they are a race which has

been asleep and which only now is beginning to move rapidly along its own evolutionary pathway of development. The Tibetans also are in a similar category in the sense that their racial development lies largely before them instead of lying in the past. Races evolve, just as individuals do.

Mark you here a noteworthy proof of this statement: wherever the white man goes and thither carries his civilization, his teaching, his so-called physical comforts and conveniences, he brings disease to the barbarian and savage peoples. They cannot long stand his presence. They wilt, they fade, and die out. This is because the white man is the dominant power; and these descendants of the ancient races yield before him and drop away. The white man's diseases seize upon the bodies of these descendants of once great sires, and pestilences and epidemics brought by the white man sweep them away by the thousands.

But, contrariwise, what happens in the case of the Negro? Not only can he successfully withstand the white man's influences and the white man's presence and power, but he can even live together with the white man and hold his own — he can live on and grow and prosper, develop and learn. The reason is that he belongs to a young racial stock; the physical and racial vitality runs strong in the Negro race; he can as a rule withstand the attacks of the white man's microbes, so to speak — both psychological and physical.

These old and now degenerate peoples all have mystical and religious records and sodalities which have come down through the ages, passed down from father to son, from priest to priest, through many ages; and the roots of their legends, the inner meanings of these transmitted or traditional teachings, are the same in general and often in specific terms, mark you, all over the earth. Isn't that an interesting and highly significant fact?

No matter whence you draw the ancient records of these so-called barbarous and dying-out peoples, you will find that beneath the superficials of these records, they all teach pretty much the same fundamental doctrines. In one race these old doctrines were embroidered in one way, and in another old race the same doctrines were embroidered in some other fashion; but if you search carefully with the key that theosophy gives you to work by, you will discover the one fundamental, identic truth, in other words the same identic body of doctrines, under the coverings of habit and custom in every clime. I repeat that in the records of those ancient and barbarian peoples, you will find the same secret doctrine of the ages. In one race you will find one doctrine or set of doctrines more greatly emphasized than others are; in some other race you will find some other doctrine or set of doctrines of the archaic wisdom more greatly emphasized than in the former case, and so forth; but in all instances you will find the same fundamental teachings and at least hints of the existence of the greatly emphasized teachings existent in full flower elsewhere.

Consider the ancient Greeks, for instance, who in our Occident have always been considered, and rightly so, as one of the most subtle-minded and intellectually developed people of the white race. Look at their archaic schools of the Mysteries. The same essential things that you will find taught — as far as they can now be found out — in the Mystery-teachings of the Greeks, you will find in far-off Tasmania or Australia. Hunt for these proofs. Examine the folklore of these archaic peoples. Test it yourselves. Put the necessary time into the study, and you will discover that what I have told you is true.

Now, my Brothers, do you think that this secret wisdom of the ages has vanished off from the face of the earth? Not at all. The human race has been protected and guided in the past by great

sages and seers, lofty spiritual and intellectual Initiates, men who have become more or less at one with the inner divinity. They compose a brotherhood, and this brotherhood still exists today. Theosophists call these great ones mahatmas, masters, teachers, elder brothers, sages, seers, and by various other names. They exist even today as an association, as a brotherhood, and their sublime work is the aiding and teaching of their fellow men to become like unto themselves — which means in brief a hastening of the evolutionary process.

They have their schools of initiation into which men in the outside world can enter, provided that these great ones see in the hearts and minds of the men in the outside world the qualifications for initiation. This procedure is not a selfish one. It is not a policy directed by an ignoble wish to keep truth for oneself, but is directed by nature's own law. You cannot teach an infant studies which are beyond its capacities. You cannot teach it lessons in Sanskrit, nor how to deliver a lecture on astronomy or chemistry, as instances. You must wait until the child grows, grows up, until its faculties evolve, which is the same thing as inner growth.

What a wondrous picture of hope and consolation we have here! Any man who will show the necessary qualifications is acceptable to these teachers — not only acceptable, but he is helped, is taught; and every great seer and sage throughout the ages has had the same wonderful Message to give to mankind: "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest, and peace, and light."

But the man's heart must hunger for these, his mind must be ready to receive them; otherwise how can he take them? His moral instincts must be sufficiently developed so that the development of the wonderful but latent power within him can

be brought about with an assurance that these powers will not be debased to ignoble uses.

I repeat, Brothers, that all the great sages and seers of the ages have taught: ask, and ask aright, and ye shall receive; knock, and give the right knock — which is the life of a pure heart and the strivings of an eager intellect — and then the door will be opened unto you. Any son of man has a right to these sublime teachings as his heritage as a human being.

I will tell you frankly, Brothers, Comrades, and Friends, that the Theosophical Society was originally founded to bring these same ancient, very archaic, wonder-teachings back to the cognizance and living of mankind; and even today those who have proved themselves by kindness of action, by a heart-hunger for truth, by the courage to follow that truth to the world's end, ready to receive initiation, can get it. As I have told you on other occasions, this is a promise — not my own, but the same promise that any genuine theosophical teacher and leader is authorized to make.

Do you understand now what I refer to when I speak of the archaic doctrine, the wisdom-religion of mankind, the secret doctrine of the ages? It is that "Lost Word," which yet is not a word, but a system of teaching, a wisdom, the existence of which still remains as an echo in the hearts of all good and true and intuitive men. This Lost Word, this wisdom-teaching, you can have. It is, as a body of doctrines, the formulation in human language of the essential truths of the universe. It comprises the facts regarding the nature of the universe, visible and invisible, spiritual, intellectual, psychical, ethereal, astral, and physical. It comprises also the teachings regarding the structure and operations and laws of the universe, of which every human being is an inseparable portion. It also includes teaching a man to find himself — *i. e.*, to discover, and uncover from its enshrouding

veils, the god within him.

In every human being there is his inner god. Some call it the immanent Christ, others the inner Buddha. But by whatever name we call it, it is the same. Having found this inner god, you will enjoy communion with the divinities, and you will understand the universe in which you live, and move, and have your being, and of which you are an inseparable part. Receiving this Wisdom means the broadening of your consciousness, the deepening of your being, the evocation of your latent intellectual powers, and the self-acquaintance with your soul, so to speak — call it by what name you like. It also means to become at one with the All, and self-consciously.

Doing this is following the mystic pathway that I spoke of this afternoon. Essential truth is within you. Every man and woman of you here can find that truth, if you only have the key. It is the teacher who gives the key. He shows you how to become your self. He shows you how to unlock the faculties and powers latent within your self. He shows you how to bring out your self. He shows you how to be your spiritual self.

There is a teaching current in the world today, not only in the ranks of some theosophists but it is very popular all over the world, to the effect that a man does not need teachers, that a man should be sufficient unto himself, that he has it within him to find his own path; and this is said to be a manly course of life. Verily, so it is: "Truth abides within in fullness"; but why haven't you found the path? Why aren't you what you claim you can be? For the simple reason that you don't know how to be it and because you have not been taught. You need a teacher. Pause in thought over this, if you please.

Do you think that the human race has been abandoned through the ages, that the great seers and sages who have lived in the past



and who have brightened human existence by their teachings, and who have given to men a deathless hope — do you think that they were ordinary men, or are ordinary men today? They were and are men indeed, men who had become at one with the inner god, the god within: in other words, who had become at one with their spiritual self and thus they could teach other men to do the same.

Men need teachers. O my Brothers, if I could tell you the debt of gratitude that I have to my own teachers, and to this gratitude I bear glad witness! I am not ashamed of it. I proclaim it as the loveliest and most beautiful thing in my life that I have learned to subordinate my human pride of mind to abstract truth, to love, to gratitude. Truth is within, in very fact; but a man must be taught how to unfold it within himself. Look at your little children. Their growth will exemplify the idea. A little child has everything within it that the grown man has, but as yet undeveloped and he needs his teachers; he needs the mother's loving care, first to guide the footsteps, then to teach the letters of the alphabet, to watch over its growing intelligence, to guide its mind into the proper paths; and I pity the mothers who fail in this — one of the noblest duties that a human being can undertake.

The spiritual teacher of grown men is just what Socrates claimed that he was himself, a "midwife" bringing out the man himself, bringing his disciples to birth — to spiritual birth. This is a sublime thought.

Yes, and furthermore, Brothers, Comrades, Friends, this great association of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace have their envoys and representatives in the world all the time. Now, pause in thought over this statement. As a great people will send its ambassador or envoy to some foreign land, so do these great ones, these great seers and sages of the ages, send their

envoys, high disciples of theirs, into the world, in order to proclaim at different periods in the world's history the same old secret wisdom of the ages. H.P. Blavatsky was one such. There were many others before her. There were others after her. The future will show many more.

It is trifling with truth, it is juvenile, it is childish, to say that the Great Ones send their representatives no more until a certain time-period has been reached. How do you know? Do you dictate the policy of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace? I repeat my question: How do you know? Why do you sit in judgment of your brothers? Here is a good proof by which you may judge such an envoy: What is his teaching? What is his life? What does he give to the world? Does he inspire his fellows with great and noble thoughts and does he show them the still small path of the ages? If he does, you need have no fear about superficial theories whether he is or is not a Teacher from the Great Ones. Such a man is a man to be trusted.

Reject anything that your conscience tells you is false; abhor it. Cast it aside even if a very god from heaven taught it to you; reject it, if your conscience tells you that it is wrong. You may make mistakes time after time; but at any rate you are exercising your divine prerogatives of free will and of vision, and you are also thereby exercising your intellect; and these will grow by the exercise and thus become stronger; and the time will surely come when your judgment and your discrimination will have grown to be far greater than now they are; and then you will recognize truth whenever you see it or hear it.

If, on the other hand, what a man teaches you find to be true, that is if it appeal to you as a fact, then hold to it and help him to sow that truth abroad. Such action is a human duty. Every decent man feels it. Do you think that there is a man in this room who, seeing

some other man working against heavy odds, would not instantly, with an outburst of generous feeling, rush to aid him? Of course he would; and so would every true woman, too.

I tell you, not only that these Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace send their envoys continuously into the world of men one after the other, but also that these envoys in consequence are working in the world among men all the time; and happy are they whose hearts recognize these envoys; happy they who recognize the footfalls of the messengers of peace and wisdom crossing the mountaintops of the Mystic East.

I have been reminded sometimes that the chief founder of the Theosophical Society in our age, H.P. Blavatsky, taught that it was sufficient unto a man to look within himself in order to find truth, because all truth abides within. She did so teach, and so has every other great theosophical teacher and leader, and I am as cognizant of the fact as any one else is, and teach exactly the same thing myself. But H.P. Blavatsky also taught the need — a real and imperative need — for men to have spiritual teachers, teachers who could help to guide the faltering steps of average men, teachers who would be showers of the way: human signposts so to speak.

Genuine theosophical teachers are not mere preachers of ideas or mental notions that may have currency as a fad in any age, but base their teachings and doctrines solely on the facts of being. They recognize full well that men are imperfect albeit learning entities, entities who are growing and, as in the case of all imperfectly developed entities, guidance is needed and help is to be given where help can be given and will be accepted in the spirit in which it is offered; and also they know and teach that while all truth abides within, nevertheless the average man can be helped to shorten his ages-long evolution by the means of

receiving teachings through the inflaming of his own inner divinity, and this inflaming is the work of the greater men, of the Masters of Wisdom.

Life is a school and men are the pupils in that school, and in that school there are teachers, and in these few words you have the key to the whole situation and to the policy of the Great Lodge.

I will read to you a brief observation of H. P. Blavatsky's which is found in a letter written to a Dr. Franz Hartmann. You will find this letter published in full in the theosophical magazine, *The Path*, March, 1896:

. . . I am enough of an occultist to know that before we find the Master within our own hearts . . . we need an outside Master. As the Chinese alchemist says, speaking of the necessity of an outside teacher: . . . 'One word from a wise Master and you possess a draught of the golden water.' [True!] . . . He is a Savior who leads you in finding your own Master within yourself. It is ten years already that I preach the inner Master.

Do you think, Brothers, Comrades, Friends, that I as a theosophical lecturer and teacher would ask you to accept one word of what I tell you from this platform if you yourselves feel it to be untrue? No. I say to you again what I have always said: reject anything and everything that you hear if your conscience rebels against it. It is your human duty to do that. But, on the other hand, if what you hear appeals to you as true, then be true men and hold to it and proclaim to the world the truth that you have found and help us in so doing. Help in passing on the beautiful teachings of theosophy, its glad tidings of great joy. Theosophists need the help of every honest man and woman who hears what we have to say and who feels that what we teach is truth.

We have nothing to gain personally, theosophists, in our work. But let me pause a moment, and, after all, ask myself if this statement is exactly true. From another standpoint as I now think it over in speaking to you I am inclined to think that from this other standpoint the opposite statement is also true. We have everything to gain; for indeed in helping others we find ourselves, each one of us comes nearer to realizing the god within him. Don't you know that the sweetest, the loveliest, the happiest, moment in a man's life, is when he feels that he has helped a fellow human being? Have you not experienced that? It is a sublime experience. It satisfies something noble within you that naught else can reach. Yes, from this other standpoint, we Theosophists do gain, gain grandly, gain wonderfully, because not only do we come nearer to finding our spiritual selves, which itself is a sublime experience, but we see and feel that we help our fellows to find themselves, to find their true inner selves, as individuals.

The secret doctrine of the ages you can find outlined in brief in our modern theosophical books, in our age especially in the works of H.P. Blavatsky, in her *The Secret Doctrine*, for instance. There you can read and study somewhat of what this ancient, this archaic, wisdom was, this Lost Word, which as said is no "word," which is indeed a wisdom, a wisdom-teaching. If the study of this ancient wisdom interests you and you desire to go farther along this path, which is the inner pathway of inner and spiritual self-realization and which means a development of your inner, nobler selfhood, then come to our temple door and knock.

In this connection quite frankly I am going to make a statement to you and it is as follows: during the last few years I have received a limited number of communications couched somewhat in the following fashion: "I have been to your Temple of Peace; I have heard you speak there. I would like very much to become better

acquainted with the wonderful doctrines, the esoteric doctrines, at which I have so often heard you hint; but with all due respect to The Theosophical Society, I would much prefer not to join it. The reason is that I am not a 'joiner.' I like to be free. I don't care to associate myself with any Society. With all due respect to you splendid people and with deep sympathy for your work, nevertheless I prefer to remain apart, and to pursue my own personal path."

I usually answer these communications with all due courtesy; but my own reaction is — and here again I will talk quite frankly to you — that a man or a woman who would like to take from a household what he is not entitled to take and then avoid helping the members of that household who have helped him or her, is not fully guided by the instincts of a true and generous heart.

For my part, I am proud to join a body of men and women whom I believe to have found something great and beautiful — the pathway of spiritual and intellectual self-realization under the guidance and teaching of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion. It is possible that theosophists do not always follow this pathway with perfect fidelity. This is only natural because we are all human; but nevertheless our theosophists are *trying* to follow the path faithfully; and this already is a great deal. I am proud to join a movement headed by the immortal gods, for that is indeed a fact — a movement composed of men and women who are honestly striving to do their best to bring light and help and peace and comfort to their fellows. My heart yearns to help in so great and so noble a work. I should be ashamed to want to obtain for myself without giving myself and what I can do in return for what I have received. I am, therefore, a "joiner" of all that is grand and sublime.

Before you can enter our Esoteric Section — but how shall I

phrase this? Let me put the matter in this way: Before you can pass the threshold of the inner Temple you must enter the outer Temple. This is a rule which has come down to us from the ages of the past and simply exemplifies the results of ages of human experience. Furthermore — and this I must say in honesty — even if and when you have entered the outer Temple, it is not certain, absolutely certain, that you will be able to pass the threshold of the holy of holies — the inner Temple. It all depends upon yourselves, and this statement should be perfectly clear to everybody.

If you have it in you to pass into the greater light, then not all the devils in hell can keep you out; but if you have it not in you, then with equivalent reason not all the gods in heaven can help you to pass inwards. Do you know why this is so? It is so because it is the individual who chooses for himself, in other words who walks his own path. Do you now get the idea? You must have it in yourself to succeed, you must have it in your own heart, before you can succeed. You must become it before you can be it, in other words pass the threshold of the inner Temple.

I do not think that anyone, after this frank observation, my Friends, can ever say that I have told people enticing things and then, when it came to the scratch, I would not let them in. I will, therefore, now tell you the simple and exact truth: I cannot keep you out if you give the right knock, and if you ask aright; but, on the other hand, I could not, even if I would, pass you into realms of thought and consciousness which you yourself have not evolved within yourself, which you are not prepared to understand. In these remarks I refer to the esoteric part of our teachings, the secret part; but nevertheless any man or woman who accepts the one prerequisite for membership in The Theosophical Society, which prerequisite is a sincere belief in universal brotherhood, can join us and help us, and we are happy

to have his brotherly aid.

Now, Brothers and Comrades and Friends: before leaving you this afternoon, I want to talk to you briefly, as I usually do, upon something that to me is the loftiest part of our majestic theosophical philosophy. It is this: every human being is an imbodyed incarnate divinity; some human beings manifest this divinity in splendor, and such men we call Buddhas, or we speak of them as Christs, or call them by other names. They are among the number of the great sages and seers of the human race. Again, other men show forth the faculties and powers of the inner god but averagely, but poorly; and they are the average men like me, like you — unless, mayhap, in this audience, there may be a few who are greater than the average. It is quite possible. There are still other human beings who show forth the faculties and powers of the inner god very poorly, and these are the undeveloped men, the men whose hearts are asleep and whose minds are dulled. But they will grow to greater things.

But to the average man and woman it is my duty to recall this wonderful truth of the essential god at the core of the core of the being of everyone. Each one is an incarnate god, each one of you is an imbodyed divinity, kin with the immortals who guide and protect the universal spheres; and you can find how self-consciously to become this inner god of you, which you yourself are in your inmost. Become it in your daily life little by little, every day a little more. Yearn to be it; yearn to become it; feel it; think of it; ponder upon it. Even the rewards that come from this discipline and this training are past ordinary comprehension.

Pause a moment in thought and realize what it means to have your consciousness virtually of cosmic reach, attaining the outmost limits of our solar system, and this not only in the physical sphere but very much more so in the invisible worlds;



try for an instant to realize what it is to send your consciousness behind the veils of the physical universe — deep, deep, deeper still, into the very heart of being — and there to learn, by becoming it, what is there, by experiencing all that is there in your own perceiving consciousness; and then, holiest thing of all, perhaps, feeling so strongly your oneness with the boundless universe that instinctively and with all the impulses of your life you consecrate yourself to its service — a godlike activity.

This consecration also means becoming ever greater in spiritual power, in growth of inner faculty, in inner vision, in inner hearing, in deeper feeling. Following upon this consecration the inner spiritual senses will open and develop grandly. You have all within you, and you lack but the proper teacher. Therefore, seek out your teacher. Aspire, become worthy of his care and guidance. You may find him sooner than you realize. Turn whither the noblest impulses of your soul direct you to turn. Doubtless he will be there.

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[Vol 2, No 32](#)

[Contents](#)

## Second Series: No. 32 (April 13, 1931)

### THE ESOTERIC EASTER

(Lecture delivered April 5, 1931)

CONTENTS: Easter a spiritual event. — The Ostara of the early Germanic peoples. — The Christian Easter a theological misinterpretation. — The *Mysteria* of the ancient Greeks. — Four seasons of initiation. Significance of each. — Date of the Christian Easter. — Hints concerning lunar influences. — Initiations still possible. — Circulations of the universe. — Meaning of the Easter egg. — Japanese expression of an eternal verity. — Crucifixion and resurrection explained. — To give in order to get: a universal law. — The boundless vision of the gods.

Easter is a beautiful season of the year. It is not merely a day, it is rather a spiritual idea; indeed, it is an ideal — as it were a breath of the soul of antiquity, which has come down to us, albeit distorted, from far past ages, this soul-breathing of antiquity arising in the inner spiritual life of man. By these words I mean that Easter represents an actual event which occurs annually in the spiritual life of man, because the events of man's spiritual life faithfully reflect the events that take place in the spiritual life of the world.

It is a fact, Brothers, that every great mystical event of the ancient religions and philosophies of the world was commemorated in a feast, in the ancient sense of this word — in a festival such as Easter in Occidental lands now is, and such as was the European original and forerunner of the present-day Easter festival: the *Ostara* or *Eastre*, as it was called by different families of the early Germanic inhabitants of the northern European countries. In

those lands it took the form of a celebration of the vital forces working in the springtime, when new life is surging through the earth and affecting all earth's children, when the trees begin to burgeon and the flowers begin to blow, and when a new hope is singing in men's hearts, representing in men, because derived from the spiritual realms, exactly what appears in the beautiful flowers that in those northern lands Nature then begins to bring forth.

The Easter Festival in Occidental countries is commonly supposed to be a purely Christian one, commemorating what the Christians call the supreme event of their religious faith — the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Are we to accept as wholly complete a merely theological and one-sided interpretation of a really beautiful and significant event of general importance in the history of the spiritual life of mankind? Yet even this theological misinterpretation has a background of verity, a vein of truth running through it, because, as I told you before, every one of the great feast days of every one of the great religious faiths or philosophical faiths of mankind — which means all over the earth — has behind it as its background and origin an esoteric fact, arising in and out of what the ancient Greeks called their *Mysteria*, "the Mysteries."

Easter is one such; Christmas, the supposed anniversary of the birthday of Jesus, is one such; but two others the Christians never commemorate in celebration, if indeed they ever understood these two latter; and these other two are the great spiritual — psycho-spiritual — events that occur in midsummer or the summer solstice, and at the time of the autumnal equinox. The ancients in their wondrous doctrines of the Mysteries taught that there were four main seasons of the year at which the highest, noblest, most heart-enticing initiations possible to man took place at certain periodically recurring times. These four seasons are

respectively the two equinoxes, of spring and of autumn, and the two solstices, of winter and of summer.

The Christians still commemorate two of these seasons — one is solstitial and the other equinoctial — Christmas at the winter solstice more or less, and Easter around the time of the spring equinox: one of these two festivals commemorating the birth, as they say, of their Savior Jesus, and the other commemorating what they call his resurrection. Now even these two words, "birth" and "resurrection", distorted as they are by the orthodox Christian interpretations, and misunderstood as these two words have been from a very early period in Christian ecclesiastical history, nevertheless contain elements of real truth. This is because both of these festivals are distorted representations of two esoteric facts concerning what takes place in the initiation chambers at a winter solstice and at a spring equinox.

The initiatory cycle, my Brothers, contained the circling year as a symbol of the entire spiritual, intellectual, and psychical life cycle of a human being; and at the four cross periods, composing 'the cross of the universe,' as the divine philosopher Plato, the Greek, called it, there took place the four great initiation ceremonies of human existence, representing — what? This first: the "birth" of the new man, of the initiate out of the personal man, the latter living, as Pythagoras put it, a living death, because living merely in the body and in the brain-mind, and usually entirely oblivious of the titanic spiritual forces that make a man really Man.

When the man was thus born, mystically speaking, *i. e.*, when the inner man or initiate arose out of the dead person, he was mystically said to be 'born' when this occurred at the time of the winter solstice, which the Christians celebrate as their Christmas Festival. He then entered upon the first stage of his career as an initiate, one who had begun really to know and really to follow

the path, that mystic, small, old path which, when faithfully followed, will lead you to the very heart of the universe; for indeed that pathway is your own spiritual being, the inner man of you, the source of all that is great and sublime in mankind — that inner holy spiritual Thing — our spiritual self by which we are linked intimately with the very gods; and it is thus that following this pathway of the spiritual self we enter into cognizance of and become acquainted with the realms and forces of the spiritual universe, which is the cause and the mother of our exterior, physical universe, just precisely as the spiritual man is the cause and the parent of the psycho-physical man.

How many times have I not told you from this platform that every human being is an inseparable part of the universe — not merely of the physical universe, but more especially of the inner and invisible, the spiritual universe! He is bone of its bone, life of its life, blood of its blood, essence of its essence. There is his real home in the spiritual worlds; and from within him, from the inner and invisible man, spring forth all the qualities that make men great — courage, steadfastness, truth, insight, vision, intellect, spirituality, hope, peace, impersonal love — all are from within. It is to rend the barriers of the physical being, the veils that enshroud the spiritual sun within and which lock these noble, these sublime, things in, that the neophytes followed the pathway of initiation, in order to bring out, in other words to evolve, what was locked up — the inner essence of the man.

The first of these initiations, as I have already told you, which was called the birth, took place and takes place at the time of the winter solstice, December 21-22, which Christians now call the Christmas Festival of December 25; and when this new 'Birth' occurred, then men said: "Lo! the Christ in man is born"; or, "the inner Buddha is born from within the shell of the neophyte." As the man lived on, if he had the strength of will and the courage to

proceed and to follow the path to the second initiatory stage — no matter how many years this may have taken or now may take — then came the "Easter" of his life, the second great initiation, when the Christ within him was — not born, because that had already taken place — but when the Christ "arose" and took his own stand as a fully developed master, teacher, guide, and leader, of men.

Then came the third stage, that which was commemorated mythologically by so many of the ancient peoples in the festival of the midsummer, of the summer solstice. On June 21-22 began the "trials" of this third stage, and they lasted for fourteen days, beginning at a time when the moon was new and culminating and ending for that period when the moon was full. So was it also at the winter solstice or Christmas Initiation beginning on December 21-22, when the moon was new and ending fourteen days afterwards, when the moon was full. So was it also during the springtime, the spring equinox, the second stage; and so was it again during the autumn period, September 21-22: each of these initiation ceremonies began when, according to the ancient, wonderful, mystical, true astrology, the sun and moon and planets were rightly situated.

Every one of these initiation periods began either at the time of the winter solstice, or of the spring equinox, or of the summer solstice, or of the autumnal equinox; respectively therefore on December 21-22, and lasting for fourteen days until the full moon; or on March 21-22, and lasting for fourteen days until full moon; and then on June 21-22, and lasting for fourteen days until full moon; and then finally on September 21-22, and lasting for fourteen days until the moon was full.

This whole matter has been so completely lost sight of by Occidental peoples that it is most difficult adequately to describe

the true circumstances; and the difficulty is rendered still greater by the fact that due to misunderstanding and ignorance and ecclesiastical bigotry and jealousy, what remained or was taken over by the early Christians has been greatly distorted and changed; so that while actually, as I have before said, the Christians celebrated two of these great initiation festivals, the ones they call Christmas and Easter, they know nothing of the other two; and even the two that they still commemorate they commemorate on approximately the accurate dates but actually inaccurately because not following the exact astronomical time periods.

The circle of the year, as I have told you, represented symbolically the entire initiatory cycle that a man could follow from the beginning of his training until its end. There was the Birth, then the Resurrection, or rather the evocation of the inner Christ or Master, which was the mystic Youth just as the former had been the mystic 'Birth,' then the third which was the mystic Majority or Adulthood, at which the glorious initiate or Master of Life began an active, indeed a strenuous, career among men as Teacher and Guide and Savior; and then finally the last period, that of the passage into the great peace, where, if such was the choice made and followed, the Master left the world of men for ages and entered into other spheres. Many renounced this fourth and supreme initiation in order to remain Buddha-like, in their love and pity for erring mankind, with men in order to help them and to protect them and to guide them.

Please understand that I am not describing these facts as the results of merely my own studies; I am simply repeating what you may prove for yourselves by your own studies actually to exist.

How is the date of Easter reckoned today, according to the Christian fashion of doing so? It is figured in this way: Easter falls

on the first Sunday following the first full moon on the date of or first after the spring equinox. Bitter disputes arose in the early days of Christianity about the proper date on which to celebrate the Christian Easter Festival, commemorating the supposed resurrection, the rising, of their Savior; and the greatest and most bitterly debated of these disputes was called the *Quartodeciman* — the word quartodeciman being taken from the Latin word for fourteenth — "fourteenthers." It was so called because a large body of the early Christians contended that Easter should fall on the fourteenth day — which was full moon day — of the Jewish month of Aviv or Nisan — the same day on which the ancient Jews commemorated their Passover.

The Jewish calendar was wholly a lunar one — their months went by moons. As a matter of fact, even in English the word *month*, derived from the Anglo-Saxon *Monath*, means the period of one lunation or one moon, in Anglo-Saxon *Mona*. But the Christians, the majority of them, didn't like the idea of celebrating the Resurrection of their Savior, Jesus Christ, although he was a Jew, on the same date on which the Jews commemorated their Passover. They were very largely of opinion that their Easter Festival commemorating the alleged Rising of Jesus must be celebrated on a Sunday, the day of the sun. Thus it came about that after a great deal of verbal fighting and verbal squabbling — very bitter and unkind some of it — the arguments of the *Quartodecimans* were rejected and the *Quartodecimans* were declared to hold "heretical opinions." This event took place at the Council of Nicaea in the year 325 of the Christian Era.

This decree of the Nicæan Council of 325 showed that the Christians of that time had already lost the root-meaning of the Easter Festival; and I may add here that the Jews had the right idea in celebrating their Passover on the fourteenth of the month Nisan, in other words when the moon was full, no matter how



much the Jews themselves at that late date may have misunderstood the real meaning and significance of this Spring Festival.

The esoteric fact connected with this Spring Festival is one which is fully explained in our own Theosophical esoteric teachings. But I may remind you that the moon, among all the ancient peoples, and even today among non-Christian peoples practically all over the earth, has been called the Lord and Giver of life as well as of death; and there are certain phases of the moon, in other words certain positions that the moon occupies, taken in connection with the astronomical positions of the sun and the earth, when influences and forces both from the moon to earth and from earth to the moon run strong.

If you will examine the ancient literatures of the world, you will find that all that I have told you thus far is contained in those literatures, albeit in some cases rather carefully hid, as well as many other hints about the same secret facts of nature; and if you want to know how to understand and to construe these hints, then my advice to you is to study theosophy. This study will give you the key of the enigma.

I will add also the following: that the old initiations have not died off from the face of the earth. They take place even today, and in the archaic way, under the supervision and guidance of men, great sages and seers, who know perfectly well what they are doing, and who know what the inner and to us — to the average man — mysterious secrets of the universe are; they know how nature's forces and currents run, and in what direction they run and along what pathways they return; they know, in other words, the circulations of the universe, circulations not only physical but psychical and spiritual; for verily there are such circulations in the universe.

Everything in the universe is connected and bound together with every other thing that exists. Nature is one universal organism or organic entity. There is a harmony which prevails everywhere; and consequently there is a cosmic life, call it a cosmic spirit if you like, which is the ocean of being in which all differentiations take place: which is the great fountain of being in which all things exist, live, and move, and have their being. Consequently nature is one, and, as the old Hermetists said, what you see operative in any part of nature merely mirrors what takes place everywhere, because nature's laws form one unity, and consequently work together everywhere throughout the mighty mass. Out of the small, discover the great; in the great, seek the mystery of the small; as above, so is it below; as below, as the great Egyptian Hermes said, so is it above. Nature is organically one: one life, one essence, one consciousness, and one vast and incomprehensibly differentiated aggregate of bodies — and therefore all things in the mighty whole are ruled and controlled alike and show it forth in the manifestations of their individual existences.

Thus, therefore, following this analogical principle: just as a man's body has its circulations, has its feeble consciousness reflected from the inner spiritual man, so has the mighty organic sphere of our own home-universe. Man is a child of that universe and a reflection of it, manifesting in the small what exists in his great parent.

The northern European peoples had a habit of celebrating the Easter Festival of spring by sending eggs, colored or otherwise, as gifts to each other. Why? We may well ask, what on earth have eggs, colored or otherwise, to do with the festival commemorating the supposed resurrection of the Christian Savior Jesus Christ? What have eggs to do with that event of such momentous importance to the orthodox Christian? It was a pagan custom among European peoples long before the Christians adopted it.

The celebration of Easter in the European countries, *i. e.*, in northern European countries, was a pagan custom long before the Christians took it over.

Now harken to the following: out of the apparently inanimate and senseless egg comes a living being. *Omne vivum ex ovo*, "Every living thing springs from an egg," be it small or be it great. The egg, therefore, was a *symbol* of the resurrection of life, this mystic, symbolic idea centering around the germ of life enclosed within a relatively senseless encasement or body, which is the egg; but that germ within the egg is a living and working entity; growing — wonderfully, mysteriously, marvelously — in time assuming the form and the content of the individual to be born from the egg; and one day the egg bursts and the entity comes forth — the fledgling, the chick, the human being, for the human life-germ is a cell, which is an egg also.

Sending an egg was therefore a symbolic message, and was meant to say the following: "Brother, with this gift of the symbolic egg, symbol of the new life to be, I hope that you too will soon break the infolding "egg" of the lower self, the personal man; and that, having broken the shell of your personal being, you may step forth as the Master within." It therefore meant: seek initiation; break the shell of the lower personal man and step out as the living germ to be developed into an entity fit to live in the larger world of the spiritual. The egg, therefore, mystically and symbolically, represented the birth of the living Christ — his resurrection from out the tomb of the material encasement. You see immediately that the egg is a beautiful symbol, very suggestive, and giving food for many hours of quiet thought.

You Occidental men don't know what you have within you. As I have told you so often, there is a divinity, there is a god, a divine essence, locked up within each one of you, and you won't let it

out. It is particularly difficult for Occidentals — Europeans and Americans — to understand this noble truth and to follow it, because physical life in these countries is pursued so feverishly, with such a fevered enthusiasm, that Occidental men and women have lost the sense of and the feel of the great peace; they have lost self-conscious communion with the inner spirit of themselves.

The personal man, my Brothers, must be "crucified," *i. e.*, "slain" — metaphorically speaking — in order that the Christ within you may resurrect or arise. These are not merely pretty words, poetic tropes, quaint figures of speech: I tell you that within each one of you is a Buddha, or as some of the mystical Christians of today phrase it, within every human being there is the immanent Christos — an actual fact. Why not ally yourself with your own inner divinity, with the divinity within you, the real spiritual and intellectual essence of yourself? There, verily, is the source of wisdom; there is the source of all knowledge. In becoming at one with this inner source you attain the great peace, you reach the great quiet, and mighty strength; you touch the vast reservoir where are stored up all the greatest forces of the universe; for the very heart of each one of you, is in actual fact the heart of the universe — a heart which is not localized, which has no place, which is everywhere, but called the heart of the universe because it is the central focus of consciousness of every thing and every entity that exist anywhere.

Pity the man or the woman who cannot understand even a little of this; for if he cannot understand it he is dead — or sleeping. He is indeed living in the body as the beast lives, but nevertheless is a whitened sepulcher within, as Jesus the Christian sage put it, full of dead men's bones, and of rottenness and corruption.

The pathway of beauty, the pathway of peace and strength, the

pathway of the great quiet, is within you — not within the material body, but within the inmost focus of your consciousness. This is the pathway that the great sages and seers of all the ages have taught. Follow that pathway; it will lead you to the heart of the sun, the master and guide of our solar system; and later if you follow it, it will conduct you to a destiny still more sublime. Yet that sublime destiny is only the beginning, only the beginning of something grander; for evolution, growth, expansion of consciousness, go on forever.

In different countries there are different ways of phrasing these things of inner beauty. I listened two nights ago to a speech by a Japanese lecturer, a thoughtful man, a man of kindly heart, one who had already seen somewhat of the vision beautiful and who, during the course of his lecture, illustrated one point of his address by an example — a Japanese poem. I will repeat this poem as I heard it; and in this connection please remember that the essence of poetry is visioning. Poetry is not merely the collocation of words; it is not rhyming. The noblest poetry oft is that which has no rhyme, but which instead appeals powerfully to the intellect and to the heart, because it gives vision; and this Japanese poem consisted of three lines only, nine words:

An old pond —  
A frog plunging —  
A great splash.

Do not these words give to you a beautiful and suggestive picture? The beauty of this little poem lies in the fact that there is in it no meretricious ornament, no wordy decoration; and because of this fact a thought, a picture, vivid, graphic, real, is presented to the minds of the hearers, and then the magic of thought is woven by the minds of the hearers themselves; and each man interprets the beauty of this thought strictly according to his own development

of the understanding and of the poetic sense — which means the sense of beauty and consciousness.

"Now, what is this 'old pond'?" asked the lecturer. It is the spiritual life, he replied, the life beautiful, the inner life, the great peace, called old, because it has existed from eternity. It is the essence of the spiritual world; and it is called pond after the same fashion that made other mystical thinkers of other ancient peoples speak of the waters of space. And "a frog plunging": how graphic in its simplicity is this! It seems a desecration to color this thing by trying to explain it: the frog plunging into the water where he feels at home is the man yearning to return into his own — to re-enter the spiritual existence where his soul is native. Is not this the very heart of the idea imbodyed in the Easter Festival? Is it not man rising out of the material and plunging into the spiritual life of his soul? There indeed are the Resurrection and the Life!

The spiritually thoughtful man, the man yearning for truth, the man yearning to be truly himself, his greater self, his inner self, his real self, to be the god within him — yearning to be and to grow and to enter into the light and the great peace, such a man may have his own individual Easter at any time. His Easter comes to him: his resurrection into the spiritual life comes to him: when he breaks the shell of the personal man with all its weaknesses and cloying desires and enshrouding veils, and casts that shell aside. Not by killing the body — that is not the essential idea — but by becoming at one with the god within, so that the body is no longer a hindrance but a faithful tool with which to carry out in this our sphere of existence, the mandates of the inner god.

And the Crucifixion? I use this word because we Occidentals live in a country which has been Christian — I am speaking to people who probably have been brought up as Christians; but if I were

speaking in the Orient I would use the metaphors and the figures of speech of Oriental countries, as, for instance, those of Buddhism or of Brahmanism, or of the teachings of the Tao. The meaning of the crucifixion is the resignation, painful to most human beings, of the material personal man and exchanging it for a greater light; and it is called a crucifixion because to the personal man with his limited vision it seems like his own death. We must remember that the inner Christ — or the inner Buddha if you please — is fixed to the cross of material existence; but after the crucifixion there ensues the resurrection of the inner god.

Yes, there are four great initiatory periods which take place during the course of the cycling year at the times of the two solstices and the two equinoxes; and these four initiations take place even today. I will tell you frankly, my Brothers, that the Theosophical Society has, among its other objects, to restore to men self-consciousness of the knowledge that they can grow, advance, evolve forth, and bring forth what is within them; and that this can be done and that they can do it most rapidly by passing through the initiatory rites, preceded and followed by the requisite and rigid training and teaching. I can show you where lies this path of initiation, but you yourselves must walk that path. I cannot walk it for you. I cannot grow for you. But as a theosophical teacher I can show you how to help yourselves, how to find yourselves this pathway of initiation — this pathway leading, as I have so often said before, towards that Mystic East, which is not any geographical locality on earth, but is the place where the glorious sun of spirit is seen in the far distance by the soul of man.

Crucifixion, to adopt the Christian phraseology, each one of you must undergo some time in the sense that I have just briefly outlined; you cannot enter heaven, again to follow the Christian

phrasing, with the bags and impedimenta that you lug around with you in this material sphere, for there is no place for them in the spiritual world. You must go stripped like the athlete, leaping forward in glad anticipation of attaining what he sees on the distant horizon. In other words, you cannot follow the path successfully, nor successfully pass the portals of the temple of wisdom, until you have found your inner self at least in some degree and until you yearn for more of the beautiful vision. This beautiful vision is not outside of you. Your spiritual life is within you. This beautiful vision is the vision of the god within you, clad in the habiliments of the sun. This is not poetry, although it is true that I am now using the language of the outer court. You must become clothed, at least a little, with the solar splendor, you must have become at least a little at one with the buddhic glory before you can reach the sun and pass its portals — go into its heart. In other words, *you must become like unto it.*

You cannot become one with your own inner god until the personal man, who is the becomer, has become at least to a certain extent godlike. You cannot enter into the great peace until you yourself have become peaceful. Oh! Resurrect the god within you, the inner Christ, the inner Buddha, the inner Brahma, call it by what name you will; that solar splendor which is the very core of your being. Be like the frog of the Japanese poet, plunging into the old pond — the ancient pond of your spiritual consciousness. Then you will attain truth, light, peace, love, pity, compassion, strength, discrimination, vision, glory unspeakable: and you can have all these at any time when you choose to have them. It is a matter of choosing — simply a matter of choosing, and *doing.*

My father was a Christian clergyman, and I remember that when I was a boy I used to go to church. In fact, I had to go to church. I used to sit in the pew, unless indeed I sat in a chorister's seat, because I had to sing, too. I used to sit in one of the pews and look



around and study the faces of the people; and I wondered what was the matter with everybody. They indeed seemed to be kindly, courteous people, sitting there "on the job" — a sort of duty which some of them seemed to like and some of them didn't seem to like; and I had an instinct that something was either wrong with me or wrong with the system. I have now found out where the wrong lies — and I am not going to tell you what I have discovered. I don't think that I need to tell you. I am sure that you feel exactly as I do.

Then, when I grew older and began to read a little of certain Oriental literature that fell to my hand, I realized that the instinct of my soul had been a true one; and after that, as I sat in the pew in church and looked around, I saw something which seemed to me new in the faces of my fellows. Oh, the spiritual hunger, the yearning, the unsatisfied yearning for light, that met my eyes! They were doing something more than merely being on the job. They wanted truth. They wanted consolation. They wanted vision — and found it not.

Then, still a little later, Theosophical literature fell to my hand and I read it avidly and studied it eagerly, and then my heart awoke, as my brain had awaked before. But now, from a study of the theosophical literature, my heart awaking, I began to realize what there was, not only in me, but in my fellows; and I said to myself: hereafter my life is consecrate to what I know to be the truth. No man can live unto himself alone; no man can tread the pathway — the still, small, old pathway — of the spiritual self within him, alone. Marvelous thing that this is: you can gain only when you give, you can truly understand only when you interpret for others; you can truly be only when you have renounced.

These sound like the paradoxes of Lao-tse, the great Chinese philosopher; and so they are. They are true. But in the Occident

did not Jesus called the Christ, of whom Christians today are celebrating the anniversary of the supposed resurrection — do they not also say that their Jesus taught: "Give up thy life if thou wouldst" — what? — "find it"? Lao-tse never uttered a more paradoxical saying than that; and it is a very true one. Why is it so? Because growth is expansion; growth is enlargement, whether of body, or of faculty, or of consciousness; and you cannot grow to the greater until you have given up the love of the smaller. You can bring the best in you out only when you give; and this therefore is the pathway of training that I am now laying before you — a pathway leading to the resurrection of the Christos within you — to the bringing out of the inner god. If you wish to get, give; and the greatest getting is the god within you; and you get it by giving yourself. Paradoxical? Yes. But I don't believe it is so paradoxical that you cannot understand it.

The same principle prevails — to come down to earthly things — even in your ordinary business world. You cannot get business until you give of your substance to get it; you have to give something before you can get something; and this materialistic principle is merely a reflection of a universal law of nature; you cannot find your spiritual self until you give it; and you cannot find it until you give up the lower man, yourself.

Who are you, anyway? Are you the god within you, or the lower man? You are indeed both: yet the lower man is merely a reflection of the higher man, much as the sun is reflected in a mirror, or in a basin of water, or as the moon's cold silvery beams are reflected at night in the waters of the pond. Thus the sunny god within you reflects its own divine brilliance through the brain-mind of you; and this brain-mind of you is the personal man. So, therefore, as you see, merely giving up the personal man is actually becoming at one with the great man, the great one within, your inner god.

You are, now, human Easter eggs! But I think that in your minds — which I see by the expression on your kindly faces have been receptive and have understood — I have placed the germ of a noble thought: I think that by our short study together this afternoon I have enabled the life-germ within your soul to stir in its ages-long sleep a little, to awaken a little more; and, to change the figure of speech, I feel that I have put seeds of thought into your minds today which will grow and in the future produce fruit one hundredfold; and I pray the immortal gods that they may germinate nobly and grow great in your consciousness — and bring forth your inner self.

May the time soon come for you when the great peace, the boundless vision, will be yours. There is no reward like unto these two. With heart at peace, with mind at rest, with both these growing rapidly and expanding, cannot you sense already the destiny that lies before you in the distant aeons of the future? The great peace is the great life; and the vision sublime, which your spirits will see, is the vision that the gods have.

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[Contents](#)