



# THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

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### WORLDS VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE

**F**RRIENDS: Friends here in this our Temple of Peace, and you who are 'listening in' over the radio:

I am going to talk to you this afternoon on 'Worlds Visible and Invisible'; but prefatory to that, let me say that my talk will contain nothing at all which is weird or spooky; but will be an attempt to describe to you in as simple language as possible, something of the wonderful teachings of Theosophy with regard to the manner in which the Universe, that is to say, the Kosmos, is interiorly builded.

Man is a child of this Universe; he

is an inseparable part of it; and consequently, being an inseparable part of it, everything that is in the boundless spaces of infinitude is in him — not necessarily manifest: indeed manifest as yet in very small degree, because man is still a very imperfect entity. But nevertheless as a part of that Universe he has in him everything that the Infinite Mother has; consequently everything in the Universe he has possibilities of understanding, because it is all in himself. In himself, therefore, he finds a pathway leading to the understanding of the present great-

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est riddles of the Universe; the greatest problems of kosmic Nature find their solution in him.

You know our scientists of these later days, as I have often remarked here recently, are beginning to dream dreams of truth and to see visions of reality. Wonderful things they are beginning to think, and from those thoughts they are making deductions, which are acting, as it were, not merely as an evolutionary influence in the minds of men, giving them broader outlooks, but these deductions are actually overthrowing older ideas and so-called principles in science and religion and philosophy, which were considered at one time to be so stable, so settled, so proved, as the saying runs, that nothing could overthrow them.

This state of mental satisfaction was an odd state of mind to have. Our fathers nourished it and passed it on to us in our youth. The general idea was that there could be but little or nothing more to learn as concerns fundamental principles of Nature; that everything fundamental was known, and that what in future could be learned or known would be merely a development or enlargement of previous knowledge — a foolish idea, and reminding one of the expression, 'living in a fool's paradise' — in this case, a supposed paradise of self-satisfaction. Children reason like that; but after all we grownups are more or less children still. We men are simply grown-up boys and women are simply grown-up girls, and multitudes of us still reason as children.

I was reading in the newspaper this morning a report that was rather adversely criticized by the paper in which I found this report, of the observations of a certain Dr. W. W. Swann of Philadelphia, who very recently spoke before the American Chemical Institute at Northwestern University. He has a new idea — at least he thinks it is new, though it is a very old one — and it is this: that the world is largely governed by 'chance' or 'luck'; and he spoke, according to this report, of the so-called mathematical law of probabilities, which you all know something about very probably, as a proof of his idea that this law is but a formulation of what the man in the street calls 'chance.'

Dr. Swann's exact words, as reported by the newspapers, are as follows:

Science always has felt that everything that happened could be traced to some cause, which in turn always had a definite effect. But now we note that the results of many purely physical phenomena, such as the transmission of heat, depend upon what Science inadequately calls 'laws of probability,' which is just another name for chance or luck.

The idea is that if you take a certain set of circumstances, whatever they may be, and perform a certain number of operations with that set of circumstances, certain numerical factors inherent in the group of circumstances will always reappear on account of the quantitative relations which this set of factors has to the aggregate. If, for example, you put a certain number of black beans in a bag with a certain number of white beans and shake the

bag thoroughly and then withdraw them at random by ones or twos or by tens or by dozens — by machinery, if you will, in order to eliminate the personal equation — then when you shall have withdrawn one hundred, followed by another hundred, succeeded by a third, a fourth, and a fifth hundred perhaps, and then compare the number of the black with the number of the white beans withdrawn, you will find that the ratio of the black to white beans is always more or less numerically the same. If you were to continue doing this until your hundreds become tens of thousands repetitively, you would find that the same ratio of numbers of black to numbers of white beans withdrawn would still hold. This, in brief, exemplifies the meaning of the law of probabilities.

Now, what does this law mean? It means that all things are related; that they are connected together; and that when certain things are numerically taken in certain ways, the operation will show forth numerical results; handled in other ways, the same state of things or circumstances will make different appearances, but probably produce identical results: the manner of handling the operation and the things themselves thus handled producing in all cases certain mathematical consequences. In other words, we have here the general case of the 'law of averages,' which is so well known, for instance, to insurance companies. But where is the 'chance' or 'luck' about it all? Consider a lottery, if you will, or a roulette wheel. You may

keep drawing lots and the chances are all against you, because you have one chance perhaps in a million; yet you may hit the millionth 'lucky number,' as the saying goes, and then you speak of 'luck.'

Do things 'just happen' so? We Theosophists say no. This is not a helter-skelter Universe, governed by fortuity, by chance, by unreason, by what you may call maniacal or insane action of material particles which are called atoms, and so forth. To the contrary, our teaching is that of all the great thinkers of all times, and of the greatest thinkers among men of science today: that precedent causes produce effects which in a sense are the children of what preceded them; and these effects in their turn produce something else. We call this natural system or operation of Nature 'Karman' or 'action'— in other words, the law of cause and effect. Follow this operation of Nature wherever you will, and you will always find that the root precedes the tree, which then produces the seed, which drops to the earth and produces another root followed by another plant and other seeds, and so on indefinitely. We Theosophists say that there is neither 'luck' nor 'chance' nor helter-skelter action anywhere in the universe, which is itself the resultant of an endless chain of causation.

I think that Dr. Swann's idea that 'luck' or 'chance' prevails throughout the Universe perhaps may be due to his being an unconscious victim of the old materialistic 'physical determinism,' as it has been called — the idea

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that there is nothing in the Universe except unimpulsed, unensouled, unguided matter, moving in haphazard fashion towards unknowable ends — in other words a soulless Universe wherein things happen by chance, yet where, nevertheless, in some perfectly unexplained manner, cause and effect rule. I think that Dr. Swann's mind has revolted against the illogic of this conception of our parents and has sought to find in the newer speculative theories of ultra-modern science refuge in purely mathematical conceptions; but if this be true he fails to see that his idea of 'luck' and 'chance' is but a dropping back into the same old determinism under a different form; and I fail to see any difference between the older idea and his own.

We Theosophists are not fatalists: pray do not get that idea about us. When we speak of the Universe and all in it as being an inescapable chain of causation stretching from the infinity of the past to the infinity of the future; when we say that everything in the Universe is a product, a consequence, a result, a fruit, of previous causes engendering present effects, we state what we believe to be the facts of Nature, as man's highest intelligence construes what happens around him. But — and this is the gist of what I have to say — we affirm with equally positive emphasis that this very chain of causation is the manifestation or proof of the action or operation of will and intelligence; or, to put the matter with still greater accuracy before you, we Theosophists would prefer to say that

the proof of the action or operation of countless wills and intelligences of varying power and of varying quality rising along the scale of life which virtually has neither beginning nor end, like the Universe itself, lies precisely in that chain of beginningless and endless causation.

Also, therefore, do we give to man intelligence and will-power, as a part of his interior constitution, because man, or rather mankind collectively, is one of the numberless hosts of these aggregates of intelligences and wills infilling the Universe. Man is enabled thereby to carve his destiny as he will, because, as I have said, he is an inseparable part of the Kosmos, the Universe, in which he lives; and therefore he has in him in the inmost of his inmost the same factors which govern the Universe, and from this fact flows the ineluctable consequence that he takes his part in fashioning that portion of the Universe which he can cover within the sphere of his own activities and will and spirit. The inescapable laws of the Universe surround us, out of which nothing may go and into which nothing may come from outside, because there is no outside. To us Theosophists the sheer fact that man has intelligence and will-power and is an inseparable part of the Universe, is conclusive proof that the Universe likewise possesses intelligence and will-power, because the part cannot be greater than the Whole, nor contain more than the Whole contains.

Yet, while we do not teach fatalism, we do believe in destiny, which each

man makes for himself. As a friend of mine very neatly expresses it: "Destiny is the picture on the slide that will be thrown upon the screen of life; free will, however, is the artist who modifies the pictures on the slide *before* they are thrown upon the screen of life."

Now, friends, in accordance with my usual custom, I shall read to you a list of items which I have drawn up for our study this afternoon, and which I shall touch upon explicitly or implicitly, directly or indirectly, during the course of our study together today.

1. The Universe which surrounds us is an organic Whole, of which every part is interlocked and interrelated with every other part.

2. This Universe, our own Home-Universe — all that is comprised within the encircling zone of the Milky Way — is but one of innumerable other Universes, and all these various Universes, which are numberless, are in their turn interlocked and interrelated even as the various parts of our own Home-Universe are.

3. Each such Universe considered alone is an organic whole or unit, a cosmic molecule, so to say, formed of hosts of cosmic atomic entities. These latter are the various suns and their accompanying solar systems scattered over the wide fields of space.

4. Every one of such celestial bodies, whether sun or planet, nebula or comet, is likewise an organic entity, composed of incomputable hosts of entities still smaller than itself. Our earth, for instance, is compounded of atoms ultimately, in their turn built of other still

more minute particles or entities called protons and electrons by modern scientists; and these last again are very likely also compounded things, built of infinitesimals still more minute.

5. The most recent discoveries and deductions of ultra-modern science show us another archaic Theosophical teaching, to wit, that matter and energy or force, so called, are fundamentally one thing; or, if you like, two manifestations or phenomena of the underlying Noumenon or REALITY, which is Kosmic LIFE, expressing itself over the face of the Boundless as Motion or unceasing Movement or Energy, of which matter is but the phenomena in all-various forms and shapes.

6. Hence, the worlds that we sense with our feeble instruments of physical report, our physical senses, are but the phenomena of Energy and Matter that exist on and in what we call the physical plane or sphere; and our feeble senses furthermore tell us of but a minute part of even this physical plane or sphere; for our senses are still very imperfectly developed. There are vast ranges of life and being, even belonging to the physical plane or sphere, of which our senses can tell us nothing; and they tell us nothing because they are incapable of responding to the vibrational rates of the energies and substances which prevail on these planes and spheres outside the range of our outer senses.

7. Furthermore, our senses tell us absolutely nothing of the far-flung planes and spheres which belong to the ranges and functionings of the invis-

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ble substances and energies of the Universe; but those inner and invisible planes and spheres are actually inexpressibly more important than what our physical senses tell us of, because they are the *causal realms*, of which our physical world or universe, however far extended in space, is but the effectual or phenomenal or resultant production by the action of the inner and invisible worlds or spheres or planes — use which ever word you like to describe them.

8. But while these inner and invisible worlds or planes or spheres are the fountainhead, ultimately, of all the energies and matters of the whole physical world, yet to an entity inhabiting these inner and invisible worlds or planes, these latter are as substantial and 'real' — using the popular word — to that entity as our gross physical world is to us; just as we know in our physical world various grades or conditions of energy and matter, from our grossest to our most ethereal: precisely after the same general plan do the inhabitants of these invisible and inner and to us superior worlds know and cognise their own grossest and also most ethereal substances and energies.

Why should we be an exception in the boundless Universe — we human beings — or think that the things that we see do not and cannot exist elsewhere than within the very limited range of physical life that our senses of flesh report to us? This idea is positively grotesque. The Universe, after all, is an organic whole. What prevails throughout the whole, there-

fore, must prevail in any part of it.

9. Consciousness in whatever form it may express itself, fundamentally is the noblest and most spiritualized form of cosmic energy; and as all these inner and invisible worlds exist by and from energy, and are in fact nothing but forms of energy expressing itself in countless fashions and manners, the inescapable deduction therefore is that these inner and invisible worlds or spheres are filled full of consciousnesses and lives—in other words, with hosts and countless multitudes of conscious and living and self-expressing entities, operating and functioning in their own spheres or worlds even as we are so doing in this part of the cosmic whole, all of which or whom are under the sway of the general cosmic laws of evolutionary development; all, therefore, even as with us humans, are advancing steadily and continuously from relative imperfections to ever enlarging perfections.

10. There are centers or points of intercommunication between these inner or invisible worlds or planes; and therefore, of course, between them and our world or plane or sphere. And these centers or points the archaic teachings of Theosophy call 'laya-centers' or 'laya-points'—points of intercommunication, centers of intercommunication, channels whereby the forces and substances of one plane flow down into, or up into, another plane or sphere or world — making a passage as energies.

Now, Sir J. H. Jeans, one of the newer generation of scientists, has in-

tuitively discovered these centers or points; and in his latest book, just published, he calls them 'singular points,' and describes them as "points at which matter is poured into our universe from some other and entirely extraneous spatial dimension; so that to a denizen of our universe they appear as points at which matter is being continually created." (From his *Astronomy and Cosmogony*.)

Now, friends, this is a bit of pure, esoteric Theosophy, of real (not bogus) Occultism as we teach it, albeit our choice of words would be a little different from the words which Dr. Jeans uses in which to clothe his thoughts. Truly, our ultra-modern scientists are indeed seeing visions of truth!

11. But the inhabitants of these inner and invisible worlds are not our so-called 'dead'; for, as I have so often recently here told you, there are no dead at all; and I have given you the reasons why. It is not our absurdly tiny speck of kosmic dust, called Terra, our Earth, which populates the infinite fields of the spaces of these inner and invisible worlds when men and beasts and vegetation and minerals 'die,' as the word goes, here on earth; for our own hosts of evolving entities are but one collective multitude filling a small part in the endlessly immense multitudes of living and more or less conscious and self-conscious entities which fill the Universe full. But the inhabitants of these unseen and intangible worlds and spheres are collective hosts by themselves; and all such hosts everywhere and on all planes and in

all worlds, visible or invisible, form each one a kosmic group of the boundless and frontierless spaces of Space.

12. Every kosmic body or globe, be it sun or planet, nebula or comet, atom or electron, is a composite entity formed of or comprised of inner and invisible energies and substances and of an outer, to us, and visible, to us, physical vehicle or body; and these elements all together number seven, being what we Theosophists call the seven principles or elements of every self-contained entity; in other words, of every individual life-center.

13. Furthermore, there are such individualized life-centers so far superior to us and so much more ethereal in their energies and matters that they are utterly invisible to us, even the 'physical' or the lowest of any such superior septenary unit; and equivalently there are other life-centers so much more material and so much grosser in substance and energies than we or our own globe or world, that we can neither see them nor sense them even in their highest parts — the highest to us.

14. In precisely identic fashion, because under the same universal kosmic plan and law, man is a sevenfold entity, even as is our own sun and our earth and all the other planets of our solar system, and all other suns and bodies of interstellar space.

Our earth, therefore, has six invisible and inner globes closely connected with it, vitally and psychically forming what we call the Planetary Chain of our earth.

15. When man, either through evo-

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lution in the far-distant future, or by special training which our Great Teachers can give to those well worthy and qualified to receive it: when man, I say, rises above the magnetic and psychical attraction of this our earth-sphere of astral and physical matter, and functions in his higher principles and elements, which are his inner energies and substances making up his composite sevenfold constitution, then he will be able to function and live and act on and in the inner and invisible worlds and planes and spheres of the entire Solar System, as easily as he does on the visible earth today; because, friends, then he will be an inhabitant of these inner planes or worlds or spheres, with body and senses adequate for life there and with faculties making him fit there to live and to act. This state mankind will reach, as a host, when evolution in the far, far future shall have brought man to be the inner god that he even now actually is in his inmost essential self.

You see, friends, there is nothing at all spooky or weird about this, but I venture to say that there is in it much that is thought-provoking; and if you examine the old literatures of the religions and philosophies of the past, you will find every item that I have set before you this afternoon developed in more or less clear-cut form. But all this requires at least some thinking; it requires a certain amount of mental training. How can a man or woman, for instance, whose whole being is in-wrapped in the life of this physical, material plane, who does not even care

to think about anything except what concerns the physical body and its needs and wants — how can such a human being, I say, have even the remotest conception of the governing forces which rule and control even his own life? — in other words, if you will, his own inner self? — those vast and mighty powers which fill his being and express themselves more or less perfectly through him. Why, he knows nothing of them, and in fact because of this he lives the life which the ancient Pythagoreans called ‘the living death’ — he is one of the ‘living dead.’

But there are others — men whose intuitions are developed, so that they not only know of these things directly, but can throw themselves into vibrational intercommunication with their own higher spheres, energies and powers; and thus not merely contact them, but actually, self-consciously, live in those inner planes of their own being and there gain knowledge at first hand. These are the Great Seers of the human race, they who have taught their fellow-men the truths of life and of being. Our teachings are that any normal human being can become such. It remains only for him to set his own feet upon the pathway — the pathway to Reality and Truth. Whither does this pathway lead? It leads, friends, direct to the Heart of the Universe.

And what is the direction in which this path runs? Never outside of man; it is within him. “Man, know thyself,” said the Delphic Oracle in ancient Greece; and the god spoke true. Because, I tell you, the man who knows



himself knows the Universe; for, as I have said, man is a child of the Universe, an inseparable part thereof. Everything is in him that is in it. If he know himself, therefore, he can know all.

You see the ethical aspect of these teachings: wholly scientific, in the first place; ethical and moral also in very high degree, not merely in the ordinary sense of conventional morality, but in that far higher distinction of the Ancients whereby they spoke of virtue as contrasted with mere ethics or mere morality, signifying by the latter words mere custom or conventional procedures — virtue, otherwise true manhood or true womanhood.

Yes, friends, the world we live in is a marvelous one, and we know this although our knowledge of it is still very small. But our modern science is progressing with seven-league boots, to use the familiar term of the stories of our childhood. Every day some new discovery is made; and the deductions that are drawn from these discoveries are as wonderful in their way as are the discoveries themselves.

For instance, consider the ether, so called, which surrounds the earth, which is kosmic in extent, in which every molecule of our bodies, every molecule of everything that exists, and every atom, and electron and proton of every atom, are bathed as in a boundless ocean. This ether seems to us so tenuous, so thin, so ethereal; and yet, do you know, friends, that it is incomparably more dense, according to ultra-modern scientific theories, than is

our densest physical substance. Obviously, for does it not permeate and penetrate all? It permeates and penetrates our grossest physical matter, as water will a sponge; and our physical matter is mostly spaces, holes, emptinesses, as I have pointed out on many other occasions, merely recalling now to your mind this, that the atomic distances separating electron from electron and these from their protonic center or sun are relatively as great as are the distances in our kosmic solar system separating planet from planet and these from our sun.

What is the atom, according to modern theory, but a copy of the solar system, an infinitesimal copy of it? I tell you that it is mostly spaces. But this ether is incredibly dense, if judged by our own physical standards. An eminent British scientist, Sir J. J. Thomson, has made a calculation that the density of the ether of interstellar space is two thousand million times that of lead — two billion times in American numeration, and lead, as you know, is one of the densest metals that we know on earth; and yet we are utterly incognisant of the existence of this ether so far as our physical senses can tell us anything about it. Our physical sense-apparatus gives us no true report, therefore, of its nature. It is the far finer instrument called man's mind which tells him of these things.

Yes, despite our splendid acquisitions in knowledge, how little we know after all! What, then, is this physical world of ours, this world so seem-

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ing solid? Mostly spaces; mostly holes; etheric fields. You know what the modern theory of the atom is, and you also probably know that even modern atomic theories are changing rapidly. But whether the conception of the physical atom as developed by the Danish scientist Niels Bohr, consisting of electrons or negative charges of electricity revolving around an atomic central sun or proton, which is a positive charge of electricity; or whether it is the still more modern conception of the atom of Schrödinger, or that of Heisinger and De Broglie, matters not at all.

To the Theosophist any conception of the atom as a composite entity of electrical nature will be temporarily satisfactory, although as a matter of choice it does seem that the atom of Niels Bohr corresponds more closely to physical reality, because following the general plan of a physical world that we do know in the solar system, and because his theory is therefore based on reasoning by analogy — analogy being the human expression of Nature's fundamental characteristic, that the minute reflects or mirrors the great, or vice versa.

The newer ideas are somewhat different from those of yesterday, but the essential conceptions seem to remain more or less the same, to the effect that the atom is built mostly of etheric spaces, and that the particles of the substance that it contains consist of electricity variously compounded of its positive and negative parts. Thus, therefore, the physical world, reduced

to its ultimates, is mostly 'emptinesses' or etheric spaces, with occasional particles of negative or positive electricity whirling with vertiginous speed around the atomic sun, the center of the atom, which is the theory that the present speaker prefers, withal not denying that future physical discovery may modify Bohr's conception in many particulars.

Incredible is the speed of these electrons. Another scientist, Dr. E. E. Fournier d'Albe, in February of last year, wrote as follows in *The Observer* of London, about the orbits of these electrons and their rate in speed and time as they pursue their orbital course around their atomic sun:

In this miniature solar system [of the atom] the year would be represented by the time of one revolution [of an electron] round the central 'sun,' and as these revolutions take place at the rate of about a thousand million millions [or one quadrillion in American numeration] per second, it is clear that while we watch, even for a moment, untold ages and geological eras of atomic time are passing by.

Pause a moment in thought, friends: do you know what it is that has brought about the revolution in modern scientific thought more largely than any other factor? It is what is called the modern Relativity Theory. I have spoken of this theory several times before, and I shall read to you now a list of seven points on which this ultra-modern scientific theory of the nature of the Universe and of its operations is practically the same as the teachings of ancient Theosophy. By this I do not mean that our Theosophical

philosophy endorses all the mathematical proofs that Dr. Albert Einstein — the formulator of modern Relativity — has set forth in demonstration of his theory; not at all; nor again the manner in which he presents his proofs; nor again the operations of Nature as he cites them in substantiation of his proofs — not necessarily at all. But certain fundamental ideas are the same in Theosophy and in this wonderful new theory, which has revolutionized all modern scientific conceptions.

Let me read to you these seven points as I have drawn them up, not meaning, however, that every point has been set forth in formal fashion by scientific writers; but I do mean that these seven points are necessary deductions or actually teachings of the modern scientific relativist theory.

1. That all things and beings are relative to all other things and beings, and that nothing is absolute, apart from, and separate from, all other things and beings in the entire universe.

2. That energy and matter are fundamentally one thing; and Theosophy says that energy and matter are two forms or phenomena of an underlying and causal and vivifying REALITY: KOSMIC LIFE.

3. That energy and matter are both granular or corpuscular or atomic, so to say, and necessarily so, both being forms of the same underlying essential Reality.

4. That Nature in its forms of manifestation is illusory to us; that is to say, that things and beings are really

not in themselves as our senses interpret them to us humans. In other words, we do not see the Universe as it is, because our senses are imperfect reporters. Dwell upon this idea for a moment, friends. There is a great lesson to be drawn from it—if nothing else, at least the lesson of modesty.

5. That our Universe is not infinite; that is to say, boundless; but only one of innumerable other universes; and that it is rounded, more or less, in conformation, which is the so-called 'curved space' of Dr. Einstein, which has so puzzled people, simply meaning that all movement in it, reduced to ultimates, must necessarily pursue lines or pathways within that rounded universe which follow the general conformation of the Universe.

6. That Time, Space, and Matter are not singular individual absolutes in themselves, any one separate from the others and different from them, as formerly so confidently supposed; but are all relatives, and interdependent, any one on the other two, for existence and function; and are all of them forms or phenomena of the underlying fathomless Reality before spoken of — the limitless Kosmic Life.

7. Because our Universe is rounded in conformation; and because it is filled full of countless forms of energy all at work; and because energy is substantial, energy and matter being fundamentally one; and because energy and matter are inseparable by nature: therefore all the many forms of energy follow pathways or lines of least resistance; in other words, energy can-

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not leave matter nor matter divorce itself from energy, both being essentially one. Hence, all pathways of energy or the lines of least resistance, follow curved paths, because the Universe is of rounded type; energy thus returning into itself after following its courses. Nevertheless, energy of higher forms, of kinds not imbodyed or englobed, or encrusted, so to say, in physical matter, could and must have inter-cosmic circulations, which are the bonds of the universe with the Boundless Space surrounding our own Home-Universe, and are the links between our own Home-Universe and other universes.

Now, friends, from what we have said, it is abundantly evident, I think, that our Universe is illusory; that physical matter in itself is actually the most unsubstantial and unreal thing we know, because we know it only by imperfect reporters — our physical senses — which report but a small part of the kosmos — one or two tones of the gamut of the Song of Life, as it were: only these few notes do our physical senses tell us of the vast range of vibrational activity that the Universe contains.

Next, that energy, while substantial, is more ethereal and of a finer character than is matter; and that our Universe, our World, or man, or any entity, is infilled with energy, which, while substantial, is yet more ethereal than the vehicle or body upon which it works and in which it works.

That our globe, that the sun, that the other planets, that the stars, and

the nebulae, and the comets, and the atoms, and the electrons: that whatever body it may be: are all of them ruled and governed after the same general kosmic plan by infilling and inspiriting energies, which, because they are substantial, have their own inner planes, and express themselves on our physical plane as they work down towards it. These energies are the invisible worlds.

Has it ever struck you to consider that what we see around us, our own world, and the stars and the planets, cannot just be there because they are there, or in other words, that they cannot be the products of 'chance'? What is 'chance'? Chance is a word which expresses or tells our ignorance of facts of truth. When something happens whose causative relations we cannot trace, we say, popularly, it 'chanced' so; but let us not forget that giving words to things somewhat after the Hebrew legend of Adam in the Garden of Eden naming the beasts as they passed before him, by no means tells us what the things are: naming things is merely a convenience so that we may be able to call them or define them when we wish to speak of them. Man's logical mind demands links of thought; and rejects as unintelligible any conception which is senseless and therefore illogical. Man's mind, being one expression of energies belonging to the Universe, must function fundamentally after the pattern of that Universe, which is equivalent to saying that because man's mind is conscious and logical, therefore the Universe is conscious

and logical, and because man's intellect demands causative links, therefore the Universe is linked together and is not a haphazard and insane dream of a kosmic lunatic.

From what has been previously said, therefore, these links in the Universe are the various spheres and planes all working together and forming the kosmic structure. As man is both visible and invisible in constitution; in other words, as he is both body and mind or intellect and spirit, equally so must the Universe be visible and invisible; for the part cannot contain more than the Whole of which it is an integral portion. Our earth is a globe; the sun is a globe; the stars are globes; because each one of these is the visible body expressing the operative energy behind it which makes it such. If you understand this thought clearly you will see in it ineluctable proof — a proof inescapable in its logical sequences — of the inner and invisible worlds of which I have been speaking; and I have endeavored to give you the simplest case in proof of this statement that occurs to me.

Reverting a moment to the theory of Relativity, formulated by Dr. Albert Einstein, I dare say that you know that there still are some few scientists of eminence who gravely doubt whether Einstein's Relativity Theory is actually based on truth. I very recently read a book by Professor Charles Lane Poor, Professor of Celestial Mechanics in Columbia University. In this book, entitled *Gravitation versus Relativity*, Professor Poor argues

both emotionally and mathematically against the Relativity Hypothesis of Dr. Albert Einstein; and whatever else may be said of his book, it is at least interesting and readable. Printed in 1922, it contains 272 pages, including Appendices, and it devotes 238 pages to an attempt to demolish Einstein's Relativity Theory, much of his argument being that Relativity is neither *necessary* nor *sufficient* to account for the alleged various discrepancies and irregularities that have been observed in astronomy: not *necessary*, because one can imagine another cause or other causes for the observed astronomical peculiarities; and not sufficient, because he argues that only one of several such unexplained astronomical discrepancies — that pertaining to the perihelion-movement of the planet Mercury — has been explained by the Relativity Theory.

Yet, after devoting many pages to the motions of the planets and certain discrepancies therein as being due, according to Professor Poor, to an envelop of diffuse matter stretching through the solar system and surrounding the sun, and including at least the four inner planets, he, Professor Poor, has the following remarkable statement to make. He says on pages 238-239:

Thus the motions of the planets do not prove the truth of the Einstein Theory, nor, on the other hand, do they prove its falsity. While these motions can be accounted for by a certain distribution of matter in the solar envelop, it has not yet been established by observation that the matter is distributed through space in the required way. In the present state of our knowledge regarding this

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matter, the motions of the planets do not and cannot furnish a definite answer to the question as to the validity of the Relativity hypothesis. It is then a problem of observational astronomy to investigate the actual distribution and density of the matter in the solar lens, and to determine whether or not it approximates the conditions necessary to account for the planetary motions.

But one conclusion is certain, the Einstein hypothesis and formulas are neither *necessary* nor *sufficient* to explain the discordances in the planetary motions.

In other words, Professor Poor *imagines*, perhaps rightly, a certain state of distribution of matter in the solar system, and argues from this that the Relativity Theory is not necessary nor sufficient, because his imagined matter-distribution also accounts for the alleged discrepancies; and then immediately goes on to say, as any honest man would, that such distribution of matter "has not yet been established by observation." This seems to be a good deal like setting up a man of straw in order to make a striking point and then immediately knocking it down again.

My time for this afternoon is nearly ended; and I have no more leisure at present to go into greater details of the subjects that I have been discussing. Our earth is a globe, and the sun is a globe, because the interior elements or principles of every such physical globular body are themselves globular, and the outer or physical merely reflects or mirrors the inner or causal. Everything in Nature repeats itself. No two things are identical; nevertheless the orbs of the planets of the solar system follow the same gener-

al law; and the suns, the Flowers of Eternity, scattered over the boundless spaces, are more or less builded after the same manner; and we men of earth follow in our inner constitution the same general kosmic pattern. Every visible entity or thing, according to our Theosophical teachings, is the physical body or vehicle of an indwelling energy, or rather, bundle of energies; and it is impossible to make of man an exception from the general rule prevailing everywhere.

These inner worlds are not populated by our dead, because as I have pointed out, there are no 'dead'; but each one of these inner worlds has its own populations, even as our physical globe has. Why should we be exceptions to the universal rule? As I have so often said before, it would seem to be mere egoism to imagine that we humans stand alone and unique in the Universe, and that our small speck of dust, our earth, is the only carrier of intelligent beings. There are no such exceptional cases anywhere wandering so far from the common rule. Apparent exceptions more or less prove the rule; and did we know enough we should see that these exceptions are exceptions only to our ignorance.

For instance, as regards the geniuses in the world: the 'law of averages,' if we followed it alone, might say: it is impossible for such a man as a genius to exist, because the 'law of averages' takes no note of genius. Nevertheless we know that geniuses exist. Suppose we should gather all the geniuses of the world together and analyse their

various characteristics so that we had a full and complete case of all these geniuses before us, lacking not one, and applied the 'law of averages' to them also; we should then find that, granting this number of geniuses, such a one out of the number would be a musician, such a one would be a poet, such a one a philosopher, and so forth. Actually there are no exceptional cases; there are merely manifestations of causation, link by link, endless and beginningless, and every being, every entity, whether high or low, ordinary or genial, is such a link in Nature's processes.

Man and all the other entities of the Universe are connected with these invisible worlds. Energies are poured into our world constantly and our world is constantly pouring energy out of itself. And the same rule appertains to the circulations of matter. Modern scientists today are actually beginning to talk of the possibility of matter vanishing in a burst of energy.

Now, in order to realize how subversive this is of the old science of our boyhood-days, it is sufficient to recall to your mind the main pillar of the physical sciences of fifteen or twenty years ago: I mean the Law of the Conservation of Energy, which states in substance that the Universe contains a fixed amount of energy, to which nothing could be added and of which not an iota could be deducted. Just the opposite is the modern teaching, thank the immortal gods!

I have spoken of Dr. Jeans and his 'singular points,' and of his statement

that these are centers at which matter is being continually poured into our universe from some other dimension, as he calls it; from some other world, is the way in which we would say it; and I have spoken in very eulogistic terms of this statement of Dr. Jeans. I cannot take the same attitude, however, in regard to this same gentleman's belief with regard to the short period of time that he gives to the future of the sun. He seems to have a theory based on the electronic orbits of atoms, that these orbits periodically vanish, each such event meaning a constant, sudden, and radical change in the structure and powers of the sun, and that when all electronic orbits shall have disappeared, leaving but the protonic nucleus, the sun itself will then be seen to fade and will manifest but as a feebly luminous but very hot white dwarf. His exact words, as reported, are as follows:

It is slightly disconcerting to notice that our sun is perilously near to the dangerous left-hand edge of the main sequence, so that its collapse into a feebly luminous white dwarf (sun) may start at any instant—*Communication to the Royal Astronomical Society*

This extraordinary notion the Theosophist finds it utterly impossible to accept; and it is perhaps comforting to timorous souls to realize that it is but an interesting and very speculative idea.

Friends, I leave you this afternoon with this final observation: Man lives his life for a brief period on this our earth, whither he has come because the chain of causation, of which I have

spoken before, drew him here. He himself is that chain of causation. The links are in him. It is not something outside of him. It is himself, developing step by step, link by link, in evolutionary progress, and thus growing from smaller to greater through eternity.

The time will come in far-distant aeons of the future, when man, having become an incarnate human god, will live in these invisible realms or worlds or spheres of which I have spoken, and therein pursue a destiny which will be sublime, because divine in its character.

## THEOSOPHY AND RELIGION

H. T. EDGE, M. A., D. LITT.

### II

**I**N this article we consider the unity of religion; whether different religions can be united, and how; the common source of all religions, the Wisdom-Religion of antiquity; what is a Christ; the relation of religion to science; how neither religion nor science have given us a proper understanding of the mysteries of our own nature and of external nature; what is salvation; and whether we should work for a future heaven or strive to realize our possibilities on earth.

Religion must be essentially one and single, though it may vary in externals. History shows us nations, sword in hand, trying to force their religion on other nations. Even in the same religion we have seen warring sects, each ready to persecute, torture, and slay its opponents, whenever it could get the upper hand. Lately we have witnessed the incredible folly of nations praying to God for the destruction of God's own people on the enemy side. Modern progress has drawn the world closer together, thus emphasizing the local nature of religions, and stressing the importance of finding a basis of

mutual tolerance which shall not be a merely negative one, but a bond of unity in faith.

Shall we then seek to *unite* religions and thus build up a kind of composite religion, or religious compromise? Such unions inevitably result in the elimination of controverted points, leaving only the vaguest and most diluted residue as a basis of unity. It is like one of those composite photographs, wherein, several negatives being superimposed successively upon one sheet of printing paper, the peculiar features of each portrait are eliminated, and what remains is an utterly characterless human face, having only what is common to all the portraits — nose, eyes, mouth, and a primordial rudimentary collar and tie.

The question of whether to dip the whole body, or only to anoint the forehead with the water, would be reconciled by omitting the rite of baptism altogether from the common ritual; while any attempt to find common ground for all the different conceptions of the Eucharistic sacrament would surely result in something so vague



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and colorless as to be quite devoid of force. Further illustrations are not needed: the reader can supply them. No: there is a better way than trying to amalgamate what will not blend; than seeking to build an ungainly structure out of incompatible parts loosely pinned together. What is it?

### THE ORIGINAL PARENT-RELIGION

Rather than make a patchwork out of fragments, were it not better to restore the original unity? Rather than try to unify religions by a process of eliminating what they have, were it not better to give back to them what they have lost? To use a mathematical analogy, what we need is not a common factor but a common multiple. A common factor of many numbers is apt to be very small and may be non-existent; but a common multiple is superior to each number and contains them all. The one religion must surely be greater than any single religion, not less. The separate religions are to be regarded as broken fragments of a former whole.

It is not necessary that men in every race and nation should have exactly the same creed and the same ritual; it would be folly to attempt it, folly even to try to bring about perfect conformity between any two individuals. It is allowed that men can be brothers and yet wear different garbs and have different kinds of noses. *E pluribus unum*. The problem of the one and the many: the secret of harmony: harmony is not unison, neither is it discord.

More than one great scholar has stated

that there never was a religious founder . . . who had *invented* a new religion, or revealed a new truth. These founders were all *transmitters*, not original teachers. They were the authors of new forms and interpretations, while the truths upon which the latter were based were as old as mankind.

— *The Secret Doctrine*, I, xxxvi

The Secret Doctrine was the universally diffused religion of the ancient and prehistoric world.— *Ibid.*, I, xxxiv

It is a cardinal tenet of Theosophy that there has always existed a fundamental and universal Religion, which is the common parent of all religions, the source from which the religious founders drew the teachings which they transmitted and adapted to the requirements of their times. The names by which this is known to Theosophists are the Wisdom-Religion, the Secret Doctrine, the Ancient Wisdom, the Esoteric Philosophy, and others. H. P. Blavatsky's largest work, *The Secret Doctrine*, is devoted to proofs that such a system really existed and still exists, and to an exposition of its principal tenets. The inquirer is therefore referred to that work, and he will find information in the smaller Theosophical publications. This then is the source to which we must get back if we are to find the true basis of union among diverse religions. All religions, on their esoteric side, are the same; in exoteric features they are diverse.

In our last paper we considered some of the fundamental truths common to all religions, and therefore tenets of the Wisdom-Religion. One was the essential Divinity of man and the fact that man is endowed with

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faculties which enable him to come in contact with the great Spiritual Powers of the universe. This connects closely with the doctrine of the Christ.

Jesus is not a unique character, not the only Christ. Other religions have their Christs. These are *men*, men like unto ourselves, except only that they have advanced in their evolution to a point which, for the majority of us, lies yet in the future. They are the 'elder brothers' of the human race. Having attained to Self-Knowledge, having passed through the portals of initiation, they thereby become ministers of the great Law of Compassion. Having conquered their selfish personal nature, they can have no other object except to be the means of bringing to others that which they themselves have won. These great Teachers, these founders of religions, these Masters of Compassion, come to point out to their fellow-men, to their younger brothers, the Way, the Path, to liberation from ignorance and passion, the Path that leads to Knowledge and the Peace that passeth understanding.

Read the sayings of Jesus and you will find that he promises to his faithful disciples the same blessings, the same attainments, which he himself has won. Such has always been the original teaching of the great religious founders; and it is only after their departure that the light they shed gradually wanes, and their teaching assumes another form. It becomes ecclesiastical and dogmatic. For the grand old truth that man must achieve his own salvation by invoking the God-given

attributes with which he is endowed, there is substituted the doctrine that man needs a special intercession, a special act of grace, which can only be secured by conforming to certain articles of belief and certain specified rites. Thus Religion splits up into religions, incompatible with each other, each one claiming to have the keys to heaven and regarding adherents of the others as outcasts. By recognising that all religions, in their pure and original form, contain this same tenet, we have at once the basis for a union of all believers.

It will really be impossible to hold on much longer to the fond idea that the Christian religion is paramount, special, or the final word among religions. The truth, that Christianity is but one among many religions, must inevitably force itself upon the convictions of all. The process of arriving at this conviction has already proceeded far, and is gaining ground every day. It is quite a favorite idea among Christian writers today that the Christian message is not yet fully delivered, but is still in process of delivery; in other words that Christianity is not static but growing. What can this mean if not that there lies behind the present gospel something greater than itself, which is continually unfolding and being manifested? Such an admission on the part of Christians carries them far on the road to which Theosophy points; for Theosophy says that all religions are incomplete presentments of the great universal Wisdom-Religion.

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Let there be no fear that, in laying aside our former credal beliefs, we shall run the risk of losing our hold on spiritual realities and sinking into materialism and skepticism. Rather we shall gain by discarding limitations that have held us back, shut us in. Loyalty, loyalty to the Divine Spirit whose earthly temple is in the heart of man; faith, faith in the power of man's essentially Divine nature to overcome all carnal obstacles, and to replace the life of self-seeking by the life of Divine Love; these are the everlasting bases of religion, able to unite all devotees in an insoluble bond.

A false antithesis has been made between religion and science; and now it is sought to patch together the sun-dered fragments. But they should never have been separated, and we must get back to the original unity.

Religion and science can be reconciled on condition that both shall cleanse their houses, says H. P. Blavatsky. Knowledge is essentially *one*, though it may often be convenient in practice to divide it into compartments. The desire for knowledge is implanted in the human breast; and any influence which tends to thwart this desire and to represent it as impious or presumptuous is a retrograde influence, tending to darkness rather than light. Theosophy encourages, nay enjoins, the study of human nature and of external nature to the full, and does not regard such studies as profane or outside the province of religion.

Neither religion nor science, as we know them today, has taught us about

the mysteries of our own nature, and there is a vast and all-important field of knowledge left outside both domains. Thus we suffer both from ignorance and from a quenchless desire to remove it; both of which complaints are remedied by Theosophy.

To specify: what has religion, as we know it, taught us about the law of Reincarnation? We are vaguely told that the Soul will live eternally in the future, but are left altogether in the dark as to its condition before birth. A single earth-life of man seems futile and meaningless, consisting as it does of unfinished tasks and unrealized aims; and who can make rhyme and reason or justice out of the idea of a microscopic span of conscious activity lost in an ocean of eternity? This great truth of the eternity of the Soul, and of its periodical rebirths, is one of those teachings which have disappeared from many existing religions.

The allegation, sometimes heard, that Theosophy is opposed to Christianity, is not only untrue, but the opposite to the truth. For Theosophy reinstates and rescues Christianity. All religions have an exoteric or outer form, and an esoteric or inner form; and it is to the esoteric form that Theosophy calls attention. There is much more in Christianity than most people have succeeded in getting out of it.

We learn from the Gospels that Jesus had special and direct teachings for his pupils, and general, veiled, allegorical teachings for the multitude. In other words, his teachings had an esoteric and an exoteric form. This is

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the invariable rule with Teachers of the Path of Wisdom. It is not that anything is kept back from or grudged to people who ought to have it; it is that seed scattered on barren land is wasted; and you cannot give knowledge to those unready or unable or unwilling to receive it. For the reception of the more esoteric teachings, the candidate has to qualify; which is no more than what is demanded of neophytes in many branches of professional or industrial training.

Many Christians, in seeking to find a common factor for the numerous sects and shades of belief, something which shall be characteristically Christian and accepted by all Christians, have chosen the doctrine of salvation by the sacrifice of the Son of God, who thus performs an act of intercession, taking upon himself the guilt of men. But this doctrine would require that Jesus should be regarded as the son of God in a unique sense; which, as aforesaid, Theosophists cannot allow. It is also tantamount to a denial of man's power to achieve his own salvation by the grace of the Divine Spirit (his real Self) acting within him. This again Theosophists cannot accept, for it implies the degradation of human nature.

Again, the doctrine, rightly understood, is not peculiarly Christian, but is one of those teachings found in all religions and derived by them from their common parent the Wisdom-Religion. The Christ who is sacrificed for the benefit of man is man's own Divinity, which, by its association with the

fleshly nature, undergoes a crucifixion, an imprisonment, a loss of light and glory. The sacrifice is performed voluntarily, out of Love, and results in the accomplishment of its purpose, which is the redemption of man's soul from its servitude to the carnal nature.

### WHAT IS SALVATION?

Salvation means deliverance, liberation; and redemption means buying back. What in Theosophy is called the Human Soul, hovers midway between the Spiritual and the carnal nature; and it is delivered from its subjection to the carnal nature by the self-sacrifice of the Spiritual Self, which thus redeems man. This is an essential truth of the Wisdom-Religion, contained in all religions, presented as usual to the multitude in a veiled and allegorical form, which is afterwards literalized and degraded into a special dogma or credal article.

Few people today believe that the hosts of people who have not accepted the Christian Gospel will be damned; but those who still believe that are at least consistent. Those who reject this belief might find it difficult to justify their rejection on dogmatic grounds. Why preach the Gospel of salvation through Christ, if salvation can be achieved without it? Whatever way we look at it, the believing Christians must be specially favored over the rest, and that through nothing more than an accident of birth and nationality. But, once admit the doctrine to be a universal truth, not special to Christians, but applicable to all men, in all

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times and all lands, and the difficulty vanishes. What the Christian Master did was to reintroduce it and to reinterpret it for his own time and place. Theosophy proclaims it once again and interprets it for the modern understanding.

Salvation does not mean that you will save your precious 'soul' for an endless life of bliss in a 'heaven'; it means that you will raise yourself to the level of true Manhood, by uniting your human soul with its Divine Counterpart, the Spiritual Soul, and thus turning the earthly nature from a tyrant into a servant.

So salvation is not an affair of the after-life, but an affair of the present life. We can work only where we are at the time; this earth is our present sphere of duty. While on earth, whether in the present incarnation or another, our duties are concerned with the life we have to live here. Shall the whole object of our life be so to live

that we may secure our own soul against the possibility of future torment and win endless bliss in heaven; and to save as many other souls as possible in the same way? Or shall our purpose be to strive our utmost to realize the glorious possibilities of human nature while on earth, not only in our own personality but in society as a whole?

Even in the ranks of organized religion people have largely abandoned that old narrow idea of salvation and realize more fully that religion should be concerned with the welfare of humanity on earth. The devil is simply an expression for that union of the human mind with desire which tends to destroy human nature and disrupt human society. Hell is the retribution which man brings on himself by worshipping this devil; and it is true enough that we get all the hell we need or can stand where we are, without having to undergo a worse one after death.

## THREE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:

**Kenneth Morris — Flinders Petrie — Spengler**

A REVIEW BY TALBOT MUNDY

**A**CCUSTOMED as it is to violence the mind of man enjoys the military metaphor; it likes its similes assembled from the ordnance-list. Such words as 'cannonade' and 'culverin' suggest a victory and their significance is all heroic, since imagination dims itself toward the other aspect. If I liken Kenneth Morris to a lonely culverin assailing Bigots' Castle

the suggestion should not be extended to include the 'villainous saltpeter' and the malice. Year in, year out, he has kept on cannonading the redoubts of ignorance, and now a breach begins to show, through which, it may be, even the 'authorities' will march with blaring bands — forgetful of the man who laid that lonely culverin and served it faithfully; ignoring the great general

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who gave him that fatiguing post; and thoughtful only of the plunder.

For there will be plunder when the walls are down and men see history with unobstructed view. There will be riches beyond dream, of food for the intelligence and stimulus for the imagination; treasures from the fabled past that turn out to be beautiful and true; recovered provinces of knowledge in which educators will discern that evocation is a higher calling and the grandeur of the ever-present past is rediscoverable in the hearts of men.

It was H. P. Blavatsky, of course, who fired the first arousing shot. She carried the first entrenchments. Men and women rallied to her, some of whom went down before the shafts of ridicule and slander, or lost the way amid the smoke; and some grew weary. But before H. P. Blavatsky died she had accomplished what she came to do, and had assembled an unconquerable nucleus of followers. The doctrine of the Ancient Wisdom had been re-established in the western world; and under William Q. Judge, and Katherine Tingley, it has been lived and proved and made to flourish.

In the days when Katherine Tingley, demonstrating her ability to lead, appointed Kenneth Morris to a professorship of history at Point Loma, there was probably no other college-principal on earth who would have dared to indorse such entirely unorthodox views as his were reckoned by the so-called educators who controlled the text-books and examinations. Those were the days when we had to suppose

that the world was created in a week, six thousand years ago, or else be punished for impertinence and infidelity.

But Kenneth Morris had answered H. P. Blavatsky's trumpet-call while his youthful intelligence was still in process of being cribbed, cabined, and confined within the said-to-be so safe and comfortable walls of orthodoxy — literary, racial, and religious. A preliminary necessary to a powerful explosion is compression. The rule applies throughout dynamics. So it may be that the iron-ribbed doctrines of the public schools of England deserve credit for the consequent effectiveness of the explosion when the spark lit by H. P. Blavatsky fired the youth's imagination and he wrote a school prize-essay that excluded him forever from the cage of dry-as-dust pol-parroted, polite belief in the incorrigible savagery of the ancients and the *ne plus ultra* culture of ourselves.

At any rate, he broke forth — flew forth — sang his song — and has been singing ever since beside the sea, in Lomaland, whence his songs and his poems, his wholly unorthodox views and his brilliant survey of history as cyclic evolution, have been spread to all corners of the earth. Children of a quarter of a hundred nations have received from him the spark he caught and cherished from the anvil of the Founder of the Theosophic Movement.

Kenneth Morris saw and wove into a rhythmical, broad-visioned series of lectures the long hidden facts of ebb and flow in history. Not once avoiding the authentic facts as given in *The*

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*Secret Doctrine* and the other writings of the modern Founder of the Theosophical Movement, nor trespassing beyond the pale of record into legend (lest the easily disgruntled critics should accuse him of constructing his own evidence) he took the commonly accepted facts and reinterpreted their meaning with a logic and a clarity of diction that permitted no misunderstanding. Criticasters might find any fault they pleased with his discovery and his elucidation of it, but they could not pretend to misinterpret it. He had defined the issue, marshaled the acknowledged facts, and thrown a concentrated light on evolution in the history of man.

He accepted the Ancient-Wisdom teaching of the law of cycles; investigating history he applied it, recognising that the law is universal and that, consequently, no phase of existence can escape its government. As tides flow back and forth, the seasons follow one another in their order, and the night imbosoms day, so there are days and nights of evolution in which nations feel the impulse of creative energy and rise — until the inescapable, imponderable law removes the energy and they decline, through twilight, into darkness — until energy returns and they again become a force to reckon with.

By illustrations from the pages of recorded history Professor Morris showed, and proved, that the average length of the cycle — from the rise into the clash of world-importance to descent into comparative obscurity —

is one hundred and thirty years, the span not varying by more than insignificant degrees accounted for by the discrepancies of records and a margin for opinion as to just exactly when a rise began or a descent was finished.

It was caviare to the general doctrinarian. It stung the pride of the proponents of the Nordic theory of race-supremacy and the philosophers who judge intelligence by color of the epidermis or possession of a craving for machinery, to be invited to agree that Oriental races have attained to higher culture than our own and will again surpass us when the time shall come. And he offended them by speaking of pralaya and manvantara, two terms that suggest esoteric teaching. It was all very well, it might be and perhaps, to assert an unorthodox theory; but to use terms (comprehensible to two-thirds of the world) whose use implied that the ancient 'heathen' who invented them knew anything worth knowing, was an insult to men possessed of framed certificates from colleges. Some of those colleges could actually boast four centuries of repetition of the same poll-parrot cries!

Great is Diana of the Ephesians! *Vox literati vox dei!* Was there ever a time in history when they, whose honor and emoluments depended on established theories, did not denounce the man with broader and less marketable views?

It certainly was scandalous. Professor Morris boldly taught that we are not the last word in civilization,

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morality, intelligence, government, artistic enlightenment, philosophy, or in any other field; that, on the contrary, the storied past holds records of peoples who have far surpassed us, as the crest-wave of the Force that causes evolution lifted each in turn.

We were parceling up China when he made his first explosive observations. Races, whose progenitors were savages when China reached her apogee of art and scientific government, were landing missionaries then, under the guns of warships, to teach the Golden Rule to 'yellow heathen' while their governments greedily watched for the first chance to avenge a murdered missionary and seize the richest slice of the defenseless country. From burned and rifled palaces of Peking, loot was being brought by stokers and their commanding officers — loot such as no modern hand could imitate nor any auctioneer appraise — to be sold in second-hand shops to the heirs of what has been politely called 'the white man's burden.'

The future is likely to prove that burden to be heavier than the loot was that the sailors freighted home; but it was more unfashionable then than now to mention Karman. "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord," was a nice theoretical, incomprehensible, quotable, innocuous abstraction meant, if anything, to absolve men of responsibility for what they do.

Men bent on proving to themselves that temporary might is final right were not in any mood to listen to the doctrine of the cycles. To have believed

that all our boasted superiority is as evanescent as "the flowers that bloom in the spring, tra-la," and will have "nothing to do with the case" when Nature-Forces acting in obedience to Law withdraw the energy so many of us have abused, and concentrate it elsewhere, would have robbed supremacy of zest. It might have lessened zeal. The second-hand shops might have had to change the signs above their plate-glass windows.

I remember being warned against Professor Morris. I was told he was not 'recognised' by the 'authorities' and that his 'iconoclasm' was only atheism in disguise. According to my informant, a college-principal who had charge of the education of several hundred youths, there would be anarchy in education as well as religion and 'disaster would undoubtedly ensue' if such 'red heresies' should be allowed to gain a footing. He argued that if children were allowed to question the infallibility of text-books; to consider the possibility that 'heathendom' has ever reached our heights of intellectual attainment; or to believe that 'heathen' ever shall be able to surpass us unless, or until, they adopt our standards of civilization and morals; then patriotism would cease to exist and within a generation 'culture' would vanish along with it.

He admitted that he himself had not read the works of Professor Kenneth Morris, and he advised me for the future to confine my reading to the books of standard authors, of whom he very kindly made a penciled list on the back



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of an envelop. The name of one of them was Flinders Petrie.

"You will find those writers safe and sane," he assured me. "If they differ here and there in detail, they agree as to essentials. Their interpretation of the meaning of the facts of history will give you plenty to think about and will help you to appreciate the glories of our present civilization."

However, Kenneth Morris had given me 'plenty to think about,' so it was only very recently that there was time to study Flinders Petrie, whose historical works on ancient Egypt long ago won him recognition as one of the ablest of modern historians. Books that can be slipped into the pocket are attractive in this hurried age, so it was almost by Darwinian selection that the first of Petrie's books to be attempted was *Revolutions of Civilization*, the first edition of which was published in April 1911.

That date is important. There seem to have been only three editions of the book, so it is fair to presume it is much the least popular of Flinders Petrie's works — a circumstance that hardly causes wonder. He agrees with Kenneth Morris!

It appears that at the time when Morris, the Point Loma 'heretic,' was formulating his 'dangerous iconoclasms,' Petrie had already ventured into print with arguments and illustrations — and the statement (page 5) that "civilization is an intermittent phenomenon." He outlines a theory of a law of cycles and crowds his short book with evidence in proof of it. He

refers to the 'summer' and 'winter' of racial rise and decay as the recurrent phenomena produced by natural causes which should be "examined like any other action of nature."

Instances in the realm of astronomy and other sciences are numberless in which individuals, working alone and in ignorance of each other's efforts, have made identical, or almost identical discoveries simultaneously. There is sufficient evidence of this to justify a theory (even if the law were not already known and understood by those who keep alive the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom), that Truth, being universal, and its manifestations being also obedient to the law of cycles, finds its way into human consciousness recurrently, availing itself of whichever individuals in any place are ready to receive it at that time. The spirit flows along the line of least resistance, like water, electricity, sound, currents in the air, or any other form of energy.

A very careful reading of Professor Flinders Petrie's book discloses no evidence that he has read *The Secret Doctrine*, which is the source from which Professor Morris drew not only inspiration but his argument. Professor Flinders Petrie beyond question followed his own line of study, dared to let imagination raise him far above the level of the judgments of his day, and with the courage of conviction published what imagination glimpsed. The fact that *The Secret Doctrine* had been long in print detracts in no way from the merit of his book; he is entitled to full credit as an independent thinker;

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and is fortunate that the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom confirm him while repudiating the more commonly accepted notions of what history means.

Naturally, Flinders Petrie's statement of his case is not as clear or comprehensive as that of Kenneth Morris; he did not consult *The Secret Doctrine* — it is possible he never heard of it — and consequently had to grope his way amid the facts of history at the guidance of his own intuition, tracing the periodic rise and fall of nations mainly through observations of the renaissance and decadence of art, of which he gives profuse illustrations. His only reference to "the great and important elements of moral ideas and religion" is the remark that he has chosen to omit them altogether — probably a wise omission in the circumstances; had he ventured to include them in his outline he would surely have needed a thousand pages instead of one hundred and thirty-one, and would inevitably have aroused the indignation of those hierarchies of conservatism who belligerently loathe the dignified ideals which the plan of spiritual evolution indicates.

There is enough in Professor Flinders Petrie's book to stir imagination and to compel thought, which is the principal requirement in this age of standardized ideas. It actually matters very little whether the historians and scientists, who day by day confirm through 'new' discoveries those statements of fact for which H. P. Blavatsky was mocked, do or do not credit her with having definitely and in no

uncertain words forestalled them all some half a century ago. The point is that she did her work. She broke, as it were, the crust of human consciousness; since when, that inner wisdom that is the heritage of all humanity has been gradually working its way through.

Professor Petrie's book is so condensed that it is no simple matter to make extracts from it that will fairly indicate the point of view from which he has approached his subject; he has knitted his whole theme together admirably and included nothing foreign to the issue; to remove one statement from its context and to quote it in support of him might have the opposite effect to that intended. Here and there, however, there are phrases indicative of a vastly wider vision than his book includes; hints though they are, they suggest that he has seen through more than one veil while he pondered his solution of the rise and decay of nations.

One illuminating statement that he makes is that "the power of *vox populi* is a regular feature of a decaying civilization." It needs courage to adopt that viewpoint in an age when nearly all material accomplishment is made contingent on acknowledging the voice of *demos* as the arbiter of destiny.

He also mentions parthenogenesis (as he calls it) affirming that in the birth of nations there is no such element—wherein he is stoutly supported by *The Secret Doctrine* and by Professor Kenneth Morris. He assures us "there is no new generation without a

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mixture of blood"; and his statement that, if generations average thirty years, each one of us must have had one hundred million ancestors in the course of the past eight centuries, should go far toward exploding the abominable theories of racial superiority that have made our vaunted civilization not much nobler than a cockpit. Mathematically it is evident that so-called 'purity of race' is a delusion. If it could exist, it would inevitably lead to racial extinction. And, as Flinders Petrie says: "When the full maximum number of different ancestors are blended, and every strain of one race has crossed with every strain of the other, this is the period of greatest ability."

But it would not be fair to Professor Flinders Petrie to suggest by implication that he has confined his argument to racial admixture. Admirably, in the compass of his short book, he has indicated many other processes of Nature on the plane of objectivity; that these may be effects, not causes, hardly weakens the book's value. If he cites a famine, or a series of famines, as the cause of Arab restlessness or of Egyptian decay, he indicates by inference a subtler cause again, behind the famine, and compels imagination to bestir itself, since he has raised already that suggestive theory of cycles.

Professor Flinders Petrie's disadvantage is that he ignores the law of Karman and the hope-inspiring theme of the rebirth of individuals. There Kenneth Morris so far has the weather-gage of him that there is no conceiv-

able comparison between their books. Morris explains convincingly and makes the heart sing with the knowledge of the cyclic progress, that always has been and forever shall be ours — where Flinders Petrie only gropes for a solution of the problem. He has observed, and he has reasoned shrewdly; he has given his imagination rein, and he has dared to set down what he sees — which is no mean performance and undoubtedly required the utmost courage. Imagination grows with exercise and there are more unlikely things than that Professor Flinders Petrie may discern such truths as shall illuminate the whole of his patiently acquired familiarity with ancient history and make him the outstanding historian of his age.

And now Spengler, who has taken literary Germany by storm. He is the man who introduced philosophy to railway bookstalls. He philosophizes with a club, and his principal weakness seems to be his incandescent rage. He has no pity for the old school; he prefers to smash it and, like Flinders Petrie, he is not yet ready to replace the "incredibly meager and senseless scheme" with one that really solves the mystery of ages.

In his book *Der Untergang des Abendlandes*, he boasts: "In this book for the first time an attempt is hazarded at determining history in advance. Its purpose is to pursue, through its still unrun stages, the destiny of a culture, and precisely the one culture on the earth at this time which is nearing completion: that of Western Europe."

That expression, 'for the first time,' is amusing. Indubitably Spengler thinks he is the first to break into print in that field, and it may be that he needs the thunder of the boastful drums to call attention to the wares he has to offer. They are good wares; but they will be better when the quiet forward movement of Theosophy in Germany shall reach him and reveal to him that H. P. Blavatsky introduced immensely better ones some half a century ago.

In his manner Spengler brings Nietzsche to mind. He is so vehement against the fallacies of education that he sees around him as to have no patience, and apparently not much hope. Like Flinders Petrie, though with less tact, he has drawn attention to the cyclic course of history and has ignored the laws of Karman and of Rebirth, without which there would be no logic in the law of cycles. He conceives of a logic of time as an organic necessity of fate, to complement his otherwise obviously incomplete conception of cause and effect as 'the logic of space'; and he seeks for a 'logic of history' but fails to find it — as any man must whose eyes are blind to the higher law of spiritual evolution, which includes the key to all the others.

In common with Flinders Petrie, Spengler turns to the arts to illustrate his theory; but to Spengler 'culture' and 'civilization' have widely different meanings, which he stresses vehemently. A 'culture' according to Spengler precedes a 'civilization,' of which latter phase imperialism is the "typical symbol of conclusion." Our present

phase is one of civilization, not of culture. "One may regret this, but one cannot alter it." It does not appear to have dawned on him that we are now creating our own future and that cycles, whether of decay or progress, do no more than to provide and to control the circumstances and conditions in which, and against which, we may struggle, if we will, toward a higher spiritual destiny.

Spengler conceives of cultures as "living organisms of the highest type, growing up in exalted aimlessness, like flowers of the field. They belong, like plants and animals, to the living nature of Goethe, not to the dead nature of Newton. . . . I see in universal history the vision of an eternal formation and transformation, a marvelous rising and passing of organic forms. The standard historian sees it as a tape-worm which is the 'preliminary' to inexhaustible epochs." They are views magnificent that Spengler sees; he is a sure sign of the awakening of growth in human thought; but there is little he can do, except to break up into fragments the already damaged dogmas of the schools of thought he rails against, until the Ancient Wisdom shall include him in its orbit and reveal to him not only cultures that are living organisms, but cycles within cycles that know nothing of 'exalted aimlessness.'

It is a mystery, much more insoluble than any riddle that the Sphinx propounded, how Spengler reconciles exalted aimlessness with his equally stressed assertion that it is man's business to discover the particular stage

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at which history finds him and to govern his actions accordingly. Self-government implies a purpose, a conviction, and a goal. *Cui bono*, if exalted aimlessness is all that actuates the higher types of living organisms?

Spengler is at his best in his destructiveness. He withers with his scorn the hobby-riding of the "highly intelligent connoisseur" concerned with "the mastery of absurd instrumental tone-masses and harmonic obstacles or with the 'doing' of a problem in color." Everything, he says, is centralized, the metropolis dictating to the provinces what they shall think, and money is the standard of all measurement of value. This, he points out, parallels exactly the decay of Rome, where *panem et circenses* symbolized precisely the same causes that are undermining our latter-day civilization. He points out many other parallels — the many-storied tenements, for instance, of Byzantium and Rome and of our own great cities; Rome's financial magnates, whose burial monuments obscured the view along the Via Appia, and our own great capitalists, who, with similar immodesty, erect advertisements of their opulence.

But Spengler misses the significance of all this. Though he can coin a flaming epigram in scorn of Guyau, Bergson, Düring, Euchen, and a host of other thinkers, asserting that "they have dropped from the bird's-eye view to the frog's-eye view" and have become "mere theorists," he himself submits to us a theory that is only different from theirs and newer. He ac-

cepts quite cheerfully conditions that he holds up to our ridicule, asserting they are "part of an organic sequence, a type of historic act (biographically predetermined hundreds of years before.)"

He recommends us to accept conditions also, his theory being that the only possible course left to the occidental intellect corresponds to Hellenic skepticism. "Everything," he says, "depends upon one's clarifying and grasping the situation; this destiny; one can deceive himself about it, but cannot disregard it. Whoever does not admit it to himself, does not count among the men of his generation. He remains a fool, a charlatan, or a pedant."

Spengler possibly forgets that there were prophets of despair before his day, and that human hope perennially lives in spite of them. He has accomplished wonders of invective. But he seems so pleased with having pricked a few thin bladders and exposed the emptiness within, that he has neither capacity nor inclination left to discern what forces move the mere phenomena that he would sweep away as worthless. He prefers "the splendidly clear, highly intellectual lines of a fast steamer" to any of what he terms our present-day "stylistic trash"; and he prefers a Roman aqueduct to all Roman temples and statues. He seems to overlook the fact that even aqueducts and steamers are phenomena.

But he is doing good. He is exploding bombs into the ranks of those who

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would like to pass laws to compel us to think as they dictate. He has none of Kenneth Morris's vision, none of Flinders Petrie's tact. It might improve his usefulness to learn that vehemence is very often merely waste of energy, and that scorn robs truth of its attractiveness. In ignorance of Spengler's age one hesitates to guess that he has yet reached forty. Time with its logic may suggest to him economy of invective, to the end that he may reach, through sympathy, a more distinct and hopeful view of that history which, he believes, he is the first to seek to outline in advance.

Flinders Petrie, diffidently, with authority and tact, has drawn aside a veil and rather hinted than asserted possibilities of new interpretation of the well-known facts of history. Spengler, a scornful bigot in revolt against the bigots, shakes the ranks of ortho-

doxy; he is likely to persuade few and to compel none to agree with him, although, like some 'revivalists,' he can create a nine-days' wonder and a stir intensely satisfying to his own esteem. Kenneth Morris, speaking with authority, because he had *The Secret Doctrine* to rely on, making use of the Key that H. P. Blavatsky brought westward, has unlocked the storehouse of antiquity. Whoever will, may enter, even though Spengler's diatribes suggest to them that there is no hope for the human race.

These are signs of the times. There is a good time coming, when the western world will wake up and discern what history can teach about the proper use of energy. Then — hardly until then — we may expect a renaissance of art and government that truly shall surpass all former crest-waves of recorded history.

## LI PO'S SONG OF PARROT ISLAND

Kenneth Morris, D. Litt.

ON the green island in the river, when he saw the parrots fly  
Thither, desiring its grasses, o'er the river waters of Wu,  
And rise from its gem-green trees again, to wing through the sky  
Westward to where Dragon Mountain looms purple and blue:

When he saw the dawn-mist, rising, reveal what was sweet on the air,—  
The leaves and blooms of the spear-orchid on the island shore;  
And the dark waters embroidered with the pink of the peach-blooms there  
On either side of the river the trees lean o'er:

When he saw the island in the night-time, watched by a lonely moon  
From the dark blue beyond the peaks, his last night there, ere he went,  
And heard the lapping and whisper of the water: his heart fell aswoon  
In his breast, for very sorrow. He knew what banishment meant.

# FUNDAMENTALS OF THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY

G. DE PURUCKER, M. A., D. LITT.

## SIMPLIFICATION OF *THE SECRET DOCTRINE*

### III

**D**EAR Teacher, Fellow-Students of the Esoteric Philosophy:

In taking up again this evening our study of *The Secret Doctrine* at the point we reached a fortnight ago, I open Helena Petrovna Blavatsky's book, the first volume, at page 17, and read the third fundamental postulate — at least a portion of it:

The fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Over-Soul, the latter being itself an aspect of the Unknown Root; and the obligatory pilgrimage for every Soul—a spark of the former —through the Cycle of Incarnation (or 'Necessity') in accordance with Cyclic and Karmic law, during the whole term. In other words, no purely spiritual Buddhi (divine Soul) can have an independent (conscious) existence before the spark which issued from the pure Essence of the Universal Sixth principle — or the OVER-SOUL — has (a) passed through every elemental form of the phenomenal world of that Manvantara, and (b) acquired individuality, first by natural impulse, and then by self-induced and self-devised efforts (checked by its Karma), thus ascending through all the degrees of intelligence, from the lowest to the highest Manas, from mineral and plant, up to the holiest archangel (Dhyâni-Buddha).

Paul, the Apostle of the Christians "to the Gentiles," as they call him, according to the Christian Gospels in *Acts*, xvii, verses 23-28, spoke to an assembly of the Athenians on Mars

Hill, commonly called the Areopagus, and he said the following (the translation being ours):

For as I passed by and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription: 'To the Unknowable God.' For in It we live and move and have our being, as certain also of your own poets have said, "For we are also of Its line."

The poets of whom Paul speaks were probably Cleanthes the Stoic, and Aratus. It is perhaps well to mention that the sense of 'Unknowable,' as used in connexion with this word *Agnostos*, is that employed by Homer, by Plato, and by Aristotle. This Greek word *Agnostos* also permits the translation 'unknown,' but merely because the Unknown in this connexion is the *Unknowable*.

The Athenians had raised an altar to the Ineffable, and with the true spirit of religious devotion they left it without further qualification; and Paul, passing by and seeing it, thought he saw an excellent chance to 'make hay while the sun shone,' so to say, and claimed the Unknowable to which this altar had been raised, as the Jewish God, Jehovah.

A fortnight ago, following the Teacher's instructions, we stated how it was that man could form some conception

of that Ineffable Principle of which Helena Petrovna Blavatsky speaks on pages 14-19 of her *Secret Doctrine*, as being the first of the three fundamental postulates, necessary in order to understand the true teachings of the Esoteric Wisdom; and we saw that man has in himself, as was then said, a faculty transcending the ordinary human intellectual power — something in him by which he can raise himself upwards or, perhaps better, *inwards*, towards the Inmost Center of his own being, which in very truth *is* that Ineffable: from It we came, back to It we are journeying through the aeons of time.

All the ancient philosophers taught the truth concerning this same fundamental principle, each in his own way, each with different terms, each in the language of the country where it was promulgated, but always there was taught the central truth: that in the inmost being of man there lives a divinity, and this divinity is the offspring of the Highest, and that man can become a God in the flesh or he can sink — as the Teacher's words have told us this evening — lower even than the common average of humanity, so that he becomes at first obsessed or beset, and finally possessed by the daemons of his own lower nature and by those of the lower sphere; and by these particular daemons we mean the elemental forces of life, of chaotic life, or of the material sphere of being.

Again, how is it that man cannot see these truths intimately and immediately? We all know the answer is, on ac-

count of the illusion under which his mind labors, the illusion which is a part of himself, not cast upon him from the outside: he *sees*, for instance, and his mind reacts to the vision, and the reaction is conducted along the lines of the illusion, which, taking the ancient Sanskrit word, our first Teacher has called *Mâyâ*.

This is a technical term in the ancient Brâhmanical philosophy. Let us examine its root. What does the word *Mâyâ* come from? It comes from a Sanskrit root *mâ*; the meaning of *mâ* is *to measure* and by a trope of speech, — that is by a figure of speech, — it comes to mean *to effect*, or *to form*, and hence *to limit*. There is an English word *mete*, meaning *to measure out*, from the same Indo-European root. It is found in the Anglo-Saxon as the root *met*, it is found in the Greek as *med*, and it is found in the Latin also in the same form.

Now *Mâyâ*, as a technical term, has come to mean — ages ago in the wonderful Brâhmanical philosophy it was understood very differently from what it is now usually understood to be — the fabrication by man's mind of ideas derived from interior and exterior impressions, and hence the *illusory* aspect of man's thoughts as he considers and tries to interpret and understand life and his surroundings — and thence was derived the sense which it technically bears, *illusion*. It does *not* mean that the exterior world is non-existent; if it were, it obviously could not be illusory; it *exists*, but *is not*. It is 'measured out' or it stands out to the



human spirit as a mirage. In other words, we do not see clearly and plainly and in their reality the vision and the visions which our mind and senses present to the inner life and eye.

The familiar illustrations of Mâyâ in the Vedânta, which is the highest form that the Brâhmanical teachings have taken, and which is so near to our own teaching in many respects, were such as follows: A man at eventide sees a coiled rope on the ground, and springs aside, thinking it a serpent. The rope is there, but no serpent.

Another illustration is what is called the 'horns of the hare.' Now the animal called the hare has no horns, but when it also is seen at eventide its long ears seem to project from its head in such fashion that it appears even to the seeing eye as being a creature with horns. The hare has no horns, but there is then in the mind an illusory belief that an animal with horns exists there.

That is what Mâyâ means: not that a thing seen does not exist, but that we are blinded and our mind perverted by our own thoughts and our own imperfections, and do not as yet arrive at the real interpretation and meaning of the world, of the universe around us. By ascending inwardly, by rising up, by inner aspiration, by an elevation of soul, we can reach upwards or rather *inwards* toward that plane where Truth abides in fullness.

Bernard of Clairvaux, the French mystic of the Middle Ages, said that one way of doing this, and he spoke truly, was by 'emptying the mind,'

pouring out the trashy stuff it contains, the illusory beliefs, the false views, the hatreds, suspicions, carelessness, etc., and that by emptying out all this trash, the temple within is cleansed, and the light from the God within streams forth into the soul — a wonderful figure of thought for a Christian Mystic, but a true one.

It may be asked: What relationship has our wonderful philosophy to the many so-called idealistic systems of Europe, particularly in Germany, and represented by Bishop Berkeley in Britain? The answer is that there are points of contact, naturally, because the men who evolved these systems of philosophy were earnest men, and no man can earnestly think and strive upwards without arriving at some visions of truth, some faint perceptions of the inner life — but none of the systems of idealism which they taught is exactly the idealism which Theosophy is. Theosophy is not an absolute idealism, it does not teach that the external universe is *absolutely* non-existent and that all external phenomena merely exist in the mind.

Theosophy is not exactly either the idealism of Kant nor the wonderful pessimistic idealism of Schopenhauer — wonderful as this great thinker was, and wonderful precisely because he derived his knowledge (and confessed it openly) from the Orient. The idealism of Theosophy is nearest to the philosophy of the German philosopher, von Schelling, who taught (principally) that truth was to be perceived by receding inwards and taking it from

the Spirit, and that the outward world is 'dead mind' or perhaps rather *inert* mind — not the mind of the thinker obviously, but the mind of the Deity. Now this is called 'objective idealism' because it recognises the external object as having existence: it is not non-existent, as absolute idealism would put it. Schelling's ideas come nearest but by no means equal the grandiose teaching which our great Teachers have taught us is the Truth.

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky says on page 631 of the first volume of *The Secret Doctrine*:

Esoteric philosophy, teaching an *objective* Idealism — though it regards the objective Universe and all in it as *Mâyâ*, temporary illusion — draws a practical distinction between collective illusion, *Mahâmâyâ*, from the purely metaphysical standpoint, and the objective relations in it between various conscious *Egos* so long as this illusion lasts.

The teaching, as all older students of the Esoteric School know — and I believe that many of them are here present this evening — is that *Mâyâ* is thus called from the action of *Mûla-prakriti*, or *root-nature*, the co-ordinate principle of that other line of co-active consciousness which we call Parabrahman. We remember that we discussed these questions at our former meeting, and we say that from the moment when manifestation begins, it acts dualistically, that is to say, that everything in Nature from that point onward is crossed by pairs of opposites, such as long and short, high and low, night and day, good and evil, consciousness and non-consciousness, etc.,—and

that all these things are essentially *Mâyic* or illusory — real while they last, but the lasting is not eternal. It is through and by these pairs of opposites that the self-conscious soul learns Truth.

What is the basis of morals? This is the most important question that can be asked of any system of thought. Is morality based on the dicta of man? Is morality based on the conviction in most men's hearts that for human safety it is necessary to have certain abstract rules which it is merely *convenient* to follow? Are we mere opportunists? or is morality, ethics, based on Truth, which it is not merely expedient for man to follow, but needful, necessary? Surely upon the latter!

And in the third Fundamental Postulate which we read at the opening of our study this evening, we find, as was before said, the very elements, the very fundamentals, of a system of morality greater than which, profounder than which, more persuasive than which, perhaps, it would be impossible to imagine anything.

On what, then, is morality based? And by morality I mean not merely the opinion which some pseudo-philosophers have, that morality is more or less that which is 'good for the community,' based on the mere meaning of the Latin word, *mores*, 'good customs,' as opposed to bad. No! morality is that instinctive hunger of the human heart to do righteousness, to do good to every man because it is good and satisfying and ennobling to do so.

When man realizes that he is one with all that is, inwards and outwards, high and low; that he is one with them, not merely as members of a community are one, not merely as individuals of an army are one, but like the molecules of our own flesh, like the atoms of the molecule, like the electrons of the atom, composing one unity — not a mere union but a spiritual *unity* — then he sees Truth.

Every one of us belongs to, and is an inhering part of, that Sublime and Ineffable Mystery — the ALL — which contains and is individual and spiritual unity.

We have all of us one inward universal Self, and each one has also his individual ego. The ego springs from the Self and the Self is the Ineffable, the Inmost of the Inmost, one in all of us — giving each one of us that sense of selfhood; although by extension of meaning we also speak, and properly speak, of the 'lower self,' because this is a tiny ray from the Highest. Even the evil man, as our present great Teacher has taught us, has in himself not merely the spark of the divine, but the very ray of divinity itself: he is both the selfish ego and the Universal Self.

Why then are we taught that when we attain selflessness, we attain the Divine? Precisely because selflessness is the attribute of the Paramâtman, the Universal Self, where all personality vanishes. Paramâtman is a Sanskrit compound, meaning highest or supreme self.

If we examine our own spirits, if

we reach inwards, if we stretch ourselves inwards, as it were, towards the Inmost, every one of us may know that as he goes farther, farther, farther in, the self becomes selfless, the light becomes pure glory.

What a thought, that in the heart of each one of us there dwells, there lives, the Ever-Unfolding, the Constant, the Eternal, the Changeless, knowing no death, knowing no sorrow, the very divinity of *all!* How it dignifies human life! What courage does it give to us! How does it clear away all of the old moldy superstitions! What unspeakable visions of Reality, of the Truth, do we obtain when we go inwards, after having emptied the mind, as Bernard says, of all the mental trash that encumbers it!

These are the doctrines of our Teachers; our present Outer Head is telling us it daily, hinting at it in this way and in that way, using these words and those words, taking the opportunity on every occasion that presents itself to awaken us, to instil these eternal truths into us.

When man has reached the state where he realizes this and has so 'emptied his mind' that it is filled only with the Self Itself, with the selfless selfhood of the Eternal — what did the ancients call this state? What did they call such a man himself? They called the state, 'Bodhi'; and they called the human, 'Buddha'; and the organ in and by which it was manifested, 'Buddhi.' All these words came from a Sanskrit root, meaning to *awaken*.

When man has *awakened* from the

living death in which we live, when he has cast off the toils of mind and flesh and, to use the old Christian term, has put on the 'garments of eternity,' then he has *awakened*, he is a *Buddha*. And the ancient Brâhmanical teachings, found today even in the Vedânta, state that he has become one with — not 'absorbed' as is constantly translated — but has *become* one with the Self of selves, with the Paramâtman, the Supreme Self.

Hearken a moment to the wisdom of the *ancient* Orient, not the voice of modern Brâhmanism (excepting the Vedânta) but to a book which was ancient before our ancestors knew anything higher than the quasi-barbaric ideas which Europe had two thousand years ago.

We read from the *Chhândogya-Upanishad*, one of the most important of the 108 or more *Upanishads*. The very word 'Upanishad' signifies 'Esoteric treatise.' We read from the eighth lecture, seventh, eighth, and ninth sections. They contain such truth that the Teacher has permitted us to take up our time in reading it.

"Prajâpati said" — we interrupt by saying that Prajâpati is a Sanskrit word meaning governor or lord or master of progeny. The word is applied to many of the Vedic gods, but in particular to Brahmâ — that is to say the third step from Parabrahman — the evolver-creator, the first and most recondite figure of the triad consisting of Brahmâ, Vishnu, and Śiva. Brahmâ is the Emanator or Evolver, Vishnu the Sustainer or Preserver, and Śiva, which

may be translated euphemistically perhaps as 'beneficent,' the Regenerator. This name is very obscure. However:

Prajâpati said: "The Self which is free from sin, free from old age, from death and grief, from hunger and thirst, which desires nothing but what it ought to desire, and imagines nothing but what it ought to imagine, that it is which we must search out, that it is which we must try to understand. He who has searched out that Self and understands it, obtains all worlds and all desires."

We interrupt to ask why? Because this Self of selves, this Inmost, is all worlds: it is All, it is Everything. Now to quote:

The Devas [gods] and Asuras [demons] both heard these words, and said: "Well, let us search for that Self by which, if one has searched it out, all worlds and all desires are obtained."

Thus saying Indra went from the Devas, Virochana from the Asuras, and both, without having communicated with each other, approached Prajâpati, holding fuel in their hands, as is the custom for pupils approaching their master.

They dwelt there as pupils for thirty-two years. Then Prajâpati asked them: "For what purpose have you dwelt here?"

They replied: "A saying of yours is being repeated, viz. 'the Self which is free from sin, free from old age, from death and grief, from hunger and thirst, which desires nothing but what it ought to desire, and imagines nothing but what it ought to imagine, that it is which we must search out, that it is which we must try to understand. He who has searched out that Self and understands it, obtains all worlds and all desires.' Now we both have dwelt here because we wish for that Self."

Prajâpati said to them: "The person that is seen in the eye, that is the Self. This is what I have said. This is the immortal, the fearless, this is Brahman."

Interrupting: the Self that is seen

in the eye is a figure of speech not infrequently found in the ancient Sanskrit writings; it signifies that sense of an indwelling presence that one sees when he looks into the eyes of another.

They asked: "Sir, he who is perceived in the water, and he who is perceived in a mirror, who is he?"

He replied: "He himself indeed is seen in all these."

(Eighth Section) "Look at your Self in a pan of water, and whatever you do not understand of your Self, come and tell me."

They looked in the water-pan. Then Prajâpati said to them: "What do you see?"

They said: "We both see the self thus altogether, a picture even to the very hairs and nails."

Prajâpati said to them: "After you have adorned yourselves, look again into the water-pan."

They, after having adorned themselves, having put on their best clothes and cleaned themselves, looked into the water-pan.

Prajâpati said: "What do you see?"

They said: "Just as we are, well adorned, with our best clothes and clean, thus we are both there, Sir, well adorned, with our best clothes and clean."

Prajâpati said: "That is the Self, this is the immortal, the fearless, this is Brahman."

Then both went away satisfied in their hearts.

And Prajâpati, looking after them, said: "They both go away without having perceived and without having known the Self, and whoever of these two, whether Devas or Asuras, will follow this doctrine will perish."

Interrupting: they saw Mâyâ and not the Self.

Now Virochana, satisfied in his heart, went to the Asuras and preached that doctrine to them, that the self (the body) alone is to be worshiped, that the self (the body) alone is to be served, and that he who worships the

self, and serves the self, gains both worlds, this and the next.

Therefore they call even now a man who does not give alms here, who has no faith, and offers no sacrifices, an Asura, for this is the doctrine of the Asuras. They deck out the body of the dead with perfumes, flowers, and fine raiment by way of ornament, and think they will thus conquer that world.

(Ninth Section) But Indra, before he had returned to the Devas, saw this difficulty.

Interrupting: the difficulty now comes which Indra saw.

As this self (the shadow in the water) is well adorned, when the body is well adorned, well dressed, when the body is well dressed, well cleaned, if the body is well cleaned, that self will also be blind, if the body is blind, lame, if the body is lame, crippled if the body is crippled, and will perish in fact as soon as the body perishes. Therefore I see no good in this (doctrine).

Taking fuel in his hand he came again as a pupil to Prajâpati. Prajâpati said to him: "Maghavat [Indra], as you went away with Virochana, satisfied in your heart, for what purpose did you come back?"

He said: "Sir, as this self (the shadow) is well adorned, when the body is well adorned, well dressed, when the body is well dressed, well cleaned, if the body is well cleaned, that self will also be blind, if the body is blind, lame if the body is lame, crippled if the body is crippled, and will perish in fact as soon as the body perishes. Therefore I see no good in this (doctrine)."

"So it is indeed, Maghavat," replied Prajâpati; "but I shall explain him (the true Self) further to you. Live with me another thirty-two years."

Indra was able to see beyond the mâyâ of the personal self, and therefore was searching for the Real, for the True, the Self Itself.

The translation is Max Müller's. It may be well to add in conclusion that

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all translations which have been made and may hereafter be made are made by ourself, from any one of the ancient languages, and if any quotation is taken from another translator, his name will be given.

### IV

**B**ELOVED Teacher, Fellow-Students of the Esoteric Philosophy:

Before we open our study of *The Secret Doctrine* this evening, it should be said that the Teacher has asked me to repeat what was before stated with reference to the nature of these studies, that is, that they are a simplification of *The Secret Doctrine* in the sense of an explanation and unfolding of the meaning of the teachings that the book contains; and in order to achieve these ends, it will be of course necessary to bring to bear upon these doctrines for comparison and in order to show analogy or identity, lines of thought from the great religions of the world and from the great minds of ancient times; because these, in their essence, have sprung from the central source of men's thought and religion which we today call Theosophy.

Yet before we can really embark upon the study of *The Secret Doctrine* itself, as a book, it will be necessary during the course of our studies to clear from our path certain stumbling-blocks which are in the way of each of us; certain ideas and so-called principles of thought which have been instilled into our minds from childhood, and which, on account of the psychological effect they have on our minds, really prevent us from grasping the truths of Being that Helena Petrovna

Blavatsky has so masterly given us in *The Secret Doctrine*.

In addition, it will be necessary to investigate certain very ancient principles of thought, and to penetrate more deeply into the real meaning of the ancient religions and philosophies than has ever been done in any modern books, because those books have been written by men who know nothing about the Esoteric Philosophy, men who were mostly rebels against the barren ecclesiasticism of the Christian church; who, in order to gain freedom from those chains of ecclesiasticism, actually went too far the other way, and saw nothing but priestcraft and evil doing in these old religions, and in the acts and teachings of the men who taught them, priests, philosophers, or scientists.

We really, also, cannot understand *The Secret Doctrine* unless we have made these preliminary studies. We may read it as a book, as we would take down a book from the shelf in the public library and read it, but in doing so we do not get the essence, the heart, the core of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky's meaning.

Another point always to keep in mind is, that we are, as the Teacher has told us more than once in these meetings, actually assembled here as fellow-students and members of the

Inner School — we are undertaking the study of the very doctrines which formed the core or the heart of the teachings of the Mysteries of ancient days. These Mysteries were divided into two general parts, the Lesser Mysteries and the Greater.

The Lesser Mysteries were very largely composed of dramatic rites or ceremonies, with some teaching; the Greater Mysteries were composed of, or conducted almost entirely on the ground of, study, and later were proved by personal experience in initiation. In the latter was explained — among other things — the secret meaning of the mythologies of the old religions, as for instance the Greek.

The active and nimble mind of the Greeks produced a mythology which for grace and beauty is perhaps without equal, but it nevertheless is very difficult to explain; the Mysteries of Samothrace and of Eleusis — the greater ones — explained among other things what these myths meant. These myths formed the basis of the *exoteric* religions; but note well that exotericism does not mean that the thing which is taught exoterically is in itself false, but merely that it is a teaching given without the key to it: such teaching is symbolic, illusory, touching on the truth: the truth is there, but without the key to it — which is the esoteric meaning — it yields no proper sense.

We open our study of *The Secret Doctrine*, this evening, by reading from page 43, second and third paragraphs:

The Secret Doctrine teaches the progres-

sive development of everything, worlds as well as atoms; and this stupendous development has neither conceivable beginning nor imaginable end. Our 'Universe' is only one of an infinite number of Universes, all of them 'Sons of Necessity,' because links in the great Cosmic chain of Universes, each one standing in the relation of an effect as regards its predecessor, and being a cause as regards its successor.

The appearance and disappearance of the Universe are pictured as an outbreathing and inbreathing of 'the Great Breath,' which is eternal, and which, being Motion, is one of the three aspects of the Absolute — Abstract Space and Duration being the other two. When the 'Great Breath' is projected, it is called the Divine Breath, and is regarded as the breathing of the Unknowable Deity — the One Existence — which breathes out a thought, as it were, which becomes the Kosmos. (See *Isis Unveiled*.) So also it is when the Divine Breath is inspired again the Universe disappears into the bosom of "the Great Mother," who then sleeps, "wrapped in her invisible robes."

A fortnight ago we were studying the question of Mâyâ and the relationship of the inner being of man to the Ineffable Essence; it remains for us briefly to study how man, who has a *personal* element in him, sprang forth from the very essence of *impersonality*, if one may so call it. We can say at once that the Infinite and Impersonal *never becomes finite and personal*. How, then, does the spirit of man (already the first film over the face of the Absolute, as it were) come into being? Let us remember that the manifestation of worlds, and, deductively, of the beings who inhabit those worlds, took place in the extension of matter popularly called 'space.' A center, first, is 'localized' — a very poor word to use!

— and is, *de facto*, not infinite, not eternal; if it were, it could neither manifest nor come into outward existence, for this is limitation. The Eternal, the Ineffable, the Infinite, does not ever manifest at all, either partially or *in toto*. Words themselves are misleading in treating of these subjects; but what can we say? We must use human expressions in order to convey our meaning.

How then arose manifestation? The Ancient Wisdom tells us the following: In the *seeds of life remaining in space* from a planet which had previously run its Manvantara and had passed into latency or Prakriti-Pralaya — there came (when the hour struck for manifestation to begin again) into being in these seeds of life the activity called in Sanskrit *trishnâ* (*thirst*, if you like, *desire* for manifestation), thus forming the center around which was to gather a new universe. It had by karmic necessity its particular place in space and was to produce its particular kind of progeny: gods, monads, atoms, men, and the three elementary — or elemental — kingdoms of the world as we see it around us: from the karmic seeds which were brought over and which were lying latent from the preceding Manvantara.

The Universe re embodies itself (it does not 'reincarnate,' which means coming into *flesh*), following precisely the analogical lines, *mutatis mutandis*, that the soul of man does in reincarnating, making the necessary allowances for varying conditions. As man is the product of his former life, or rath-

er of his lives, so is a universe, a solar system, a planet, an animal, an atom — the very great as well as the so-called infinitesimal — the fruitage, the flower, of what went before. Each of these bears its load of karman precisely as the soul of man does.

The teachings relating to the evolving of the inner planes of Being, which precede and produce the outer planes, are very esoteric, as our Teachers have told us, and belong to a study higher than we venture to approach at the present time, but we can form some general idea of how it is done, as has already been said, by analogy and by comparison with the life of man.

When manifestation begins, what is called 'duality' supervenes. It would seem to be a procession something like this, were we to symbolize it by a blackboard diagram (shown opposite).

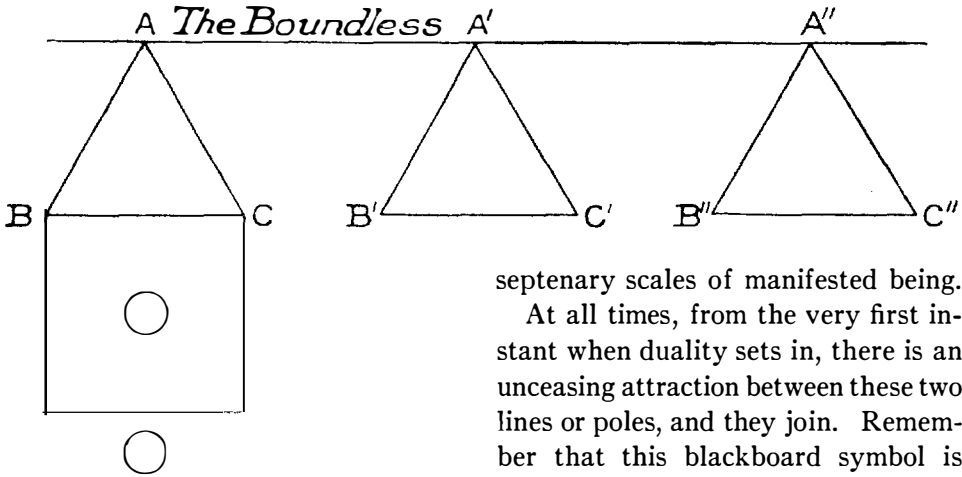
Consider this uppermost straight line a hypothetical plane: it may be, humanly speaking, immeasurable miles in depth or in extension, but mere extension has nothing to do with the general concept. Above it stretches the infinitude of the Boundless, and below the diagram is the Boundless, and *inwards* through it is the Boundless, interpenetrating everywhere; but for purposes of our present illustration we will say that it is 'above.'

Let us place anywhere we may please a point A, another one A' here, and a third A" there. We have now reached, after a long period of latency or pralaya has passed, a period of manifestation or manvantara; such a point as A, or A' or A", we will call the



Primordial Point, the first breaking-through into the cosmic plane below; the spirit-force above arising into activity in the seeds of being, and forcing its way down into the lower life of manifestation — *not pushed nor moved by anything outside of itself* — is driven into manifestation by the karmic life of its own essential being, by

lines of the diagrammatic triangle. We may call one A—B the Brahmâ (masculine), and the other A—C the Prakriti or Nature (feminine). Brahmâ is frequently also called Purusha, a Sanskrit word meaning Man, the Ideal Man, like the Qabbalistic Adam Qadmon, the primordial entity of space, containing in Prakriti or Nature all the



the thirst or desire of blossoming forth, like a fresh upspringing in early summer of a flower, in which the tendency in manifestation is outward. This first appearance is conceived of in philosophy as the First or Primordial Point; this is the name given to it in the Jewish Theosophy called the Qabbâlâh.

From the moment that the Point, as it were the seed of life, the germ of being — all these are but names for the one thing, the spiritual atom, the spiritual monad, call it what you will — from the moment that it bursts through into the lower life as it were, differentiation or duality sets in and continues thenceforward to the end of the Great Cycle, forming the two side-

septenary scales of manifested being.

At all times, from the very first instant when duality sets in, there is an unceasing attraction between these two lines or poles, and they join. Remember that this blackboard symbol is merely a paradigm, that it is merely a paradigmatic scheme or representation. Absolutely, it would be absurd to say that life and beings proceed into manifestation as geometric triangles only; but we can represent it *symbolically* to our minds in this fashion. When these two join, the Father and the Mother, spirit (or Reality) and illusion (or mâyâ), Brahmâ (or Purusha) and Prakriti (or Nature), their union produces the Son. In the Christian scheme they give the spiritual or primordial Son the name of Christos; in the Egyptian scheme Osiris and Isis (or her twin sister Nephthys—which is merely the more recon-dite side of Isis) produce their son

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Horus, the spiritual Sun, physically the sun or the Light-Bringer; and so similarly in the different schemes that the ancient world has handed down to us.

From the interaction of these three, by inter-polar action, by the spiritual forces working in and out, two other lines fall downwards — according to the mystical way in which this scheme of emanation is taught — and they also join and form the square — or the manifested Kosmos.

Now from the Central or Primordial Point is born or proceeds the Sun of Life. By It and through It is our union with the Ineffable. Man may be down here a physical being on earth, or anywhere else a luminous, ethereal entity: but it matters not where he is or what his body: for once the *seven* principles of his being are in action, man, the thinking entity, is produced, linked by his seventh principle, and his sixth, with that Sun of Life.

To every 'man' of the unnamable multitudes of self-conscious beings belonging to this Kosmos or Universe, there extend respectively upwards or downwards, two natures: one of which is a ray of spirit connecting him with the divine of the Divinest, and from that extending upwards in all directions and linking us in every sense of the word with the Ineffable, the Boundless, which is, therefore, the core of our being, the center of our essence.

The appearance and evolution of man as a human being on this planet Terra, follow the same line of Nature's wonderful analogical working that a

planet does in space, or a sun does with its brothers of a solar system, the planets. Man, thus being in very truth a child of Infinity, the offspring of the Ineffable, has latent within himself the capacity of the Universe.

And on this fact depends what we have so often been told of the getting of 'powers.' The very method by which we do *not* get them, the very way of missing and losing them, is to run after them, strange as it may sound, because this is the impulse of vanity and selfishness. If we, then, selfishly seek them, what do we get? We get the action of the lower powers upon us; it is a growing thirst for sensation which we do get, and this leads us towards and into the nether abyss of Matter, the opposite pole of the Boundless, if it is followed.

But in the great Soul who has passed by and thrown off this thirst for personal acquisition, in whom the grasping spirit for self is no longer dominant, who feels his Oneness with everything that is, who feels that every human being, yea the very pismire that laboriously crawls up a sand-knob only to tumble down again, is *himself* — no metaphor but an actuality: a different body, but the same *life*, the same *essence*, the same things latent in it as in him — in him indeed lies the power of ascending the ladder of Being, drawn by the link with the Highest in his innermost nature. He and they are both filled full of latent powers and forces, and he and they may become in time very Gods, blazing as it were, with power like the sun; and the

only way is utter selflessness, because selflessness, paradoxical as it may sound, is the only way to the Self, the Self Universal. The personal self shuts the door before us.

Of course we cannot crush out of our being the sense of self-hood, nor is that desirable; but in the lowest aspect it takes upon itself the forms of all selfishness, until the being of the man who follows the 'left-hand path,' as they call it, or the path downwards, ends in what the early Christians — stealing from the Greeks—called Tartarus, the place of disintegration.

When man ascends beyond the reach of matter, he has cast off the bondage of Mâyâ, or illusion. Let us remember that when manifestation opens, Prakriti becomes or rather is Mâyâ; and Brahman, the Father, is the spirit of the consciousness, or the Individuality. These two are really one, yet they are also the two aspects of the one Life-ray acting and reacting upon itself, much as a man himself can say, "I am I." He has the faculty of self-analysis, or self-division; all of us know it, we can feel it in our selves; one side of us, in our thoughts, can be called the Prakriti or the material element, or the Mâyâvi element, or the element of illusion; and the other, the spirit, the individuality, the God within.

Yet as man sees life, as he runs his eye down the scale of beings, he sees it through Mâyâ; in fact, he is the child of Mâyâ on one side, as he is of the Spirit on the other. Both are in him. His lesson is to learn that the

two are one and that they are not separate; then he no longer is deceived. His lesson is to understand that Mâyâ, the great Deluder, is the famous snake or serpent of antiquity, which leads us out from the 'Garden of Eden' (employing a Biblical metaphor), through experience and suffering to learn what *illusion is* — and is *not*.

Also matter, which is the mâyâvi manifestation of Prakriti on this plane (and I mean here physical matter), itself is not substantial. The most dense and rigid things we can think of, perhaps, are the metals, and actually they are, perhaps, the most porous, the most foamlike, the most evanescent, as seen from the other or higher side of being, from the other side of the plane. So well is this now beginning to be understood that even our more intuitive scientists are telling us that 'space,' which seems to us so thin, and tenuous, is in reality more rigid than the hardest steel. Why is it that electricity prefers metals as a path, to common wood, or cotton-wool, or some other such thing?

Before we go further, it would seem necessary to study a little what we mean by the words Manvantara and Pralaya. Let us take Manvantara first. This word is a Sanskrit compound, and as such means nothing more than 'between two Manus'; more literally, 'Manu — between.' 'Manu,' or Dhyâni-Chohan, in the Esoteric System, is the entities collectively which appear first at the beginning of manifestation and from which, like a

cosmic tree, everything is derived or born. Manu actually is the (spiritual) tree of life of any Planetary Chain, of manifested being. Manu is thus (in one sense) the third logos; as the second is the Father-Mother, the Brahmâ and Prakriti; and the first is what we call the Unmanifest Logos, or Brahman (neuter) and its cosmic veil Pradhâna.

Pradhâna is also a Sanskrit compound, meaning that which is 'placed before'; and from this, it has become a technical term in philosophy, and means what we would call the first filmy appearance of *root-matter*, 'placed before,' or rather around, Brahman, as a Veil. Root-matter is *mûlaprakriti*, root-nature, and corresponding to it as the other or active pole, is Brahman (neuter). That from which the First or Unmanifest Logos proceeds is called Para-Brahman, and Mûlaprakriti is *Its* Kosmic Veil. Para-Brahman is another Sanskrit compound meaning 'beyond Brahman.' Mûlaprakriti, again, as said above, is a Sanskrit compound meaning *mûla* — root, *prakriti* — nature.

First, then, the Boundless, symbolized by the ○; then Parabrahman, and Mûlaprakriti its other pole; then lower, Brahman and its Veil Pradhâna; then Brahmâ-Prakriti or Purusha-Prakriti (Prakriti being also mâyâ); the manifested Universe appearing through and by this last: Brahmâ-Prakriti, Father-Mother. In other words, the second logos, Father-Mother, is the producing cause of manifestation through their son, which in a

Planetary Chain is Manu. A Manvantara, therefore, is the period of activity between any two Manus, on any plane, since in any such period there is a root-Manu at the beginning of Evolution, and a seed-Manu at its close, preceding a Pralaya.

Pralaya: this is also a Sanskrit compound, formed of *laya*, from a Sanskrit root *li*, and the prefix *pra*. What does *li* mean? It means to dissolve, to melt away, to liquefy, as when one pours water upon a cube of salt or of sugar. The cube of salt or of sugar vanishes in the water; it dissolves, changes its form; and this may be taken as a figure, as a symbol, of what Pralaya is: a crumbling away, a vanishing away of matter into something else which is yet in it, and surrounds it, and interpenetrates it. That is Pralaya, usually translated as the state of latency, state of rest, state of repose, between two manvantaras or life-cycles. If we remember distinctly the meaning of the Sanskrit word, our minds take a new bent in direction, follow a new thought; we get new ideas; we penetrate into the arcanum of the thing that takes place.

Now there are many kinds of Manvantaras; also many kinds of Pralayas. There are, for instance, the Universal Manvantara and the Universal Pralaya, and these are called Prâkritika, because it is the pralaya or vanishing away, melting away, of Prakriti or Nature. Then there is the solar pralaya. Sun in Sanskrit is Sûrya, and the adjective from this is Saurya; hence, the saurya-pralaya, or the pra-

laya of the solar system. Then, thirdly, there is the terrestrial or planetary pralaya. The Sanskrit word for earth is Bhûmi, and the adjective corresponding to this is Bhaumika: hence, the bhaumika-pralaya. Then we can say that there is the pralaya or death of the individual man. Man is purusha; the corresponding adjective is paurusha: hence, the paurusha-pralaya, or death of man. So, then, we have given examples of various pralayas: first of the Prâkritika, or dissolution of Nature; next the solar pralaya, the saurya; next the bhaumika or the passing away of the earth; and then the paurusha, or the death of man. And these adjectives apply equally well to the several kinds of Manvantaras, or life-cycles.

There is another kind of Pralaya which is called Nitya. In its general sense, it means 'constant' or 'continuous,' and can be exemplified by the constant or continuous change — life and death — of the cells of our bodies — it is a state in which the entity, the indwelling and dominating entity, remains, but its different principles and rūpas undergo continuous change. Hence it is called Nitya. It applies to the body of man, to the outer sphere of earth, to the earth itself, to the solar system, and to all Nature.

It is likewise represented by a symbol that our first great Teacher, H. P. Blavatsky, has given us from the Oriental Wisdom, the out-breathing and in-breathing of Brahman. This symbol, by the way, is not solely Indian. It is found in the ancient Egyptian

texts, where one or another of the Gods, Khnumu, for instance, breathes forth from his mouth the cosmic egg. It is also found alluded to in the Orphic Hymns, where the cosmic serpent breathes forth as an egg the things which are to be, or the future universe. Everywhere, especially where ancient religion or philosophy has longest retained its hold, there do we find the symbol of the cosmic egg. Religions of less age and of less influence do not so often employ it. The cosmic egg was found as a symbol in Egypt; it was found in Hindûsthân; it was found in Peru, where the 'Mighty Man,' the Sanskrit Purusha, the Ideal Man, the Paradigmatic Man, was called Manco Capac, and his wife and sister was called Mama Oello, which means 'Mother-egg'; these brought the universe into being, becoming later the sun and the moon respectively.

Why did the Ancients symbolize the beginning of manifestation under the form of an egg? Let us ask: Is it not a fine symbol? As the egg producing the chick contains the germ of life (laid by its mother, the hen, and fructified by the other pole of being) so the cosmic egg, which is the Primordial Point of which we spoke in the early part of our study this evening, also contains the germ of life. The egg itself also can be called the germ of life, and the germ of life within the egg can be called the inner germ — that more subtil point which receives those impulses of which we have spoken before, coming down from the highest center of communication between the

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outward world and the inner, the lines of inner magnetic action and reaction. And when the chick within the egg is formed, it bursts its shell and comes forth into the light of day, precisely as we saw was the case with the Primordial Point. When the karmic hour had struck, it burst forth, as it were, into other spheres of manifestation and activity. The Ancients, carrying the figure still farther, even spoke of Heaven as a dome-like affair, as the upper part of an egg-shell.

Let us think more deeply of these

ancient symbols. The Ancients were not fools. There is a deep meaning in these olden figures of speech. Why did Homer speak of his Olympus, the abode of Zeus and the Gods, as being brazen, like brass, one of the hardest and most intractable things that the Greeks knew? Why did Hesiod speak of the same as made of iron? Because they realized that the life here in matter and of matter, was based upon an evanescent substratum, and that the lower world of matter is, as has been so often said, evanescent, foamy, full of holes, as it were, and unreal.

## NEWS FROM THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD

C. J. RYAN, M. A.

### THE EVOLUTION OF MAN: A CONSIDERATION OF THE ANCIENT WISDOM IN CONTRAST WITH MODERN SPECULATION

**A**T the present moment, when Theosophy is spreading its influence so widely, it seems well to offer our readers a few of the reasons why students of Theosophy believe the teaching of human evolution according to the Ancient Wisdom more reasonable than the scientific (and mostly materialistic) hypothesis of the day.

A friendly critic, a scientist only partially acquainted with the Theosophical position, in discussing the subject lately, referred to the well-known scientific axiom that theories supported by incontestable and sufficient facts are the only kind that can be seriously

considered, and said that the Theosophical system of evolution, derived from the authority of certain Eastern Sages, cannot expect to appeal to scientists unless it produces unimpeachable evidence.

Quite likely; but before we surrender to the monkey-theory, we had better inquire whether the evidences are sufficiently numerous and complete and indisputed to decide the problem, and, if so, is the scientific view of evolution the only or the best possible solution?

Well-informed Theosophical students know the evidence for the latter, and are *not theologically biased against*

*it*; they are open-minded, yet they prefer the evolutionary theory taught by the Eastern Sages!

A glance at the Theosophical and scientific theories of man's development may clarify the situation. While biologists are not united as to the exact sequence of the ancestry of man, they agree that the human race has branched off from the animal kingdom and that man is only a more advanced type of animal with a more convoluted brain and therefore a higher intelligence. They teach an evolution of *bodies*, a process of physical parent and offspring, a heredity carried on by certain transmitted *physical* cells. Darwin's idea was that man, *under the action of biological forces which can be observed and measured*, has been raised from a place among some (unknown) kind of anthropoid ape to his present position. The theory presupposes the *priority of matter over mind*, and the precedence of structure over function, a materialistic gospel.

To support the biological theory we are offered the testimony of the fossils which, *in general*, show that simpler forms of animal life come first and more complex ones follow in advancing order. From analogy it is claimed that man must have followed the same rule, and has advanced from the anthropoid to Aristotle in the last million years or more. We are also offered the evidence of the stone implements used by ancient man, which are claimed to show improvement in design and finish from the almost shapeless eoliths of the later Tertiary or early Pleistocene, to the

finely-worked tools of more recent times. Above all, there are the meager remains of human skulls and bones found in ancient caves and river-beds, most of which are incomplete and the subject of sharp differences of opinion among experts.

Ingenious arrangements or representations of 'primitive men' in graduated order, from the most apelike to modern man, are shown in many museums. They are not literally accurate, but they very skilfully set forth the *opinions* of the school of anthropologists for the moment dominant. One leading museum, at least, has lately removed them as misleading, but the public is naturally influenced by them.

The material triumphs of modern science and invention have given a factitious importance to unproved speculative hypotheses and under the influence of this glamor the man in the street imagines science is equally infallible in all branches, and does not realize the amount of guesswork and inference that the best scientists admit to be necessary in support of their anti-spiritual hypothesis of evolution.

Yes, anti-spiritual; for the basis is materialistic, consisting of nothing but a physical process of biological forces, with man as an ephemeral product. Man, said Dr. Shapley, the eminent astro-physicist, lately, is "infinitesimal and evanescent" the result of a "transient, fortuitous, and uncertainly-poised combination of circumstances."

Dr. F. X. Dercum, emeritus professor of neurology in Jefferson Medical College, enthusiastically announced

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that there was no element of design in the steps by which creatures became more intelligent and that the great variety of living beings originated from "the greater strength of the upbuilding processes as against those of the down-building ones"! Why should this occur unless there is some profound intelligence brooding over 'matter' and desiring to build for itself more and more perfect forms of life?

We would not exaggerate or misrepresent; all evolutionists are not equally materialistic; there are those who feel there must be something superior to appearances, who have abandoned 'natural selection' and the 'struggle for existence' (the original Darwinism) as the principal cause of progress, who admit that co-operation is more powerful than competition in natural processes. But how few they are, and what have they to offer in exchange — that is definite and comprehensive?

Let us now glance briefly at the Theosophical view of evolution in a few of its bearings. To get a proper idea of the greatness of its scope and its application to details the reader must study our literature.

We not only accept the fact of evolution but declare that it is the universal law of the universe: "As above, so below" according to the ancient Hermetic axiom. It applies equally to nebulae, suns, and planets, and to the humblest forms of life. Science has lately discovered that the stellar universe is undergoing a gigantic process of evolution, and it has justly boasted

of its great achievement, but this was known to the Teachers of the Ancient Wisdom ages ago. H. P. Blavatsky sums up the general principle of human evolution thus:

The fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Over-Soul, the latter being itself an aspect of the Unknown Root; and the obligatory pilgrimage for every Soul—a spark of the former — through the Cycle of Incarnation (or 'Necessity') in accordance with Cyclic and Karmic law, during the whole term. In other words, no purely spiritual Buddhi (divine Soul) can have an independent (conscious) existence before the spark which issued from the pure Essence of the Universal Sixth principle — or the OVER-SOUL — has (a) passed through every elemental form of the phenomenal world of that Manvantara, and (b) acquired individuality, first by natural impulse, then by self-induced and self-devised efforts (checked by its Karma), thus ascending through all the degrees of intelligence, from the lowest to the highest Manas, from mineral and plant, up to the holiest archangel (Dhyâni-Buddha). The pivotal doctrine of the Esoteric philosophy admits no privileges or special gifts in man save those won by his own Ego through personal effort and merit throughout a long series of metempsychoses and reincarnations.

— *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 17

In the process of terrestrial evolution, the Monad descended from previous cycles into ethereal worlds which gradually became denser until the complete physical man in material conditions came into existence. During this immense period the Monad passed through many forms and kingdoms. After taking on primitive physical conditions, mankind advanced to higher stages in the late Secondary and early Tertiary geological periods. (Science



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has no conclusive proofs that man existed so early as this, though some eminent authorities have suspected it.) After many cataclysms and major changes on the earth's surface, during which little was left of humanity but seeds for another periodic rise and which destroyed any material records, another 'world' began. This in its turn was destroyed, mankind was again reduced to a remnant, and civilization perished, leaving only decaying vestiges on a few remote islands. A new great cycle then began, partly overlapping the previous one, and humanity started to rebuild itself, burdened by severe handicaps, but helped by the incarnation of souls more advanced than the rest. The growing races slowly increased, and after hundreds of thousands of years developed civilizations in both hemispheres which culminated in the 'historic nations.' Through all this a true evolution has proceeded by the process of the reincarnation of the Monad or immortal soul.

Science has never explained the need for mankind to have spent hundreds of thousands of years making such slow progress in civilization during the 'Stone Ages' when men were physically well-developed, of large brain-capacity, and evidently possessed of plenty of intelligence. Without the latter, as Dr. Russel Wallace points out, they never could have withstood the innumerable ferocious beasts. Theosophy gives the clue to this.

Spengler, in his *Decline of the West*, has lately called attention to the importance of the law of Periodicity in

historical research, but his vision is limited to the last few thousand years. The greater cycles include many small ones such as our 'historical' records deal with.

During the long process of the human races, the animals were undergoing changes, as is shown by their fossil remains, and during the Tertiary period the anthropoid apes appeared, *but not as the ancestors of man*. They were a kind of bastard second-cousins, the progeny of miscegenation between very degraded men and certain animals. The result is that science has been quite misled as to the evolution of Man, which took place before the anthropoids existed.

The above is less than an outline, but is enough for the present argument. In handling the enormously complex subject of man's evolution from an ethereal state to full physical maturity, H. P. Blavatsky had to leave untouched far more than she revealed, but the picture she outlined is reasonable and attractive to the more intuitive minds who realize that physical appearances are deceptive and that the probability of evolution having a purpose and an aim is greater than that of the 'fortuitous combination of circumstances,' 'chance,' etc., offered by science. It is supported by traditions handed down in the ancient literatures of the world, as shown in great detail in *The Secret Doctrine*. For instance, the destruction of inhabited 'worlds' preceding ours is an almost universal tradition — such 'worlds' being conditions on our planet so different

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from ours as to warrant the phrase.

We declare that the Eastern scheme of evolution is an intelligent, coherent, and truly philosophical system, supported by the authority of Teachers who have means at their disposal of ascertaining facts not yet available to the ordinary human being, however learned and scientific. These Teachers have no personal aims in promoting their views; they are perfectly content to remain in the background, but they do say: *Follow the Path we show and you can find the Truth for yourself; we have no monopoly of it.*

The facts about the constitution and ascent of man were (and are) taught in the Mysteries, and H. P. Blavatsky was permitted to give out a small portion to the world. They are offered to inquirers as a reasonable explanation of the great problem of life, and include important factors disregarded by orthodox science and left to religion as matter of 'faith.' For example, the complex nature of man, the 'Seven Principles' found in every religious system of antiquity, which any theory of mere bodily evolution does not come within miles of covering. Theosophy brings this within the bounds of science. We say, take the Theosophical suggestions as worthy of study; see how they explain the difficulties which confront us in every line — scientific, social, moral, theological; examine all new discoveries in the light of Theosophy, and in time you will find you are standing on a hill from which an infinitely greater vista can be surveyed than you thought possible.

You will have convinced yourself.

Another reason for giving serious consideration to the Theosophical theory of evolution is that the same Teachers have presented many other explanations of natural phenomena entirely at variance with the scientific hypotheses of the nineteenth century (and some dealing with facts then altogether unknown to science), which have been subsequently discovered by science and established as part of its ascertained laws. These have frequently been referred to in these pages, and space will not permit the lengthy record to be quoted here. Many of these will be found in *Theosophy and Modern Science*, the new book by Dr. G. de Purucker, Leader of the Theosophical Society.

These points were either absolutely unknown when the Sages of the East gave them out in public print, or the explanations given by science have been quite abandoned in favor of the Theosophical ones. Among them will be found fundamentals in radio-activity, the periodicity of the solar phenomena, the atomic theory, many archaeological discoveries, and others. Such evidence of knowledge unknown to the most learned scientists in the seventies and eighties of the nineteenth century surely raises a strong presumption that the same Teachers have a substantial basis of knowledge about the evolution of man! But still they say, Search for yourselves; do not accept anything as *final* upon authority, keep your freedom of thought; but try the key offered by Theosophy and see how

easily it will open the doors to wisdom.

Perhaps a hint will suggest to some how the Screen of Time Past may be unfolded and studied, to a certain degree even by ordinary men. How much deeper must an advanced Seer penetrate! We refer to the faculty of *psychometry*. To quote from H. P. Blavatsky in *Isis Unveiled*:

One of the most interesting discoveries of modern times is that of the faculty which enables a certain class of sensitive persons to receive from any object held in the hand or against the forehead, impressions of the character or appearance of the individual, or of any other object with which it has previously been in contact. Thus a manuscript, painting, article of clothing, or jewelry — no matter how ancient — conveys to the sensitive a vivid picture of the writer, painter, or wearer. . . . Nay more; a fragment of an ancient building will recall its history and even the scenes which transpired within or about it. A bit of ore will carry the soul-vision back to the time when it was in process of formation. . . .

The existence of this faculty was first experimentally demonstrated in 1841. It has since been verified by a thousand psychometers in different parts of the world. . . .

The psychometer . . . sees with the inner eye. Unless his will-power is very strong, unless he has thoroughly trained himself to that particular phenomenon, . . . his perceptions . . . must necessarily be very confused.— Vol. I, pp. 182-3-4

Since H. P. Blavatsky wrote that, many more experiments in psychometry have been conducted by careful observers, and no sane person who studies the subject can deny the faculty. It is far less mysterious than the faculty of prevision of the future recently brought to the attention of the

scientific world by Dunne in his experiment.

As to the 'proofs' provided by the stones and bones, none is convincing *proof of any theory of evolution, including our own*. The limited number of specimens hitherto discovered are too few adequately to represent conditions during the million or millions of years they cover. The differences of opinion on vital points among leading anthropologists demonstrate the uncertain nature of scientific conclusions, which, as everyone knows, may be upset tomorrow by some new and unexpected discovery. The 'origin of man' is claimed by different schools to have occurred in Europe, Central Africa, Mongolia, even America!

What can be fully admitted is that mankind in the past has been divided into many races, very different from those of today and from one another. Some were obviously brutal, while others, contemporary with them or far earlier, present what is called the modern type of intelligent humanity.

It is firmly established that races not only rise from more primitive states, but also go down into degradation and utter death, a fact that harmonizes perfectly with the Theosophical system of periodic or cyclic law and reincarnation. When a certain class of Egos have gained all that is possible in a race they leave it and enter another more advanced one; the original race, now on its natural decline, being occupied by Egos of a lower type who need just that experience.

The extremely limited remains of

early man which are accepted by science as authentically placed, in no way clash with the Theosophical system, though, as we have said, they do not prove it. There are, however, certain remarkable skulls, skeletons, and artifacts, found in very ancient strata, but of modern appearance, around which there has always been animated controversy. Eminent scientists frankly admit that the immense antiquity of these, "in which there are no signs of an inferior race in the characters of the skull" is rejected "because they are not in accordance with our expectations," and for no other reason. "If they were in harmony with the theories we have formed regarding the date of man's evolution, no one would ever dream of doubting them, still less of rejecting them."

We cannot enlarge upon this important point here, but it is to be noted that when prejudice in favor of the soulless ape-ancestry theory is laid aside, and these relics — of modern and intelligent type — are frankly admitted, as they must ultimately be, to be as old or older than the more brutal types, science will have contributed a most valuable piece of evidence to the Theosophical theory of evolution. We refer principally to the Calaveras skulls, etc., from California, and the skeletons from Castenedolo, Italy, all of which were found in middle or later *Pliocene* deposits. (See Keith's *Antiquity of Man, Smithsonian Report* for 1899, 1901, etc.)

Quite recently marvelous rock-carvings of extinct and other animals, in-

cluding the mastodon, have been found in South Africa. The mastodon, according to biology, became extinct in the Old World toward the end of the Pliocene, before the beginning of the Pleistocene or Glacial Ages. Theoretically, man was extremely brutal then, having hardly emerged from the animal state. But these carvings of Pliocene mastodons by contemporary men are splendid works of art and must have been created by the cultivated minds of highly-skilled artists who had technical ability to cut deeply into the hardest volcanic rock. No modern sculptor would attempt similar work without the finest steel chisels, and then would have no easy job. How could 'ape-men' do such things?

The scientific world has lately been profoundly moved by what is publicly announced as a 'revolutionary' discovery in South Africa, showing that the brutal-looking Neanderthal Race (the typical 'Cave Man', 'our predecessor of fifty thousand years ago' of the popular writers) was *preceded* by the highly advanced, modern and refined type, known as the Aurignacian or Cro-Magnon race, from which certain modern French people are supposed to be derived with little or no change. This kind of thing shows how shifting are the sands upon which Darwinian evolution is built, and that we are perfectly justified in preferring the ancient teaching on the subject. A biologist writing in the *Spectator* (London, October 10, 1925), remarked in regard to the difference of opinion between Sir Arthur Keith and Professor

Dart about a newly discovered skull:

This last example [out of many] may give some hint of the difficulties investigators in this field have to face, for when two such eminent authorities come to opposite conclusions on the same evidence, the natural conclusion is that the evidence is not entirely satisfactory. To the biologist working in other departments, indeed, none of the evidence from structure would be really satisfactory, because it is insufficient in amount. The research worker soon becomes painfully familiar with the wide extension of variation in individuals in even an inbred race, and regards investigations done on a few animals with the greatest skepticism. The growth of biometrics, or biological statistics, . . . has done more to convince the biologist of this. . . . We look to the anthropologist to solve the question of human evolution, but we require a greater amount of evidence than is available at the present time.

As our critics will not fail to bring against us the Embryology argument for Darwinian Evolution, we may say that the very incomplete and sketchy recapitulation of the supposed order of animal evolution throughout the ages during the seven-months' growth of the human embryo, is fully consi-

dered by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine*. The scientific argument based on this is partially correct, but the facts are in far more complete harmony with the Ancient Wisdom, which also explains the vestigial organs, abandoned by the embryo before birth, without the need of assuming that man is merely the physical descendant of a line of animal forbears. The profoundly suggestive Theosophical explanation is given in *The Secret Doctrine*, Volume II, page 257, etc. It relates to stages of existence and conditions in which the Monad existed before entering into material existence as physical man. Naturally, for the majority of biologists and psychologists, who have been shown by statistics either not to believe in a soul at all or to be extremely doubtful, the suggestion that the Spirit of man has had a pre-existence in a non-physical state is not acceptable. But they will have to face even more startling facts as they become prepared to receive them or as they are forced on them.

## THE THEOSOPHICAL ORGANIZATION

H. TRAVERS, M. A.

**W**HAT is an organization? What is its function? A human being supplies a very good illustration. He consists of a number of organs, members, and functions, working systematically together for the purpose of expressing or carrying out certain—ideas. We can analyse the organism into members, organs, senses, etc., according to

different systems of classification; and we can similarly classify the parts and functions of the psycho-mental being who dwells within the organism and uses it. In determining just how much of a man is organism, and how much is the being who uses it, we may draw the line in different places. We may say the physical body is the organism

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of the psychic nature, and the psychic nature the organism of the mental nature, and the mental nature the organism of the spiritual nature. The truth is not accurately expressible in any such formula, and it is not well to try to be too definite or to draw hard-and-fast distinctions.

The general notion which emerges is that an organization is an instrument for carrying out the ideas of a mind.

A great religious Teacher might choose to work without an organization; he would go about preaching and teaching, inspiring men to action. But he could not prevent men from forming organizations for the preservation and promulgation of his teachings. And, after the Teacher had withdrawn, there might be no more direct teaching, and the organizations would be left to adopt their own versions or interpretations of the teachings. Thus we should get, first a church; and very soon, several different churches. Here then we see the connexion between Religion and religions, between the original teachings of a Founder and the doctrines of sects, each claiming to represent these teachings.

Again, the Teacher might establish an organization during his own period of work among men, when he could himself be present to direct it and to give additional teachings from time to time. And he might provide that, when he had withdrawn, another would take his place; and by this means the organization would be kept true to its original purpose and prevented from degenerating and splitting into sects.

Such an organization would not of course be of the — shall we say, democratic? — model used in clubs and societies, with elected officers and meetings of the members for voting. But we shrink from using the word ‘autocratic,’ as that is somewhat decayed in its meaning and is apt to suggest tyranny and narrowness. There would have to be a leader or director, but he would be of the kind which people choose when on an expedition, one whom all trust and whom all undertake to obey, because they realize that the direction of a single mind is necessary for success and even for safety. There could be no tyranny, because nobody would be compelled to belong to the organization; the only condition would be that, so long as he remained in it, he would have to obey the regulations, as laid down by the leader in the interests of the organization; while one unable or unwilling to do this would *ipso facto* disqualify himself for further membership.

The leader would be one without any personal ambitions or desires to subserve, and devoted solely to the furtherance of the purposes of the organization. The principles on which he would act would be those recognised and cherished by the members, so that he would thus be carrying out their wishes.

The Theosophical Society is such a body; but, to avoid misconception, it is needful to specify certain reservations; for this organization is unique, differing in some important respects from organizations with which one is

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familiar. In ordinary organizations, for instance, it would be assumed that the leader, if he failed to satisfy a voting majority of the members, might be deposed. But in the Theosophical Society it is not necessary to consider such a contingency. The leader is not elected by the membership, nor could he be deposed by them.

The Theosophical Society was founded by H. P. Blavatsky, a leader whom the members recognised to be far superior to themselves in knowledge, wisdom, and authority. She appointed her own successor, W. Q. Judge, in whom the same qualities were recognised; and in the same way the leadership has passed on to Katherine Tingley and to the present leader, G. de Purucker. These leaders are messengers from the great Lodge of Masters of Wisdom, who stand behind the Theosophical Society; and they have attained their position, and their qualification to act in that capacity, by their progress on the Path of Knowledge, at the portals of which it is necessary to sacrifice all personal motives.

Thus a leader, in the Theosophical sense, is not simply one of the members elected by the others to manage their organization, and possessing no extraordinary qualification but only a somewhat better ability as an organizer or director, or a greater technical knowledge. But he is one recognised by the members as standing on a higher level, and as one who can never be unfaithful to his mission or miss his way. The idea of his failure is not

entertained; but that contingency, if it could be conceived as happening, would be met, not by a vote of deposition and re-election on the part of the members, but by action *from above* — the sending of a new representative by the Lodge.

Such then is our organization, and a word to possible critics may be added. First, it works. Next, those not liking it can stay out. Third, it explains the remarkable achievements of the Theosophical Society. Very recently one leader passed away, and her named successor succeeded at once to her position without one single word of question or remark from any member or lodge throughout the whole international organization. The public was expecting what invariably happens in such circumstances—a disputed claim, rival aspirants, schisms, secessions. None of these things happened. Which proves to any reasonable mind that the thirty years' work of the late leader, Katherine Tingley, whether you call her autocrat or what not, has resulted in a perfectly knit organization, with all its members loyal and devoted.

Some may now perhaps, in seeking to characterize this organization, think of the word 'hierarchy'; we are a hierarchy, they will say. But there again you have a word, a label, which is apt to carry with it various sinister meanings, owing to wrong applications which have been made of the term. We cannot be responsible for all that different people may have in their minds when using the word. Yet the word has a pure and original sense. It

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does not necessarily mean, did not originally mean, a high priest, with descending orders of minor priests, such as might constitute the official organization of a church; priests perhaps arrogating to themselves powers and prerogatives to which their actual lives gave no just title. The dictionary gives as the first meaning of hierarchy "a rank or order of holy beings, primarily of angels." Angels are 'messengers'; 'holy beings' may be taken to mean human beings who have attained to a state of wisdom and purity to which the word 'holy,' in its primitive and unconventionalized meaning, might be applied. The word 'holy,' by the way, means etymologically 'whole,' 'perfect,' 'complete' — not 'hallowed.'

Thus we see the true form of organization, as found in Nature, organization from above; just as in man we find a graduated order of lives and intelligences, each subordinate to the one next above, and the whole controlled by the master-intelligence. In criticizing such an organization, we must bear in mind that, though there are always many spurious imitations, and deceptions, and superstitions, the world is not entirely made up of such things; but the mere existence of a spurious article implies at least the possibility of a genuine original. But, as said, the fact of success is the best test.

It is also to be remembered that the Theosophical teachings are true, not mere beliefs and speculations. The members do not merely believe in the perfectibility of man, the existence in

him of higher powers, the reality of the Path of sublime attainment — they do not merely believe in these things as interesting speculations, applying perhaps to some remote future or to some very few and rare individuals. They regard these teachings as practical realities, as involving duties. From which it follows logically that there must be human beings of varying grades of development; for humanity is very ancient and reincarnation has operated for untold ages. And thus we have the elements and conditions for such an organization as has been described.

It will be allowed that an organized body recognises certain laws and principles, which the leader administers, and to which there can be appeal from him to the members, or from them to him. It is precisely so with the Theosophical Society; only these laws and principles are of a special kind. They are the Theosophical teachings and the practical interpretation thereof. Thus the leader, instead of acting arbitrarily, calls for obedience to principles recognised by the membership; his authority rests (1) on his administering laws recognised by all; (2) on his superior qualifications, also recognised by all, and demonstrated by his conduct.

In fine, Theosophy will re-establish certain ancient institutions, whereof the world has for the most part, in recent times, seen only the degenerate remains; and will show that behind the many shams there exists the reality.



# DIALOG ON THE MYSTERIES OF THE AFTER-LIFE

HELENA PETROVNA BLAVATSKY

ON THE CONSTITUTION OF THE INNER MAN AND ITS DIVISION

(From *Lucifer*, III, 407, January, 1889)

M. Of course it is most difficult, and, as you say, 'puzzling' to understand correctly and distinguish between the various *aspects*, called by us the 'principles' of the real EGO. It is the more so as there exists a notable difference in the numbering of those principles by various Eastern schools, though at the bottom there is the same identical substratum of teaching in all of them.

X. Are you thinking of the Vedântins? They divide our seven 'principles' into five only, I believe?

M. They do; but though I would not presume to dispute the point with a learned Vedântin, I may yet state as my private opinion that they have an obvious reason for it. With them it is only that compound spiritual aggregate which consists of various mental aspects that is called *Man* at all, the physical body being in their view something beneath contempt, and merely an *illusion*. Nor is the Vedânta the only philosophy to reckon in this manner. Lao-Tse in his *Tao-te-King*, mentions only five principles, because he, like the Vedântins, omits to include two principles, namely, the spirit (Âtmâ) and the physical body,

the latter of which, moreover, he calls 'the cadaver.' Then there is the *Târâka-Râja-Yoga* School. Its teaching recognises only three 'principles' in fact; but then, in reality, their *Sthûlo-pâdhi*, or the physical body in its *jagratâ* or waking conscious state, their *Sûkshmapâdhi*, the same body in *svapna* or the dreaming state, and their *Kâranopâdhi* or 'causal body,' or that which passes from one incarnation to another, are all dual in their aspects, and thus make six. Add to this Âtmâ, the impersonal divine principle or the immortal element in Man, undistinguished from the Universal Spirit, and you have the same seven, again, as in the esoteric division.\*

X. Then it seems almost the same as the division made by mystic Christians: body, soul, and spirit?

M. Just the same. We could easily make of the body the vehicle of the 'vital Double'; of the latter the vehicle of Life or *Prâna*; of *Kâma-rûpa* or (animal) soul, the vehicle of the *higher* and the *lower* mind, and make of this six principles, crowning the whole with one immortal spirit. In Occult-

\*See *The Secret Doctrine* for a clearer explanation.

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ism, every qualificative change in the state of our consciousness gives to man a new aspect, and if it prevails and becomes part of the living and acting EGO, it must be (and is) given a special name, to distinguish the man in that particular state from the man he is when he places himself in another state.

X. It is just that which is so difficult to understand.

M. It seems to me very easy, on the contrary, once that you have seized the main idea, *i. e.*, that man acts on this, or another plane of consciousness, in strict accordance with his mental and spiritual condition. But such is the materialism of the age that the more we explain, the less people seem capable of understanding what we say. Divide the terrestrial being called man into three chief aspects, if you like; but, unless you make of him a pure animal, you cannot do less. Take his objective *body*; the feeling principle in him — which is only a little higher than the *instinctual* element in the animal — or the vital elementary soul; and that which places him so immeasurably beyond and higher than the animal — *i. e.*, his *reasoning* soul or 'spirit.' Well, if we take these three groups or representative entities, and subdivide them, according to the occult teaching, what do we get?

First of all Spirit (in the sense of the Absolute, and therefore indivisible ALL) or *Âtmâ*. As this can neither be located nor conditioned in philosophy, being simply that which is, in Eternity, and as the ALL cannot be absent from even the tiniest geometrical or mathe-

matical point of the universe of matter or substance, it ought not to be called, in truth, a 'human' principle at all. Rather, and at best, it is that point in metaphysical Space which the human Monad and its vehicle man, occupy for the period of every life. Now that point is as imaginary as man himself, and in reality is an illusion, a *mâyâ*; but then for ourselves as for other personal Egos, we are a reality during that fit of illusion called life, and we have to take ourselves into account — in our own fancy at any rate, if no one else does. To make it more conceivable to the human intellect, when first attempting the study of Occultism, and to solve the A B C of the mystery of man, Occultism calls it the *seventh* principle, the synthesis of the six, and gives it for vehicle the *Spiritual Soul, Buddhi*. Now the latter conceals a mystery, which is never given to anyone with the exception of irrevocably pledged *chelas*, those at any rate, who can be safely trusted. Of course there would be less confusion, could it only be told; but, as this is directly concerned with the power of projecting one's double consciously and at will, and as this gift like the 'ring of Gyges' might prove very fatal to men at large and to the possessor of that faculty in particular, it is carefully guarded. Alone the adepts, who have been tried and can never be found wanting, have the key to the mystery fully divulged to them. . . . Let us avoid side issues, however, and hold to the 'principles.' This divine soul or Buddhi, then, is the Vehicle of the Spirit. In conjunc-

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tion, these two are one, impersonal, and without any attributes (on this plane, of course), and make two spiritual 'principles.' If we pass on to the *Human Soul* (*manas*, the *mens*) every one will agree that the intelligence of man is *dual* to say the least; *e. g.*, the high-minded man can hardly become low-minded; the very intellectual and spiritual-minded man is separated by an abyss from the obtuse, dull, and material, if not animal-minded man. Why then should not these men be represented by two 'principles' or two aspects rather? Every man has these two principles in him, one more active than the other, and in rare cases, one of these is entirely stunted in its growth: so to say paralysed by the strength and predominance of the other *aspect*, during the life of man. These, then, are what we call the two principles or aspects of *Manas*, the higher and the lower; the former, the higher *Manas*, or the thinking, conscious Ego gravitating toward the Spiritual Soul (*Buddhi*); and the latter, or its instinctual principle attracted to *Kâma*, the seat of animal desires and passions in man. Thus, we have *four* 'principles' justified; the last three being (1) the 'Double' which we have agreed to call Protean, or Plastic Soul; the vehicle of (2) the life *principle*; and (3) the physical body. Of course no Physiologist or Biologist will accept these principles, nor can he make head or tail of them. And this is why, perhaps, none of them understand to this day either the functions of the spleen, the physical vehicle of the Protean Double,

or those of a certain organ on the right side of man, the seat of the above-mentioned desires, nor yet does he know anything of the pineal gland, which he describes as a horny gland with a little sand in it, and which is the very key to the highest and divinest consciousness in man — his omniscient, spiritual and all-embracing mind. This seemingly useless appendage is the pendulum which, once the clock-work of the *inner* man is wound up, carries the spiritual vision of the Ego to the highest planes of perception, where the horizon opened before it becomes almost infinite. . . .

X. But the scientific materialists assert that after the death of man nothing remains; that the human body simply disintegrates into its component elements, and that what we call soul is merely a temporary self-consciousness produced as a by-product of organic action, which will evaporate like steam. Is not theirs a strange state of mind?

M. Not strange at all, that I see. If they say that self-consciousness ceases with the body, then in *their* case they simply utter an unconscious prophecy. For once that they are firmly convinced of what they assert, no conscious after-life is possible for them.

X. But if human self-consciousness survives death as a rule, why should there be exceptions?

M. In the fundamental laws of the spiritual world, which are immutable, no exception is possible. But there are rules for those who see, and rules for those who prefer to remain blind.

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X. Quite so, I understand. It is an aberration of a blind man, who denies the existence of the sun because he does not see it. But after death his spiritual eyes will certainly compel him to see?

M. They will not compel him, nor will he see anything. Having persistently denied an after-life during this life, he will be unable to sense it. His spiritual senses having been stunted, they cannot develop after death, and he will remain blind. By insisting that he *must* see it, you evidently mean one thing and I another. You speak of the spirit from the Spirit, or the flame from the Flame — of *Ātmâ* in short — and you confuse it with the human soul — *Manas*. . . . You do not understand me, let me try to make it clear. The whole gist of your question is to know whether, in the case of a downright materialist, the complete loss of self-consciousness and self-perception after death is possible? Isn't it so? I say: It is possible. Because, believing firmly in our Esoteric Doctrine, which refers to the *post-mortem* period, or the interval between two lives or births as merely a transitory state, I say: Whether that interval between two acts of the illusionary drama of life lasts one year or a million, that *post-mortem* state may, without any breach of the fundamental law, prove to be just the same state as that of a man who is in a dead swoon.

X. But since you have just said that the fundamental laws of the after-death state admit of no exception, how can this be?

M. Nor do I say now that they admit of exceptions. But the spiritual law of continuity applies only to things which are truly real. To one who has read and understood *Mundaka-Upanishad* and *Vedânta-Sâra* all this becomes very clear. I will say more: It is sufficient to understand what we mean by *Buddhi* and the duality of *Manas* to have a very clear perception why the materialist may not have a self-conscious survival after death: because *Manas*, in its lower aspect, is the seat of the terrestrial mind, and, therefore, can give only that perception of the Universe which is based on the evidence of that mind, and not on our spiritual vision. It is said in our Esoteric school that between *Buddhi* and *Manas*, or *Īswara* and *Prajñâ*,\* there is in reality no more difference than *between a forest and its trees, a lake and its waters*, just as *Mundaka* teaches. One or hundreds of trees dead from loss of vitality, or uprooted, are yet incapable of preventing the forest from being still a forest. The destruction or *post-mortem* death of one personality dropped out of the long series, will not cause the smallest change in the Spiritual *Ego*, and it will ever remain the same *Ego*. Only, instead of experiencing *Devachan* it will have to immediately reincarnate.

X. But as I understand it, *Ego-Buddhi* represents in this simile the forest and the personal minds the trees. And

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\**Īswara* is the collective consciousness of the manifested Deity, *Brahmâ*, *i. e.*, the collective consciousness of the Host of *Dhyân-Chohans*; and *Prajñâ* is their individual Wisdom.

if Buddhi is immortal, how can that which is similar to it, *i. e.*, Manas-taijasi,\* lose entirely its consciousness till the day of its new incarnation? I cannot understand it.

M. You cannot, because you will mix up an abstract representation of the whole with its casual changes of form; and because you confuse *Manas-taijasi*, the *Buddhi*-lit human soul, with the latter, animalized. Remember that if it can be said of Buddhi that it is unconditionally immortal, the same cannot be said of Manas, still less of taijasi, which is an attribute. No *post-mortem* consciousness or Manas-Taijasi, can exist apart from Buddhi, the divine soul, because the first (*Manas*) is, in its lower aspect, a qualificative attribute of the terrestrial personality, and the second (*taijasi*) is identical with the first, and that it is the same Manas only with the light of Buddhi reflected on it. In its turn, Buddhi would remain only an impersonal spirit without this element which it borrows from the human soul, which conditions and makes of it, in this illusive Universe, *as it were something separate* from the universal soul for the whole period of the cycle of incarnation. Say rather that *Buddhi-Manas* can neither die nor lose its compound self-con-

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\**Taijasi* means the radiant in consequence of the union with Buddhi of Manas, the human, illuminated by the radiance of the divine soul. Therefore Manas-taijasi may be described as radiant mind; the *human* reason lit by the light of the spirit; and Buddhi-Manas is the representation of the divine *plus* the human intellect and self-consciousness.

sciousness in Eternity, nor the recollection of its previous incarnations in which the two, *i. e.*, the spiritual and the human soul, had been closely linked together. But it is not so in the case of a materialist, whose human soul not only receives nothing from the divine soul, but even refuses to recognise its existence. You can hardly apply this axiom to the attributes and qualifications of the human soul, for it would be like saying that because your divine soul is immortal, therefore, the bloom on your cheek must also be immortal; whereas this bloom, like taijasi, or spiritual radiance, is simply a transitory phenomenon.

X. Do I understand you to say that we must not mix in our minds the noumenon with the phenomenon, the cause with its effects?

M. I do say so, and repeat that, limited to Manas or the human soul alone, the radiance of Taijasi itself becomes a mere question of time; because both immortality and consciousness after death become for the terrestrial personality of man simply conditioned attributes, as they depend entirely on conditions and beliefs created by the human soul itself during the life of its body. Karma acts incessantly; we reap *in our after-life* only the fruit of that which we have ourselves sown, or rather created, in our terrestrial existence.

X. But if my Ego can, after the destruction of my body, become plunged in a state of entire unconsciousness, then where can be the

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punishment for the sins of my past life?

M. Our philosophy teaches that Karmic punishment reaches the Ego only in its next incarnation. After death it receives only the reward for the unmerited sufferings endured during its just past existence.\* The whole punishment after death, even for the materialist, consists therefore in the absence of any reward and the utter loss of the consciousness of one's bliss and rest. Karma — is the child of the terrestrial Ego, the fruit of the actions of the tree which is the objective personality visible to all, as much as the fruit of all the thoughts and even motives of the spiritual 'I'; but Karma is also the tender mother, who heals the wounds inflicted by her during the preceding life, before she will begin to torture this Ego by inflicting upon him new ones. If it may be said that there is not a mental or physical suffering

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\*Some Theosophists have taken exception to this phrase, but the words are those of the Masters, and the meaning attached to the word 'unmerited' is that given above. In the T. P. S. pamphlet No. 6, a phrase, criticized subsequently in *Lucifer* was used, which was intended to convey the same idea. In form, however, it was awkward and open to the criticism directed against it; but the essential idea was that men often suffer from the effects of the actions done by others, effects which thus do not strictly belong to their own Karma, but to that of other people — and for these sufferings they of course deserve compensation. If it is true to say that nothing that happens to us can be anything else than Karma — or the direct or indirect effect of a cause — it would be a great error to think that every evil or good which befalls us is due *only to our* own personal Karma. (*Vide* further on.)

in the life of a mortal, which is not the fruit and consequence of some sin in this, or a preceding existence, on the other hand, since he does not preserve the slightest recollection of it in his actual life, and feels himself not deserving of such punishment, but believes sincerely he suffers for no guilt of his own, this alone is quite sufficient to entitle the human soul to the fullest consolation, rest and bliss in his *post-mortem* existence. Death comes to our spiritual selves ever as a deliverer and friend. For the materialist, who, notwithstanding his materialism, was not a bad man, the interval between the two lives will be like the unbroken and placid sleep of a child; either entirely dreamless, or with pictures of which he will have no definite perception. For the believer it will be a dream as vivid as life and full of realistic bliss and visions. As for the bad and cruel man, whether materialist or otherwise, he will be immediately reborn and suffer his hell on earth. To enter *Avichi* is an exceptional and rare occurrence.

X. As far as I remember, the periodical incarnations of Sûtrâtmâ† are likened in some *Upanishad* to the life

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†Our immortal and reincarnating principle in conjunction with the Manasic recollections of the preceding lives is called Sûtrâtmâ, which means literally the Thread-soul; because like the pearls on a thread so is the long series of human lives strung together on that one thread. Manas must become *taijasi*, the radiant, before it can hang on the Sûtrâtmâ as a pearl on its thread, and so have full and absolute perception of itself in the Eternity. As said before, too close association with the terrestrial mind of the human soul alone causes this radiance to be entirely lost.

## DIALOG ON THE MYSTERIES OF THE AFTER-LIFE

of a mortal which oscillates periodically between sleep and waking. This does not seem to me very clear, and I will tell you why. For the man who awakes, another day commences, but that man is the same in soul and body as he was the day before; whereas at every new incarnation a full change takes place not only in his external envelop, sex, and personality, but even in his mental and psychic capacities. Thus the simile does not seem to me quite correct. The man who arises from sleep remembers quite clearly what he has done yesterday, the day before, and even months and years ago. But none of us has the slightest recollection of a preceding life or any fact or event concerning it. . . . I may forget in the morning what I have dreamed during the night, still I know that I have slept and have the certainty that I lived during sleep; but what recollection have I of my past incarnation? How do you reconcile this?

M. Yet some people do recollect their past incarnations. This is what the Arhats call Samma-Sambuddha — or the knowledge of the whole series of one's past incarnations.

X. But we ordinary mortals who have not reached Samma-Sambuddha, how can we be expected to realize this simile?

M. By studying it and trying to understand more correctly the characteristics of the three states of sleep. Sleep is a general and immutable law for man as for beast, but there are different kinds of sleep and still more different dreams and visions.

X. Just so. But this takes us from our subject. Let us return to the materialist, who while not denying dreams, which he could hardly do, yet denies immortality in general and the survival of his own individuality especially.

M. And the materialist is right for once, at least; since for one who has no inner perception and faith, there is no immortality possible. In order to live in the world to come, a conscious life, one has to believe first of all in that life during one's terrestrial existence. On these two aphorisms of the Secret Science all the philosophy about the *post-mortem* consciousness and the immortality of the soul is built. The Ego receives always according to its deserts. After the dissolution of the body, there commences for it either a period of full clear consciousness, a state of chaotic dreams, or an utterly dreamless sleep indistinguishable from annihilation; and these are the three states of consciousness. Our physiologists find the cause of dreams and visions in an unconscious preparation for them during the waking hours; why cannot the same be admitted for the *post-mortem* dreams? I repeat it, *death is sleep*. After death begins, before the spiritual eyes of the soul, a performance according to a program learnt and very often composed unconsciously by ourselves: the practical carrying out of *correct* beliefs or of illusions which have been created by ourselves. A Methodist will be a Methodist, a Mussulman, a Mussulman, of course, just for a time — in a perfect fool's paradise of each man's creation and

making. These are the *post-mortem* fruits of the tree of life. Naturally, our belief or unbelief in the fact of conscious immortality is unable to influence the unconditioned reality of the fact itself, once that it exists; but the belief or unbelief in that immortality, as the continuation or annihilation of separate entities, cannot fail to give color to that fact in its application to each of these entities. Now do you begin to understand it?

X. I think I do. The materialist, disbelieving in everything that cannot be proven to him by his five senses or by scientific reasoning, and rejecting every spiritual manifestation, accepts life as the only conscious existence. Therefore, according to their beliefs so will it be unto them. They will lose their personal Ego, and will plunge into a dreamless sleep until a new awakening. Is it so?

M. Almost so. Remember the universal esoteric teaching of the two kinds of conscious existence: the terrestrial and the spiritual. The latter must be considered real from the very fact that it is the region of the eternal, changeless, immortal cause of all; whereas the incarnating Ego dresses itself up in new garments entirely different from those of its previous incarnations, and in which all except its spiritual prototype is doomed to a change so radical as to leave no trace behind.

X. Stop! . . . Can the consciousness of my terrestrial *Egos* perish not only for a time, like the consciousness of the materialist, but in any case so entirely as to leave no trace behind?

M. According to the teaching, it must so perish and in its fullness, all except that principle which, having united itself with the Monad, has thereby become a purely spiritual and indestructible essence, one with it in the Eternity. But in the case of an out-and-out materialist, in whose personal 'I' no Buddhi has ever reflected itself, how can the latter carry away into the infinitudes one particle of that terrestrial personality? Your spiritual 'I' is immortal; but from your present Self it can carry away into after-life but that which has become worthy of immortality, namely, the aroma alone of the flower that has been mown by death.

X. Well, and the flower, the terrestrial 'I'?

M. The flower, as all past and future flowers which blossomed and died, and will blossom again on the mother bough, the *Sûtrâtmâ*, all children of one root or Buddhi, will return to dust. Your present 'I,' as you yourself know, is not the body now sitting before me, nor yet is it what I would call *Manas-Sûtrâtmâ* — but *Sûtrâtmâ-Buddhi*.

X. But this does not explain to me at all, why you call life after death immortal, infinite, and real, and the terrestrial life a simple phantom or illusion; since even that *post-mortem* life has limits, however much wider they may be than those of terrestrial life.

M. No doubt. The spiritual Ego of man moves in Eternity like a pendulum between the hours of life and death. But if these hours marking the periods of terrestrial and spiritual life



are limited in their duration, and if the very number of such stages in Eternity between sleep and awakening, illusion and reality, has its beginning and its end, on the other hand the spiritual 'Pilgrim' is eternal. Therefore are the hours of his *post-mortem* life — when, disembodied he stands face to face with truth and not the mirages of his transitory earthly existences during the period of that pilgrimage which we call 'the cycle of rebirths'—the only reality in our conception. Such intervals, their limitation notwithstanding, do not prevent the Ego, while ever perfecting itself, to be following undeviatingly, though gradually and slowly, the path to its last transformation, when that Ego having reached its goal becomes the divine ALL. These intervals and stages help towards this final result instead of hindering it; and without such limited intervals the divine Ego could never reach its ultimate goal. This Ego is the actor, and its numerous and various incarnations the parts it plays. Shall you call these parts with their costumes the individuality of the actor himself? Like that actor, the Ego is forced to play during the Cycle of Necessity up to the very threshold of *Para-nirvâna*, many parts such as may be unpleasant to it. But as the bee collects its honey from every flower, leaving the rest as food for the earthly worms, so does our spiritual individuality, whether we call it Sûtrâtmâ or Ego. It collects from every terrestrial personality into which Karma forces it to incarnate, the nectar alone of the spiritual qualities and self-

consciousness, and uniting all these into one whole it emerges from its chrysalis as the glorified Dhyân-Chohan. So much the worse for those terrestrial personalities from which it could collect nothing. Such personalities cannot assuredly outlive consciously their terrestrial existence.

X. Thus then it seems, that for the terrestrial personality, immortality is still conditional. Is then immortality itself *not* unconditional?

M. Not at all. But it cannot touch the *non-existent*. For all that which exists as SAT, ever aspiring to SAT, immortality and Eternity are absolute. Matter is the opposite pole of spirit and yet the two are one. The essence of all this, *i. e.*, Spirit, Force and Matter, or the three in one, is as endless as it is beginningless; but the form acquired by this triple unity during its incarnations, the externality, is certainly only the illusion of our personal conceptions. Therefore do we call the after-life alone a reality, while relegating the terrestrial life, its terrestrial personality included, to the phantom realm of illusion.

X. But why in such a case not call sleep the reality, and waking the illusion, instead of the reverse?

M. Because we use an expression made to facilitate the grasping of the subject, and from the standpoint of terrestrial conceptions it is a very correct one.

X. Nevertheless, I cannot understand. If the life to come is based on justice and the merited retribution for all our terrestrial suffering, how, in the

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

case of materialists many of whom are ideally honest and charitable men, should there remain of their personality nothing but the refuse of a faded flower!

M. No one ever said such a thing. No materialist, if a good man, however unbelieving, can die for ever in the fulness of his spiritual individuality. What was said is, that the consciousness of one life can disappear either fully or partially; in the case of a thorough materialist, no vestige of that personality which disbelieved remains in the series of lives.

X. But is this not annihilation to the Ego?

M. Certainly not. One can sleep a dead sleep during a long railway journey, miss one or several stations without the slightest recollection or consciousness of it, awake at another station and continue the journey recollecting other halting-places, till the end of that journey, when the goal is reached. Three kinds of sleep were mentioned to you: the dreamless, the chaotic, and the one so real, that to the sleeping man his dreams become full realities. If you believe in the latter why can't you believe in the former? According to what one has believed in and expected after death, such is the state one will have. He who expected no life to come will have an absolute blank amounting to annihilation in the interval between the two rebirths. This is just the carrying out of the program we spoke of, which is created by the materialist him-

self. But there are various kinds of materialists, as you say. A selfish wicked Egoist, one who never shed a tear for anyone but himself, thus adding entire indifference to the whole world to his unbelief, must drop at the threshold of death his personality for ever. This personality having no tendrils of sympathy for the world around, and hence nothing to hook on to the string of the Sûtrâtmâ, every connexion between the two is broken with the last breath. There being no Devachan for such a materialist, the Sûtrâtmâ will reincarnate almost immediately. But those materialists who erred in nothing but their disbelief, will oversleep but one station. Moreover, the time will come when the ex-materialist will perceive himself in the Eternity and perhaps repent that he lost even one day, or station, from the life eternal.

X. Still, would it not be more correct to say that death is birth into a new life, or a return once more to the threshold of eternity?

M. You may if you like. Only remember that births differ, and that there are births of 'still-born' beings, which are *failures*. Moreover, with your fixed Western ideas about material life, the words 'living' and 'being' are quite inapplicable to the pure subjective state of *post-mortem* existence. It is just because of such ideas — save in a few philosophers who are not read by the many and who themselves are too confused to present a distinct picture of it — that all your conceptions of life and death have finally become

WANG WEI PRAISES THE RIVER WINGS-OF-A-KINGFISHER

so narrow. On the one hand, they have led to crass materialism, and on the other, to the still more material conception of the other life which the Spiritualists have formulated in their Summer-land. There the souls of men eat, drink and marry, and live in a Paradise quite as sensual as that of Mohammed, but even less philosophical. Nor are the average conceptions of the uneducated Christians any better, but are still more material, if possible. What between truncated An-

gels, brass trumpets, golden harps, streets in paradisiacal cities paved with jewels, and hell-fires, it seems like a scene at a Christmas pantomime. It is because of these narrow conceptions that you find such difficulty in understanding. And, it is also just because the life of the disembodied soul, while possessing all the vividness of reality, as in certain dreams, is devoid of every grossly objective form of terrestrial life, that the Eastern philosophers have compared it with visions during sleep.

WANG WEI PRAISES THE RIVER WINGS-OF-A-KINGFISHER

Kenneth Morris, D. Litt.

I NEVER go down the Yellow-Chrysanthemum River  
But rocked in my boat on Wings-of-a-Kingfisher Stream  
That winds between silent and people-less peaks forever  
Mirroring cloud-high bluffs where the pine-woods dream.  
I trust I may never go down to the beautiful river  
But by secretly-winding Wings-of-a-Kingfisher Stream.

Through a murmurous recitative and continual pondering  
Stone-broken jargon of many-voiced waters I go;  
Boat-borne, through mazy leagues in the wilderness wandering,  
By shadowy reaches where the water-chestnuts grow;  
And always, from near or far, aware of the pondering  
Stone-broken jargon and recitative as I row.

I never go down to Yellow-Chrysanthemum River  
Through the still, deep reaches where greenly the reeds are glassed,  
But the morning glows, and my heart and the ripples quiver  
With the peace that will dawn when the lives of the stars are passed.  
I never go worshipping down to the beautiful river,  
But I know the Eternal broods where the reeds are glassed.

*International Theosophical Headquarters,  
Point Loma, California*

# H. P. BLAVATSKY: THE MYSTERY

KATHERINE TINGLEY and G. DE PURUCKER, M. A., D. LITT.

## PART TWO: PHILOSOPHICAL AND SCIENTIFIC

### CHAPTER VII—THE GREAT SAGES AND SEERS

“If there be no reasons to suppose that we have existed before that period at which our existence apparently commences, then there are no grounds for supposing that we shall continue to exist after our existence has apparently ceased.”—SHELLEY

**P**ROBABLY there is not one of the doctrines of Theosophy which has aroused such interest in both Occidental and Oriental lands as the sublime Theosophical teaching of the existence of great Sages and Seers, living men, who compose an Association or Order or Society of relatively perfected human beings. It is perhaps the most persuasive of all Theosophical doctrines to the average man, and the one which makes the strongest appeal to the quiet chambers of his heart.

It is, also, one of the simplest of our doctrines and least complicated by philosophical intricacies. It illustrates so simply and with such admirably fetching appeal to the human heart, the sublime doctrine of human perfectibility as obtained through the working of the evolutionary processes as manifested here on our earth.

It is with a view to developing the real nature and characteristics and powers of these Great Men, whose existence H. P. Blavatsky brought anew to the attention of Western lands, that this and the succeeding two chapters will be devoted.

In considering a universal view of

the great world of beings which surrounds us, the thoughtful student will be struck with one very interesting fact, which is, that if we place Man as being the highest known entity on earth—highest, that is, with regard to faculty and the use of faculty and the self-conscious perception and enjoyment of faculty—we find that as our survey leaves him and travels backwards along the descending scale of evolutionary development, our attention is caught away from the individual and particular towards composites.

It has been said, and probably said with perfect truth, that no two leaves in a forest are exactly the same; for if they were, they would not be two leaves but the same leaf; with how much greater force can this be said of so highly individualized a being as Man! And, despite the formal individualities even of the leaves in a forest of trees, they are as a single entity when compared with the marvelous development of what is popularly called individuality as found in Man.

It would seem as if the whole purpose of Nature, or the whole trend of

development, were the bringing out, the rolling forth (which is of course the etymological meaning of the word 'evolution'), or the unfolding, of characteristics lying latent in the invisible, as well as visible, fabric of living beings.

An English scientific writer, Bateson, some years ago expressed this very neatly when he spoke of the "unpacking of an original complex" as representing the evolutionary process. We must regard the evolutionary processes working in Nature as being the effects of a concatenation of causes working in living beings, and leading such beings into constantly extending paths of individual development. This is the 'tendency' in the living things of Nature to advance towards individuality and away from the perfect communism of the lowest forms of animal life, and from the simple unism of the rocks.

But this is looking at the matter on its merely material side. How our ideas expand as we study the *mental* and *spiritual* activities of mankind! Here we observe the 'struggle' to reconcile duty with desire; right with strength; knowledge and power with justice.

In employing the word 'struggle' here, we are using the ordinary phraseology of modern quasi-philosophical biology in order to be understood easily; but actually the struggle is purely imaginary, for the entire field of human effort is in the individual himself, and only relatively and in small degree does any such imaginary struggle along these lines arise from man's relations

with the surrounding sphere of circumstance, or with his fellows.

The so-called 'struggle' is simply the conflict in man's own mind; and as all men have this conflict, they imagine that it exists outside of themselves. Once the realization comes home to him that all Nature is a unity, and that he himself forms but one small wheel in the cosmic macrocosm, directed and inspired by a unifying spiritual force, man finds his freedom, sees his so-called 'struggle' to be what it is, his own illusion, and attains peace and liberation from the bonds of desire arising out of the thralldom of the personal self to the desires which that personal self gives birth to.

One of the great virtues of the teachings which H. P. Blavatsky brought anew to the western world lies in the sentences which immediately precede, for she showed to Occidentals the pathway out of this stifling morass of personality into the golden sunlight of spiritual freedom. In doing so she merely put in philosophic and religious form the teachings of the Sages of all the ages, that true and real freedom lies in abandoning the thralldom of selfish personal desires, and in realizing one's absolute fundamental oneness with the great motivating and causal impulses of Universal Nature which thrill through us, and really make us what we are.

These great motivating energies in Nature, which thus work through us, show to any observant eye what is popularly called the evolutionary 'tendency' in man; and this tendency, at

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man's present stage of development — a tendency which will grow constantly in strength — is to re-combine, to reunite, with his fellows, and to see and to find in them other parts of himself, as it were. All the foundations of morals repose on this so-called 'tendency' in human beings. We instinctively know a man from his thoughts and acts, in other words from his character, that is to say, from the workings in him of those forces which predominate over other forces; for in all human beings certain psycho-mental energies are dominant over others, which latter are recessive; and it is these dominant energies of a psycho-mental type, which show forth in man's character.

Indeed, when we say 'good' man, we mean one conscious of duties to other beings, who carries these duties out regardless of any temporary loss to himself, if such take place. This is, of course, a declaration of the fundamental or spiritual unity of all beings; of what Theosophists so truly but inadequately express when they speak of Universal Brotherhood as a fact in Nature.

What man can fail to see the difference which exists between a man and a tiger, for instance, or between a man and a fish? Or between these, and the unself-conscious existence of the stone? And yet all these beings, and all the multitudinous hosts of beings existing in all-various grades of development which are both invisible and visible: all are offsprings of the same fundamental spiritual-divine Source; all are

beings working their various ways upwards, each along the particular path outlined for it by its own impelling energies of higher consciousness, and some of which beings are far along the path of evolution, while others have as yet hardly done more than begin their journey, if we take the stone as a convenient conventional point of departure by way of illustrating the idea.

What man is rash enough to say that these entities are separate in origin, separate in being, separate in destiny? We have the contrary proved to us by every glance of our eyes, by every object that our eyes rest upon; for all Nature proclaims the coherent aggregate of beings as indissolubly interrelated and interlocked both in activity and in destiny.

Yet how enormous are the differences that separate the highest from the lowest, the Man from the Stone, or the Man from the Fish, or from the Tiger. We see everywhere stirring around us: in the lives, in the emotions, in the instincts, and impulses, of the humbler things that environ us, the same forces that stir in our own breasts: love, affection, fear, passion, sympathy, remembrance, hatreds, and many more. Still, Man stands supreme over all that are beneath him. He has attained a post whence he surveys the beings below him with fascinated interest: and he turns his eyes in the other direction, and he is subtly conscious that farther along the way and ahead of him, there must be beings far greater than he, beings in comparison with whom he is as are the animals now to him:

beings who in ages, aeons long since past, were in their turn where he now stands.

Man's logical sense obliges him to accept this graduated scale of beings in evolutionary development; for he is utterly incapable of pointing to a beginning, or of finding an end. Such imaginary breaks are obviously mere fantasies of the imagination.

An important point here is not merely that these beings superior to men exist, for rigid logic compels us to ad-

mit their existence; but that if such beings ahead of man do not exist, the anomaly of the graduated scale of beings beneath man would require an explanation that no one yet has succeeded in giving.

Following the teachings of the great Sages and Seers of the ages, brought anew to the Western World by H. P. Blavatsky, we are enabled for purposes of convenient illustration, to divide this graduated scale into seven (or even into ten) stages of evolution, somewhat after the following fashion:

- |   |   |                           |  |
|---|---|---------------------------|--|
| { | a | First Elemental Kingdom:  | Fluidic in type, with unmanifest and unindividualized monadic corpuscles possessing a common vital organic existence.      |
|   | b | Second Elemental Kingdom: | Separation into droplets, so to say, of quasi-particularized entities held together by the same vital wave.                |
|   | c | Third Elemental Kingdom:  | More highly particularized beings, although still bound together by, and functioning in, a common vital organic existence. |
1. The Mineral Kingdom: Quasi-individualized corpuscles, or particulars, functioning in organic unity. Simple unism.
  2. Vegetable Kingdom: Simple communism. The pressure towards individualism increases.
  3. The Beast Kingdom: Dawning of individualized existence.
  4. The Human Kingdom: Efflorescence of individuality. Dawning of a common or general consciousness.
  5. The Great Ones: Full grown individuality. Self-conscious realization of a unifying general consciousness.
  6. Quasi-Divine Beings or Lower Gods: Perfected individuality merging, without diminution, into a general consciousness. Dawning of cosmical consciousness.
  7. Gods: Emergence into conscious realization of cosmical consciousness, without loss of a perfected impersonal individuality.

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The mind pauses in wonder and awe in contemplation of the utterly sublime reaches of self-conscious existences thus spread out before the inner eye. It would indeed be an anomaly in Nature if Man were the highest possible reach of consciousness in the Universal Life! Great as he is, nothing shows his greatness more than the ability to recognise greatness elsewhere; and how clearly has H. P. Blavatsky not shown forth and proved with inimitable philosophical logic this fact!

As we ponder over the spectacle that our mind spreads before us, we realize at length that the essential difference between Man and the beings beneath him in evolutionary development, lies in his self-conscious mind. Here also we have the link binding us to the higher realms of being, the bridge over which the consciousness passes to and fro between Matter and Spirit, one the pole of the other; and as we study the lower beings, we also realize the fact that they too have minds of their own, of their own type and kind belonging to their own respective classes: centers of consciousness, in other words, but not of reflective or indirect consciousness, such as man has.

Here, then, in Man it is that we perceive the union of *another and higher* plane of being with *this* plane of being. The spiritual and the material have, so to say, effected a union: or perhaps it would be better to say that in man's case, the sensitive and the psychological and the spiritual have united; and the product of this union is seven-principled Man. Heaven and earth

have kissed, as the quaint ancient saying has it, and their offspring is the human race.

No one is blind enough not to see the enormous, indeed apparently almost impassable, gulf which separates the self-conscious mind of Man from the direct sensitive mind of the lower creatures. Man may truly be called a god inshrined within a tabernacle,— the psycho-material framework of his lower nature. It is the destiny of the god within him to raise up to its own level of power, beauty, wisdom, and strength, the struggling, falling, aspiring center which Man usually calls himself. This is achieved through evolution, which the reader must always keep in mind is evolution in the Theosophical sense, of the flowing outwards into ever-increasing and more perfect manifestation, of the inlocked, in-folded, or in other words, the native capacities, abilities, powers, faculties, of the inner god.

As man grows towards a fuller union with his inner god, with the god within, his spiritual essence, which we may call the Immanent Christos, or the Inner Buddha, or the Brahman in his heart of hearts: as his faculties develop and his consciousness expands under the life-giving and warming rays of the inner spiritual sun, which is the god within us: *pari passu* he grows into greatness of understanding and an accompanying greatness of sympathy with all that is. He realizes with ever-enlarging comprehension his essential oneness with the Universal Nature from which he sprang in the beginning



of this period of Cosmic Evolution, and towards which he is now again journeying. He left it in 'eternities' past, an unself-conscious god-spark, and he shall in a future aeon rebecome one with It again, but as a fully self-conscious divinity. The cycle of evolution, of development, shall have then closed for him until he again begins another and a new pilgrimage in the cosmic spaces, both invisible and visible, but on highths at present inconceivable to the human soul.

The lesson that we learn from all this is the lesson of fundamental unity, of inseparable interests, and of unbreakable bonds between all that is, and everything that is; we begin to understand why all the greatest figures that the human race has ever produced, the Master-Minds of the ages, the great Sages and Seers hereinbefore spoken of, have taught one Truth, one fundamental Reality, one Universal Life, of which we all — human beings and those below us, and those above us — are, as it were, the sparks; and this Essential Reality, the Universal Life, underlies all the manifold Mysteries of Being.

It should be amply clear from the preceding paragraphs of this chapter, and from allusions to the same subject in previous chapters, that the existence and living reality of the perfected Men whom Theosophists commonly call Teachers, Elder Brothers, Masters, Sages, Seers, Mahâtmâs, and by other names, is founded on no vague and imaginary hypothesis, but conversely, that their existence is imperatively called

for by the rigid logic and the inescapable deductions that flow from our study of Nature itself.

In the first place, then, from the nature of the remarks set forth briefly in the preceding paragraphs, and, from similar remarks and observations which will be found in other chapters, the attentive reader must have observed easily enough that these observations lay the foundation, for what we may call our argument, in Nature itself. On no other grounds of reality is the existence of such perfected men properly to be proved. *They are, as much as anything else is, the Children of the Universal Life; they are men, just as we are men; born of human mothers by wholly natural and usual methods; they think as we think, they breathe, smile, walk, speak in human tongues, and are as other men are — except (and this exception is of course a great difference between them and other men) that they are greater in all things than average men are.*

It is of the utmost importance to have this statement of their human and yet sublimely human nature and characteristics clear in the mind, because those great-souled beings — 'Great Soul' or 'Great Self' is the Sanskrit meaning of the word 'Mahâtman' — are sometimes spoken of, by those who do not understand anything of them, as quasi-'supernatural,' 'superhuman,' 'gods,' or, most foolishly, as 'returning spirits,' and what not. They are not 'supernatural' because there is no such thing as the 'supernatural.' Nothing can be outside of or above Nature, the

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Universal Mother, the Universal Origin; and what most people ignorantly mean when they use this term is what we Theosophists express by such words as 'inner,' 'occult,' 'hid forces of Nature,' etc., etc.

The Theosophist attaches no sensible meaning whatsoever to this word 'supernatural,' if used in any other signification. Our souls, our spirits, the invisible and unknown forces and energies and substances of Nature, the Heaven-Worlds — planes or spheres of being wholly outside of our physical ken and belonging to what is popularly called 'the Spiritual World' — all these and much more are included in what the Theosophist means when he uses the word 'Nature' without accompanying qualification.

The idea that Nature is merely our gross, visible, physical world, and that all that is outside of it (and the marvelous and daily growing achievements of modern science have taught us to realize that what is hid and invisible is incomparably vaster and greater than what is visible) is 'supernatural,' with the implied idea of something contrary to Nature, is the result of centuries of miseducation with regard to the Mysteries of Being.

*We Theosophists do not recognise the 'supernatural' in the popular sense, as having any existence at all; like the possibility of 'miracles,' if by this word we mean the working of marvels contrary to natural law, or by the suspension of natural law, we reject it as unphilosophical, unnatural, and therefore unscientific, as well as irreligious, and*

*as springing from ignorance of the inner constitution of the interlocking, interrelated, and interblending worlds of Spirit and of Matter.*

*Of course we Theosophists not only recognise but emphatically teach — and in all this we follow strictly and faithfully the tenets of the Ancient Wisdom, the Wisdom-Religion of the archaic ages as brought anew to the Western world by H. P. Blavatsky — the existence of hid mysteries in Nature, of little known and of as yet entirely unknown forces in Nature; that these mysteries and forces nevertheless have been known in past ages and are known today by these perfected Men themselves, of whom this and succeeding chapters treat. They know of them not through favor or by chance, but because these great Seers and Sages are beyond us in evolutionary development and therefore naturally know more than we do of Nature's mystic and wonderful secrets; this is why these Teachers seem 'mysterious' to many.*

Precisely as the chemist expert in his science knows vastly more about certain of Nature's secrets than the unlettered savage, and is therefore able to work with a knowledge of Nature's laws which enables him to produce what seem to be 'miracles' to the simple-minded wild man. Does the astronomer work 'miracles' when he predicts eclipses? Does the geometer work 'miracles' when he tells the wild man of the exact highth of a pole or of a cliff by taking the measure of the distance from the foot of the pole or of the cliff, to a designated spot, and

the tangent of the angle between the horizontal and the line joining the eye with the top of the pole or cliff? Does not the phonograph appear to be a 'miracle' to the mind of the unlettered barbarian, when he hears his chief's voice reproduced with fidelity and recognises the very words spoken into the record?

These Great Men, these Sages and Seers of whatever age, therefore, owe whatever knowledge of the laws of Being that they possess to the simple and easily understood fact that such knowledge springs up readily and wholly naturally in them, from experience gained and stored in the mystic volume of Memory in past lives, first; for reincarnation, or repeated imbodiment in bodies of human flesh, is the manner after which and according to which natural evolutionary law works upon the human species in urging the latter towards perfection.

Second: they owe their wisdom and knowledge also to the fact that, composing a Society, an Order, or Brotherhood among themselves from immemorial time, they possess the means and the power not only to aid the development of wisdom and knowledge in themselves by association with their fellow Great Ones, but also to assist the growth of wisdom and knowledge in such men as they have found to be fit and worthy recipients of such aid.

It has sometimes been said by the unthinking or by the insufficiently informed, that if such Great Men exist, they ought to appear among their fellow human beings, and aid those who

know less than they to more rapid progress and growth; that they ought to come out openly among their inferiors in evolutionary development, in other words, to appear publicly and teach. This supposition shows entire ignorance of the facts, an ignorance natural enough perhaps, but none the less unnecessary, for study of our Theosophical literature would have shown them otherwise.

Nevertheless when the times are ripe for their public appearance, and when the turning of the cyclical wheel of destiny calls them forth to strike the keynotes of a new age, then they *do* come out in public and teach, or at least send forth a Messenger from among themselves, who teaches and broadcasts the seeds of knowledge and wisdom into men's minds and hearts openly and publicly and wherever such seed may find even the smallest chance of germinating and bringing forth good fruits.

Slowly the Bible of the Race is writ:  
Each age, each kindred, adds a verse to it.

Realizing, therefore, that these Teachers or Mahâtmanas or Sages or Seers — call them by what name you will — are human beings like other men, except that they are farther advanced along the path of evolution than the majority of men are, it is easy enough to begin to understand something of their nature as individuals, and as a corporate body, and of their capacities, and of their vast knowledge of Nature. It is perfectly true that they possess knowledge of Nature's

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secret processes, and of hid mysteries, which to the average man may seem to be little short of the marvelous; but, after all, this mere fact is of relatively small importance in comparison with the far greater and more profoundly moving aspects of their nature and life-work.

It is of much greater and of more widely reaching importance to realize that their knowledge of the spiritual side of Universal Nature and of human life is the foundation for the reverence that unspoiled human hearts and unprejudiced minds instinctively give to these Superior Men.

It is because of this spiritual knowledge which they possess, and on account of their highly developed spiritual and intellectual power, that they are so often called in the Orient by the term Great Selves (Mahâtmanas, to use the Sanskrit term). They are called 'Teachers' too, because they teach of the Nature of Things, and because they have disciples of varied development; but obviously such disciples must themselves be, relatively speaking, far on the path of Wisdom and Knowledge, as compared with the average man.

The Great Ones are also called 'Elder Brothers,' because they are older in experience than the average of men; because they are of ripe understanding, perfected through lives of labor and self-conquest in past ages, and because they stand in much the same relation to the majority of men that an elder brother does to his younger brothers.

Especially are they called 'Teachers' because they are occupied in the noble duty of instructing mankind in inspiring elevating thoughts, and in instilling impulses of forgetfulness of self into the hearts of men. Also are they sometimes called the 'Guardians,' because they are, in very truth, the Guardians of the Race and of the records — natural, racial, national — of past ages, portions of which they give out from time to time as fragments of a long-forgotten Wisdom, when the world is ready to listen to them; and they do this in order to advance the Cause of Truth and of Civilization.

It must be apparent also, from what has been said, that in an Order or Society or Association, such as that which the authors of this book have outlined in the preceding paragraphs, there must exist different grades of these relatively perfected men: in other words different stages of advancement as among themselves. This is what Theosophy, the Ancient Wisdom, teaches as a matter of natural necessity and law. Nothing can be more accordant with what we already know of the varying grades in natural existence; and a moment's consideration will at once show that, granted the existence of these Great Men, differences of degree in evolutionary advancement among them are inevitable.

We have already shown in the opening remarks of this chapter that the more we penetrate in our study into the natural procedures of the Environmenting Life, the greater is the degree of individuality found in the beings oc-

cupying the innumerable steps of Nature's scale the higher those beings stand thereon. In other words, the farther the being has progressed, the greater is his individuality; but it was also pointed out with some degree of emphatic insistence, that the higher the degree of development, the greater is the sense of unity among the beings occupying these higher stages: but this is *conscious* unity, the spiritual and intellectual *realization* of the oneness with all that is.

Starting on its evolutionary journey, the Monad or spiritual Spark through its radiant Light by almost incredibly slow stages creeps out of the stone into the plant, and from the plant into the beast, and from the beast it yearns upwards to higher things, until finally the urging spirit within the evolving entity has brought that evolving entity to the point where it is enabled to understand selfconsciously its fundamental unity with the universe — the Enveloping Life — and here the human, Man, appears, child of heaven and of earth, in very truth, with the lower nature brought under ever-increasing control.

This is a very old teaching. *The doctrine of the slowly developing powers and faculties of the evolving entity by reason of the invigorating and inspiriting urge of the Monad or spiritual Spark or consciousness-Center working outwards and upwards, into continuously more perfected self-expressions of its native or innate powers and faculties: an evolution beginning in the darkest or most material por-*

*tion of the evolving entity's cyclic journey, until it is self-consciously united with its inner god, lies at the bottom of all the great philosophies and religions of the archaic world.*

The astonishingly rapid spread in the minds and imagination of men, once that the latter was fired by it, of the evolutionary *idea* in modern Europe, once that Lamarck, Darwin, and their many followers caught from the invisible thought-reservoir of the planet the idea of a progressive growth — however imperfectly and materialistically Lamarck and Darwin themselves may have taught, — is in itself a proof of the appeal that the idea of evolution *per se* made to man. Not that we Theosophists accept either Lamarckism or Darwinism as being identical with the teachings of Theosophy as regards evolution; for we do not so accept them, and this for the reason that both of these schemes are incomplete in conception, and largely wrong in detail; but we Theosophists do most decidedly accept and teach the general doctrine of a slow and steady evolutionary growth *from within outwards*, or, as it would probably be phrased today, from pre-existent faculty to subsequent organ.

We also teach that this steady evolutionary process consists in bringing out, through what we may call self-expression, the intrinsic, native, latent, dormant powers or faculties inherent in and urging on the evolving entity; and, furthermore, that this process is at certain cyclic intervals marked by noteworthy spurts or increases of evo-

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lutionary intensity, followed as surely by periods of quiescence or dormancy, and even occasionally by apparent, but not real, retrogression.

Such periods are, respectively, the epochs of racial manifestation in civilization reaching a culmination of power and brilliance, and then sinking back into barbarism: the evolutionary highth reached in the one case, and the following depth of retrogression in the other case, varying with many other factors contained in the problem.

The subject is obviously a vast one to treat in proper detail, and therefore outside of the scope of this book; and the authors do no more than barely sketch it here, pointing out, however, that our Theosophical literature on the subject is voluminous, and that earnest and sincere inquirers may find in that literature all information that they may desire.

This remarkable system is sketched with masterly hand, in all its main features, in the books written by H. P. Blavatsky, and especially in her *The Secret Doctrine*; and if H. P. Blavatsky had done nothing more than this; had given nothing more to the world than this outline of a scheme of spiritual, intellectual, psychological, and astral-vital evolution, she would have merited the gratitude of all thoughtful men.

As she herself so constantly reiterates in her various published works, the system that she taught, including the physical evolutionary process, is no invention of her own, far less gathered together in patchwork-fashion

from the books which she had read, as a few superficial critics have tried to show; for this idea would have made her out a towering, scientific genius, in the first place; and, in the second place, would have showed her plagiarizing from books which actually have no existence, because there never has been published any scientific or philosophical work in any language treating of evolution as Theosophy teaches it.

What she did in actual fact was to teach Theosophy, the Wisdom-Religion of the archaic ages, in modern terminology suited to modern minds, at the same time that she searched the records and literatures of the three continents of our globe for corroborative philosophical, religious, and scientific material as regards details.

It is this last feature of her amazing work that has aroused the inquisitive animosity of certain critics who seem to have lost sight entirely of the difference between citation and plagiarism; and instead of recognising the immense amount of labor involved in the mere collection of this corroborating material as regards details, and the still greater spiritual and intellectual power of co-ordination and grasp of fact which enabled the Great Theosophist, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, to use it all as she did, in proof of her statements: these critics — there are only two or three of them at most — of wilfully blind understanding, announce gravely and with much parade of citations from H. P. Blavatsky's works, that "Theosophy is nothing new!"

Could anything be more preposter-

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ous? Is not this just what we Theosophists have been repeating and proclaiming and teaching for more than half a century? Is it not just what her critics may find in H. P. Blavatsky's own books, if only they would honestly read them intelligently first, and talk about them afterwards? Yes, if there is one thing that may be said about

Theosophy, that the Theosophist wishes to lay particular and especial emphasis upon, it is just this: that Theosophy is nothing new, for it is older than the enduring hills of geologic time, and modern Theosophy is but a re-statement, fitted for modern understanding, of incomparably age-old teachings.

## OUR TRANSITION AGE

GERTRUDE W. VAN PELT, M. D., M. A.

**I**N the *Literary Digest* of last June, there appeared a short article entitled 'The Truth About Ourselves.' It consisted of a review of a very unusual book, *Middletown, a Study in Contemporary American Culture*, the object of which was to show our modern trend by a comparison of American life in 1890 with that of today. This town of 38,000 inhabitants, with a fictitious name of course, was carefully selected as being typical of 150 others made up of native-born Americans. The authors of the book lived there for a year and during that time subjected it to a scrutiny which left little concealed. Habits of thought and living, customs, the ideals of the inhabitants, and their use or misuse of opportunity: all were chronicled and studied in comparison with what could be learned of a similar community living in 1890. The project was financed by the Institute of Social and Religious Research.

And what did they find in this community which mirrors so large a pro-

portion of our American life? Did they discover a growing idealism, a keener sense of the serious purpose of life, a love for spiritual beauties, a livelier appreciation of our duties to others, a flexible and open mind, a hunger after righteousness?

Alas! none of these came to view, but on the contrary, hanging over the community like a dense cloud, shutting out the light of heaven, was a leaden, senseless, feverish attraction for material values.

The people of Middletown were reading less and thinking less than they did forty years ago. They cared less for music, poetry, and the arts. They had no time for these, for now they were possessed with a mad anxiety to keep up with the procession. Follow they must, and keep in line, convinced that the line was that of progress; that Middletown was the 'best place on earth' and they, of course, the advance guard of a flowering civilization. One wonders what invisible demon could have been driving them on.

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They must have better houses — those houses which have been advertised as 'better homes'— but in which, alas! one finds faces marked with the lines of hurry and disquiet. They must have all the modern labor-saving devices. Electricity in its latest adaptations is called into service to afford more time, but seemingly without benefit. Convention is their taskmaster. A constant competition to keep up with each other in matters of dress and accepted standards of comfort, mercilessly feeds the fever of their lives. They mount the social ladder on steps of material standards. With heads completely turned by this era of physical progress, lost in the mere mechanism of living, their souls sleep — biding their time.

Such is the ghastly picture our researchers in Middletown present for our study and instruction as 'The Truth About Ourselves.'

There are a few little spots where the clouds break overhead, which may in time prove to be entering wedges for the light. It is proper in Middletown to be interested in municipal reform. Somewhere buried in the consciousness is the idea that reforms are desirable, so there are many clubs to this end and numerous 'charities.' Attention to these is part of the frantic effort to satisfy the demands of convention.

But these reforms are superficial. Possibly a subconscious impression that radical ones are stirring in the depths, intensifies their constant fear of being uprooted, their constant drowning of thought in motion, and

causes them to make these offerings to the god of progress, hoping thereby to pacify him.

But what will it avail? A study of even these forty years has revealed with startling clearness the fact that this 'age of transition,' which rests lightly on everyone's lips, is proceeding with a rapidity little realized.

What Theosophy reveals as far more vital, however, is that the *significance* of this is little realized. For this is but average human nature of present development. Nothing is more common than the acceptance of habitual surroundings as a matter of course. They excite wonder at first, but soon, by their very prevalence, they seem to dull our perceptions. If some new marvel can be likened to an old one, though equally mysterious, it is set aside by our lazy minds as explained. Our blessings soon become our rights, for which we give thanks to no one. The sun gives us light and health, of course. The flowers offer beauty, fragrance and color, certainly. And all the myriad wonders and exquisite transformations of our old planet, Mother Earth, belong to the natural order of things. And so we ramble, march, or plod through our histories, not heeding their meaning, *until* some event awakens our sleeping faculties and we rise to the dignity of our true position as co-workers with Nature.

Thus have we wandered into our 'age of transition,' which astounded us at first, but which now, by the majority, is dismissed as belonging to the natural order of things. But not so care-



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lessly may we wander out of it. Is it possible it may reveal itself, ere it passes, as a startling world-event, which must awaken or crush?

Well indeed is it for the race that the Guides of life upon this planet foresaw its coming, knew its import to humanity and sent their Messenger, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, at the close of the last century to bring back once more the archaic truths and explain the meaning and purpose of life, thus preparing men to meet the avalanche of force which must recreate or destroy as they work with or against it.

H. P. Blavatsky wrote in 1889 in that soul-stirring editorial, 'The New Cycle':

This is again the hour of the great cyclic return of the tide of mystical thought in Europe. On every side we are surrounded by the ocean of the universal science — the science of Life Eternal — bearing on its waves the forgotten and submerged treasures of generations now passed away, treasures still unknown to the modern civilized races. The strong current which rises from the submarine abysses, from the depths where lie the prehistoric learning and arts swallowed up with the antediluvian giants — demigods, though with but little of mortality — that current strikes us in the face and murmurs: 'That which has been, exists again; that which has been forgotten, buried for aeons in the depths of the Jurassic strata, may reappear to view once again. Prepare yourselves.' . . .

The strife will be terrible in any case between brutal materialism and blind fanaticism on the one hand, and philosophy and mysticism on the other — mysticism, that veil of more or less translucency which hides the eternal truth.

But it is not materialism that will gain the upper hand. . . .

The whole world at this time, with its cen-

ters of high intelligence and humane culture, its political, artistic, literary, and commercial life, is in a turmoil; everything is shaking and crumbling in its movement toward reform. It is useless to shut the eyes, it is useless to hope that anyone can remain neutral between the two contending forces; the choice is whether to be crushed between them or to become united with one or the other.

In another, 'The Tidal Wave' she says:

The great psychic and spiritual change now taking place in the realm of the human Soul, is quite remarkable. . . . But woe to the Twentieth Century if the now reigning school of thought prevails, for Spirit would once more be made captive and silenced till the end of the now coming age.

It is the ancient teaching regarding cycles to which we must turn for some understanding of the period through which we are passing. We learn therefrom that a progressive spiral or cyclic movement is an underlying cosmic law, fundamental, universal. It is evidenced in the common phenomena of winter and summer; night and day; life and so-called death; the systole and diastole of the heart. These are minor cycles, too familiar perhaps to cause thought, and they exist within the greater, wheels within wheels, until they reach and include nations, races, solar systems, universes. They mean that the mighty cosmic currents, as they sweep all life on to sublime destinies, pass definitely-known places in their orbits where anterior conditions cease and new ones are entered upon. This is known as the termination of one cycle and the beginning of another. It further implies that specific things

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can be initiated at one epoch and not at another; just as, for instance, it would be folly to sow our seeds in winter rather than spring, for there is a time to sow and another to reap. It sometimes happens, also, in these wheels within wheels, that cycles of different lengths and also of meaning may close at the same time. This is what Theosophy teaches is occurring now, there being three cycles terminating, which must emphasize the changes that are to be.

In the early nineties, Mr. Judge — our second Leader in this era — wrote:

The first 5000 years of *Kali-Yuga* [Iron Age] will end between the years 1897 and 1898. . . . As 1897-98 are not far off, the scientific men of today will have an opportunity of seeing whether the close of the five thousand year cycle will be preceded or followed by any convulsions or great changes, political, scientific, or physical, or all of these combined.— *The Ocean of Theosophy*, p. 178

Nature works slowly, and transformations unfold gradually and without shock, even in a transitional period. Man, we are taught, molds within certain limits the character of the cycles through which he passes. And Nature, in her gentle but firmly guided movements, affords time for proper adjustments.

A transition period is then, as its name implies, one in which the old forms are crumbling and the new not yet established. It might be compared to the nascent state in chemistry, when the old attractions have weakened, old combinations are dissolved, dynamic forces set free; when subtil energies permeate the surrounding ether, gra-

dually increasing in intensity, until the ultimate point of freedom from old combinations is reached. It is a time of enormous possibilities in all directions, and in the moral world, of immense responsibilities.

This is sufficient to arrest one's most profound attention. But Mr. Judge wrote more specifically as to the overwhelming significance of the intersection of these cycles, as follows:

So the Masters have said this is a transition age, and he who has ears to hear will hear what has thus been said. We are working for the new cycles and centuries. What we do now in this transition age, will be like what the great Dhyán-Chohans did in the transition point — the midway point — in evolution at the time when all matter and all types were in a transition and fluid state. They then gave the new impulse for the new types, which resulted later in the vast varieties of Nature. In mental development we are now at the same point; and what we now do in faith and hope for others and for ourselves will result similarly on the plane to which it is all directed. Thus in other centuries, we will come again and go on with it. If we neglect it now, so much the worse for us then. Hence we are not working for some definite organization of the new years to come, but for a change in the Manas and Buddhi (mind and intuition) of the Race. That is why it may seem indefinite, but it is, nevertheless, very defined and very great in scope. Let me refer you to that part of *The Secret Doctrine* penned by Master Himself, where the midway point of evolution is explained in reference to the Ungulate mammals.

The part of *The Secret Doctrine* alluded to, treats of that point in evolution which has been traced back by modern science to 'unknown roots.' It must ever be unknown by methods of

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physical science because it passes into astral forms, which leave no trace in the grosser. It belongs to the time before the 'coats of skin' were formed, and is described as that stage where the *astral* prototypes definitely begin to pass into the physical. To quote:

The known physiological contrivances in organisms were almost entirely evolved subsequently to the incipient physicalization of the 7 Root-Types out of the astral — during the 'midway halt' between the two planes of existence. Hardly had the 'ground-plan' of evolution been limned out in these ancestral types, than the influence of the accessory terrestrial laws, familiar to us, supervened, resulting in the whole crop of mammalian species. Aeons of slow differentia-

tion were, however, required to effect this end.— *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 736

When we add to this another teaching to the effect that we are at present in the fifth sub-race of the fifth great Root Race, that types are slowly but surely working toward the formation of the sixth Root Race, and that the life of a sub-race is 210,000 years; when we reflect that all mighty events have had small beginnings, which have however molded their character, we can, even with our still undeveloped faculties, form some slight conception of the gravity of the crisis which is upon us and of the magnitude of the destiny which is before us.

## THE ESSENTIAL NATURE OF HYDROGEN

ROSE WINKLER, M. D.

**W**AKING with the summons of a glorious sunrise, I recalled the summer shower that had fallen during the night, with its startling accompaniment of lightning flashes and crashing thunderclaps. Ah! thought I, the bright god-spark Hydrogen, violently displaced in a chain of combustible elements and descending precipitously, consumed with his fiery breath the inflammable substances on his way as he darted like a flame-winged serpent down to earth. From the combined shock and rapid rearrangement of countless dissociated gaseous atoms, there immediately followed the volley of threatening reproaches, terminating in its aftermath of thunderclaps.

The merging of their bonds sent Hy-

drogen and Oxygen to saturate the earth with a drenching shower, covering all vegetation in a mantle of shimmering moisture. Hydrogen, fleet of foot, vitalized with his ever-present electrical energy, the ether, air, fire, water and earth, charging even the celestial bodies to flash and flame, while permeating all Nature with his potent creative force.

Aeons ago, Hydrogen, in god-like beauty and splendor, sped away from the ethereal worlds, and slipping over the frontiers of our earth descended the graduated steeps of Space, infilling with his fiery life every atom of our globe. Let us leave him thus for a while, enfolded in Nature's arms, and proceed to the busy and more prosaic

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manufacturing centers, where, with oxygen, carbon, and nitrogen combining with other elements, he had been selected to pass through the travail of decomposition or analysis, while being transformed into desirable supplies for the arts and industries.

Like the alchemists of old, our present-day chemist proceeds to draw a plan or design a ringed group of combining elements, indicating by signs their single, double, or triple bonds of attraction, trusting to their harmonious combinations to materialize certain desirable, saleable compounds designed to capture the various markets of the world.

Countless experiments have acquainted the chemist with the characteristic behavior, or the power of attraction or affinity, which those chemical forces manifest in each other's presence. The knowledge of the different strengths of their combining power has helped applied science to succeed in flooding the markets with their synthetic products, in many instances more adaptable and acceptable than Nature's otherwise perfect creations, which, by her infinitely slow and painstaking processes, would have taken untold centuries to hand over ready for use. But this does not mean that physical science can create elements *per se*. It can, however, skilfully harness them.

Now what is that 'Spiritual Fire'? In alchemy it is HYDROGEN, in general; while in esoteric actuality it is the emanation or the Ray which proceeds from its *noumenon*, the 'Dhyân of the first Element.'

— *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 105

In all the chemists' formulas, Hydrogen, in its trinitarian nature — fire, air, and water — charges the elements with fire, or melting magic, thus fusing their bonds, manifesting his creative genius, his destructive and preservative functions.

At a more prosaic hour, let us cast our eyes for a moment on coal, saturated for long stretches of time with solar energy, but after a period of incomplete combustion, the transforming processes of destructive distillation in closed ovens yield vapors and gases — principally our radiant Hydrogen, with oxygen and nitrogen also — and when they have made their exit, the deserted retort will regretfully hold a deposit, black, sticky, and smelly, the once ignored, but now renowned 'coal tar.' From its ten or more primary products are built up hundreds, even thousands, of new substances, its progeny of various oils, medicines, synthetic dyestuffs of every conceivable color.

Hydrogen . . . is the father and generator, so to say, or rather the *Upâdhi* (basis), of both AIR and WATER, and is 'fire, air, and water,' in fact: *one* under three aspects; hence the chemical and alchemical trinity.

— *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 105

Our luminous Hydrogen gas, like the vitalizing, incubating agent that he is, broods over and instils life into the remotest atoms of associated elements. By means of electrolysis (the decomposition of chemical compounds by electricity) the order of these atoms can be displaced and then rearranged, and under the influence of high tem-

## THE ESSENTIAL NATURE OF HYDROGEN

perature, pressure, and other secret combinations, may be made to evolve perfect imitations of natural gems. Synthetic gems, such as artificial rubies and sapphires, are manufactured simply by adding a little coloring matter to pulverized alumina and fusing this by means of an oxyhydrogen blowpipe.

Without the positive electric energy of Hydrogen, rendering more potent his associated elements comprising the various carbohydrates, their sugary and aromatic flavors, their acid taste, their alkaline compounds of modifying influence, could not lend the distinguishing aroma which makes foods so delectable, juicy, and digestible. Hydrogen is the liquid-former, wherever found, on account of his affinity for oxygen, both exhibiting their presence in all plant and animal life.

Briefly stated, Chemistry refers to this active first-born element as 'protyle' to designate it as an undifferentiated *primordial* substance. It also teaches that Hydrogen occurs in enormous quantities in the atmosphere of the sun and certain other stars and that it is the lightest of all gases. It is readily combustible as we know, but it is not a supporter of combustion; in other words, substances will not burn in it. The flame of Hydrogen is blue and very hot; and it burns in oxygen or air, forming water. It is a colorless, odorless, tasteless gas; a great reducing agent, as it withdraws oxygen from other compounds.

But we would call hydrogen and oxygen (which instils the fire of life into the 'Mother' by incubation) in the *pregenetic* and even pre-

geological ages — the *Spirit*, the *noumenon* of that which becomes in its grossest form oxygen and hydrogen and nitrogen on Earth.

— *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 626

Thus we see that Hydrogen is the father or progenitor of oxygen and nitrogen, both dwelling within him as latent potentialities. It is from the fathomless depths of 'Mother Space' that Hydrogen, slowly unfolding like the petals of a fragrant flower, sprang into light and life, radiating his countless millions of scintillating rays infilling all space, each ray endowed with the genius of his creative forces and powers.

That which Hydrogen is to the elements and gases on the objective plane, its noumenon is in the world of mental or subjective phenomena.— *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 112

In his gaseous corporeal raiment on our terrestrial plane he unfolded his properties, his positive electrical charge, combining power or affinity, atomic weight, etc., once latent potentialities more or less, but present in his radiations. Hence, all his expressions and manifestations on our objective globe, nevertheless, have their source on the subjective or noumenal plane.

. . . its trinitarian latent nature is mirrored in its three active emanations from the three higher principles in man, namely, 'Spirit, Soul, and Mind,' or *Âtmâ*, *Buddhi*, and *Manas*. It is the spiritual and also the material human basis.— *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 112-113

The Higher Self, *Âtmâ*, *Buddhi*, and *Manas*, makes Man divine in essence, and mirrors the triple emanations of Hydrogen throughout Man's entire being — his spiritual and physical nature.

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

May not Hydrogen be said to be the keystone in the arch of chemical elements? May it not be that the ever-present heat in the body is really due to the vitalizing fiery energy in the hydrogen-atoms, which, when liberated from our food like flashing rays, merge into a stream of electric life or fire to combine with the fiery emanations — the radiating Hydrogen from the Higher Self? These two streams, merging together, thereby close the circuit of life, thus maintaining the ever-present

heat of the body until the Inner God departs, leaving it cold and lifeless.

Helena P. Blavatsky, referring to Professor W. Crookes as “one, at least, of the few eminent chemists of the day” says:

Every new step he will take will bring him nearer and nearer to that mysterious center, from which radiate the innumerable paths that lead down Spirit into matter, and which transform the gods and the living monads into man and sentient nature.

— *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 554

## MAN — THE MIRROR OF LIFE'S SIMILITUDES

LEONARD LESTER, M. A.

**T**HE conception that all Nature is ensouled — that One Life, One Consciousness, penetrates all the planes of being, uniting and sustaining them throughout all the diverse stages of experience, is a fundamental teaching of the Wisdom-Religion. The vital power of this idea, native to the unspoiled wisdom of the human heart, lies in the truth that man has within him, potentially, all the powers and attributes of that One Life, being thus a divinely responsible shareholder and co-operator in the evolution and perfection of the soul.

Individually — inwardly — man is the Eternal Pilgrim, evolving an ever-growing, conscious illumination as he ascends the spiritual ray or inner Path which unites him with Divine Perfection — his True Self. Outwardly, his

physical body — the personal self with its mentality — is the instrument of this True Self. Although, from the very qualities which belong to it by nature, the personal self is constantly urged to action in fields of material enterprise, yet its true, its divine purpose, is not to be measured in terms of material economy or efficiency. The essential Man is a spiritual being, and it is by spiritual and not material values that his life is ultimately weighed. Its true end is the attainment, through experience, of Wisdom — the garnered essence of experience — and through that a fuller, profounder identity with the spiritual consciousness of the whole.

This universal life-current, flowing in cyclical harmony throughout all planes and states of being, from center to sur-

face, from the inner spiritual to the outer material, clothes itself, to our outward vision, in terms of Time and Space — as it were, in a figured garment of universal analogy. Nature's visible presence enfolds us with her orderly pageant of times and seasons — the veil of an inner world of harmony. The images that pass across its surface, like symbols of a forgotten language, reflect the light of this inner world for all whose hearts still kindle, in natural devotion to great and universal ends.

It is the Ancient Wisdom alone that can illumine human experience and endow life with new meaning, vaster proportions. This it can do by unfolding within us a profounder conception of

Man and Nature — an attitude of reception and a power of vision which perceive beneath all the forms of Nature that persistent thread of unity in which every thing, every event, shines as a link in a universal chain of similitude.

Man himself is the key to these similitudes, and the cultivation of the sense of identity with all life is said to open the door to this higher perception of universals. To embrace large and fundamental conceptions of Truth, to ponder them with earnestness and aspiration, is to become receptive to its rays. And as the arc of the mind's mirror is kept unwarped and unclouded, so will its reflected images be undistorted and clear.

## HAVE PLANTS A HEART-BEAT?

ARTHUR A. BEALE, M. B.

**S**IR JAGADIS BOSE, in his humane laboratory in India, executed under ideal conditions a series of experiments by which he satisfied himself that the life of a plant involved other vital processes than were previously admitted; for instance, that the circulation of the sap was a pulsative motion and implied impulse. He found that plants and metals responded to the stimulation of drugs and fulfilled the laws of stimulation, sufficiency, exhaustion and, with some, death; that he was able to get a mechanical record of these same, and that this went to demonstrate the great law of unity in

Nature: that all were interrelated and interdependent.

To a Theosophist, an interesting study in psychology is presented in an article in *The Scientific American Magazine* by G. A. Persson, M. D., M. S., a vivisectionist and scientific specialist, from his laboratory at Mount Clemens, Michigan.

In this exposition he claims that after the most careful and painstaking attempt to investigate the claims of Sir Jagadis Chundur Bose on plants with the object of confirming the experiments — now of world-wide repute — of the existence of a pulse in plants,

and their response to beneficent or maleficent stimuli of medicines or poisons, convinces himself and tries to convince the public that the conclusions arrived at by Sir Jagadis have no substantiation in fact. As Dr. Persson was unable to duplicate the results by his own apparatus, he states that they cannot be. He even goes so far as to say that the findings of Sir Jagadis were an example of what the psychoanalysts call 'a wish-fulfilment' complex.

Were this so, short of a direct insinuation of intentional fraud, which I hope was not intended, the results of Sir Jagadis Bose's experiments — the production of tracings by mechanical means at the instigation of his wish and will — would be a phenomenon more worthy of investigation than what he claims to have found in the plant.

I am not attempting to champion Sir Jagadis, or I might be convicted of being a third party to the complex; but there are some important psychological issues at stake.

An axiom has it that "The mistake so many people make is in supposing that what they cannot do themselves, no one else can."

I am, moreover, reminded of a little *passage* that took place at a medical meeting when a friend of mine was dissertating on some remarkable cures he had accomplished, which met with severe criticism, especially from one *medicus*. His answer was, "I did not say that *you* could cure cancer!"

One is so often liable to forget what an important factor the personal one

is; one is reminded of the almost forgotten Keely Motor. Keely was a very remarkable man who was able to develop in his own person the psychic force capable of running a motor, and that at a time when motor-cars had hardly been conceived.

Dr. Persson might have honestly tried to duplicate the results of Sir Jagadis; but, having failed, is he justified in condemning the whole thing as a myth?

As has often been pointed out, sphygmographs, clinical thermometers, and mechanical contrivances do not lie; Sir Jagadis has mechanical records, consistent, reiterated and certified; can these be argued away on psychological grounds? Has it occurred to Dr. Persson that his failure was a phenomenon of importance, and worth investigating, and might be met by the same explanation as he implies in regard to the findings of Sir Jagadis, viz., 'wish-fulfilment'?

One recalls the pronouncement of the psychologist, William James, who cited the case of two friends who found themselves on a Swiss mountain with a crevasse between them and their home. One thought it could be jumped, the other was doubtful: James pertinently remarks "they were both right."

In the case in hand, how are we to be sure that Dr. Persson had all the factors working to insure success? The point of interest to me, and I presume to my readers, is that things have to be conceived before they can be made objective. Think of the modern discoveries of forces that existed for mil-



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lions of years, probably, before they were discovered. People have to wish to fly, for instance, before they can find the way to do so, and find the necessary means. So when Dr. Persson conceived that Sir Jagadis Bose's results were the product of wish-fulfilment, he was more correct than he wanted to be.

As a matter of fact, it is a Theosophical axiom that "behind will stands

desire"; and a teaching that the soul is infinite in potential knowledge, and its temporary impotence is due to brain-mind preconceptions of its own impotence, that obstruct vision and paralyse creative genius.

The man who achieves is the man who knows, not thinks; who wills, not hopes; who sees, not dreams. All these things are part of the so-called 'mysteries of the soul.'

## THEOSOPHICAL BOOKS

### What to Get. A Guide to Inquirers

**T**HIS memorandum has been drawn up to meet the needs of inquirers who wish to learn about Theosophy but do not know what books it will be best for them to get.

Though the particular requirements of individuals may be different, all will agree in wishing for a brief, comprehensive, and lucid general statement of what Theosophy is, what are its teachings, and what is the nature and purpose of the Theosophical Society. For such the following are recommended:

*An Epitome of Theosophy* by W. Q. Judge. This pamphlet gives a clear general survey of Theosophy and its principal teachings, presented in the lucid and practical style of its author, the Leader of the Theosophical Society in succession to H. P. Blavatsky.

*The Key to Theosophy* by H. P. Blavatsky, the Founder of the Theosophical Society, may justly be regarded as a standard text-book. It is in the form of question and answer, and was writ-

ten to deal with the actual questions and difficulties of her visitors. The reader will find all the main Theosophical teachings treated under separate heads, as also the relation of Theosophy to various topics of current interest.

*Echoes from the Orient* by W. Q. Judge, is a collected edition of a series of articles contributed by Mr. Judge to a prominent journal; and touches just those points which naturally occur to an inquirer. No better introduction to Theosophy could be recommended.

*The Ocean of Theosophy* by W. Q. Judge covers the same ground, but is larger and fuller, and contains more detailed information than could be conveyed in his briefer works.

By Katherine Tingley, whose name is so well known as that of the third Leader of the Theosophical Society:

*The Wine of Life; The Gods Await; The Travail of the Soul; The Voice of*

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*the Soul; Theosophy, the Path of the Mystic.*

These books have a strong appeal to a wide circle of readers. They are collected editions of Katherine Tingley's public lectures and familiar talks to her pupils, and radiate the same qualities of earnest and heartfelt appeal and keen insight into the needs of all classes of people and into the problems of daily life, which were so characteristic of the public addresses. Though they do not contain a formal presentation of the Theosophical teachings, they express the profoundest truths in the simplest language; and the reader becomes convinced of the truth of Theosophy by seeing how it clears up these problems. The chief topics dealt with are the home, marriage, the rearing of children, the treatment of criminals, and kindred questions. The inquirer should certainly get one of these books, and he will probably wish to get the others.

We would also recommend the *Theosophical Manuals*, which as indicated by their titles treat some aspects of the Theosophical teachings more fully, and prepare the way for H. P. Blavatsky's larger works, *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine*. In these two works is presented an outline of the secret

teachings of antiquity, with copious illustrations drawn from the literature of all ages and lands, and treating of science, religion, archaeology, and many other departments of thought, as illuminated by Theosophy.

*The Voice of the Silence* and the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ* are of a more devotional and philosophic character. The former is derived from the 'Book of the Golden Precepts,' a manual for mystic students in the East; and is for those resolved to enter upon the Path of self-study that leads to Wisdom. The *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*, probably the best known of the sacred scriptures of the East, may be described as a universal Bible, containing the essential moral truths of all religions, a comprehensive guide to conduct, like an extended 'Sermon on the Mount.'

The attitude of Theosophy towards particular questions, such as science, evolution, or Spiritism, is explained in various publications in our book-list, whose titles it is sufficient to refer to.

In conclusion, the inquirer is advised to procure copies of our magazines and if possible to subscribe to them, as a necessary means of keeping constantly in touch with all the recent interesting phases of Theosophical activity.

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