



THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

G. DE PURUCKER, EDITOR

VOL. XXXVII, NO. 5

MAY 1930

THEOSOPHY, THE MOTHER OF RELIGIONS, PHILOSOPHIES, AND SCIENCES

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

[Stenographic report of the fourth of a series of lectures on the above subject. These were delivered at the request of Katherine Tingley (the then Theosophical Leader and Teacher) in the Temple of Peace, International Theosophical Headquarters, Point Loma, California, at the regular Sunday afternoon services. Others will be printed in THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH in due course. The following lecture was delivered on January 15, 1928, and broadcast, by remote control, through Station KFSD San Diego — 680-440.9]

IN talking to an audience about Theosophical subjects, especially to those who know little or nothing of the history of the Theosophical Movement, I would like to ask all, and these latter especially, to bear in mind one very important fact. While Theosophy is the system of thought which the Theosophical Movement was founded to promulgate, it is not an invention; it was not discovered; it was not composed or formed by some finely intellectual and spiritual mind. This possible error has often been called to your attention during the course of these lectures, and the full

answer to it has likewise been given. This answer is found in the system of thought itself which Theosophy is. The subjects of which it treats deal with the Universe, and with man as the offspring of that Universe. It offers an explanation of the riddles of life, an explanation which is entirely based upon that Mother Nature which is the source and background of all our being.

This systematic body of teaching was not formulated, as I have said, by any one human mind. H. P. Blavatsky, who came from the East as the Messenger of great Teachers, did

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

not formulate it, and never did she make such a preposterous claim. It is not a mere synthetic aggregation of philosophical and religious doctrines, taken piecemeal from the various religions and philosophies of the world. This last absurdity has been put forth by one or two mild lunatics, whose penetrative intellectual powers were far less than their wish to denigrate, because they saw in Theosophy doctrines parallel with, similar to, and identical with, other doctrines in other religions and philosophies. They took, or pretended to take, this fact as an explanation of the Theosophic system. They did not see that the alternative explanation, to wit: that these other religions and philosophies were originally derived from the mystical Theosophical system, is equally reasonable, and upon examination is found to be the only possible explanation.

Those of you who know something of Theosophy would, with us, I am sure, laugh at the thought that Theosophy is a mere compost of philosophic and religious fragments. Theosophy is a system of thought and a method of living comprised in a body of teachings held in the guardianship of great men — men who, through the evolutionary processes, have become what is ordinarily called 'perfect.' They have become Masters of human life, Sages of the wisdom of the ages, Adepts in the knowledge of the operations of their own nature and of our universal mother, Nature herself. The existence of these great men is something which anyone may prove for him-

self or herself, if he or she will only take the trouble honestly to investigate and sincerely to examine the records of human history, as far as they are known to us.

All through those annals of the past, all along the ages down to our own time, you will find written on the screen of history, on the pages of all literatures, references to the existence of those great men, and to many details of their lives, albeit these latter are fragmentary because in symbolic form. Who, then, are these great men? Let me recall to your mind the names of a few, names which are household words in every civilized country of the globe: the Buddha, of India; Lao-Tse and Confucius of China; Jesus the Syrian, or rather Jewish, Sage of Palestine; and in Greece and the Greek colonies, we may mention Apollonius of Tyana, Pythagoras, Empedocles, Plato. Many more such great men lived in other countries, in various ages, and they all taught the same identic message, a message which is at once spiritual and intellectual: in other words, a religious, philosophic, and scientific doctrine; they all taught essentially the same moral system; they all taught fundamentally the same religious truths, and in an inner circle which each one founded, an inner school if you will, or a select company of disciples, there was taught to these inner disciples in more open form than was given to the outer world, the solution of the riddles of the universe and of human life. As the Christian New Testament has it in substance:

RELIGIONS, PHILOSOPHIES, AND SCIENCES

To those who are outside, the truth is given in parables and in symbol, but to you 'little ones,' my 'children,' I tell you plainly the mysteries of the Kingdom of the Heavens.

Please remember that such words as 'little ones,' or 'children,' were technical terms of the Mysteries, and referred to those who were newly born in, or who had begun to tread the pathway of, the esoteric teachings. Such another word was the word 'mysteries,' taken directly from the Greek esoteric doctrines, while the expression 'the Kingdom of the Heavens' is a phrase belonging to the esoteric system of the Hither East. All these are words and phrases which belonged to the time and to the people to whom this great Sage, Jesus, was then speaking, or to whom he was alleged in the New Testament to have so spoken.

Each people in ancient times, such as the Greek, Hindû, Persian, Egyptian, Babylonian, used differing tongues, used different phrases for expression; used in many cases differing symbols of speech; but in all cases the messages were identic; and this esoteric system behind the outward garments of any religion or religious philosophy or philosophical science, when taken in its original purity and fulness, is Theosophy. And here is the reason why we Theosophists say that Theosophy is the mother of the world's great religions and philosophies.

In each age which needs it — and these needs recur cyclically — there comes a new revelation with an accompanying spiritual and mental revo-

lution in the minds and hearts of men, from this great White Lodge which is formed by these Sages of whom I speak, whom we Theosophists call 'Masters' because they are truly masters of life and wisdom, and whom we also call 'Elder Brothers of the Race,' because they are, evolutionally speaking, more advanced, farther along the path than we are, and therefore occupy to us the position that a noble-minded elder brother occupies in any human family to his younger brothers and sisters. 'Great souls' sometimes we call them, because, through the same processes of spiritual and mental and psychic evolution, the powers of the inner spiritual man can with progressively greater facility manifest themselves through the outer personality. These individuals can draw upon those inexhaustible founts of life and knowledge and wisdom which lie in the heart of every human being, at the core of him, and which are his own essence: the pity of it is that so few men know this sublime truth. This core, this essence, has received various names. It is sometimes called man's Spirit, sometimes man's Higher Soul, sometimes man's Higher Self, and what not.

Thus, then, H. P. Blavatsky came in 1873 to the United States of America from these great Sages as their Messenger, bringing anew to the Western World the identic ancient message that had been given to humanity at every time when the world needed such a new revelation of that same primeval truth. To say that it was hers in

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

the sense that she invented it or composed it or synthesized it from her studies, is ludicrous to the scholar, is grotesque to any Theosophist, and would be absurd to anyone who had honestly studied the evidence.

She herself never had studied much philosophy; she never had studied religion as a science; she was an excellent modern linguist in her native Russian and in French and German. English she spoke but poorly. To say that this great soul, wonderful woman as she was, nevertheless with her mind untrained in technical philosophical, religious, scientific, and linguistic studies, could have invented a majestic system based on the recondite truths of religion and philosophy in the short space of time which we know she could have had to compose such a system, is, in all its reaches, an incredible supposition.

She herself once said, in answer to the remark of some fanatic religionist who understood neither her nor the philosophy which she brought: "You say, my friend, that you think I myself composed all this. Nay, I cannot accept that. Had I done so, I were indeed a miracle myself! It would be a more marvelous thing, were that the case, than this system which I give to you from my Teachers. I am but their mouthpiece in that respect."

Yet, while messenger and mouthpiece in one sense, let us not forget that she of necessity had a most unusual spiritual, intellectual, and psychic apparatus, far above and ahead of the average of men, to have been capable

of transmitting to us so successfully the wonderful message that she did transmit, and that has so widely molded the thought of Europe and of America and indeed of Asiatic countries since 1875. So far as I know, no other religio-philosophical movement has ever in past times done anything at all equal to what the Theosophical Movement has accomplished in the short space of its fifty years of life in our age.

Why, when she came, on one side there stood a haughty, self-satisfied, but on the whole sincere church, believing that it had the truth and all of it, and that there was no other truth but the truth which it taught. And, facing it, across a chalk-line, so to say, drawn between them, there was an equally arrogant, haughty, and proud science, saying, "We have investigated Nature and we are the ones who know, and we tell you truth." The battle between these two had been going on for nigh upon a hundred years, more or less, when H. P. Blavatsky first began to deliver her message. The phrase, 'the conflict between religion and science,' had become almost consecrate, as supposedly expressing an inevitable state of affairs. People thought that this phrase represented a truth. But, as we have pointed out so many times in these lectures, the Theosophist recognises between true Religion and true Science no possibility of a conflict, and rejects the supposition absolutely as contrary to truth and fact.

Then came the Theosophical leaven,

RELIGIONS, PHILOSOPHIES, AND SCIENCES

so to say, into the minds of men. Attention was attracted to other sources of wonderful thought, to amazing philosophies, to profound and inspiring religions. New words entered into the language through the efforts of the Theosophical Movement. The truth of Reincarnation, which was then mocked at and scorned and considered a relic of 'ancient superstition'—people of the Occident forgetting that even in their day, as today, three-fourths of the human race still hold that belief—the truth of Reincarnation, I say, began to percolate into human understanding, and today it has become common knowledge, written about even in romance and used as a theme for plays cast upon the screen in the cinematographic theaters. No one today mocks at so noble and inspiring a belief. Why? Because men begin to understand what Reincarnation really means.

With the coming of the Theosophical Movement scientific researchers coincidentally began to know more about Nature. The action of new forces burst upon their astounded vision. They became less cocksure, more scientific, and therefore more sincere, as every true researcher should be. And the protagonists of the old theology likewise became less dogmatic in their pronouncements, more charitable, more kindly.

The idea that such a truth as Reincarnation was an invention of H. P. Blavatsky's is grotesque. What was the matter with people of that time? They would shoot off an accusation

like that point-blank and write about it in the newspapers — even supposedly educated men and women did this — when the merest research in any library would have shown them that it is one of the oldest of religious and philosophic beliefs and one of the most widely spread.

Consider, on the other hand, our doctrine of Karman, the twin-doctrine to Reincarnation, so to say, because the two are inextricably linked together, this doctrine of Karman meaning the doctrine of consequences: that what ye sow ye shall reap, and that ye shall reap it where ye sowed it; on this earth where ye lived and sowed the seed, there ye shall reap it again, the seed ye sowed, not some other seed. And how shall ye reap it if ye cannot reap it in one lifetime? It is obvious that no man works out all the results of the thoughts he has had and the deeds he has done, the good he has wrought and the mischief he has caused, in one lifetime. The answer then is: In another and in other lifetimes upon this earth, because the cause and actions which aroused the forces, giving them life and power, call you back to this earth; for ye yourselves sowed the causes here.

Dwell ye beyond Sirius or the Polar Star, or the outermost bounds of the spaces, ye cannot limit the action of the universal forces; and they will call you back, back, back, to the place of attraction, which place is the locality where ye sowed the whirlwind or the beautiful weather, as the case may be; and those seeds will blossom in your

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

life when you return to this earth, or if not in that, then in some subsequent life or lives, when the barriers fall before their pressure for outward expression, through you, their parent. They will find their fruition in you and thus make you different from what you were.

It is thus that Nature is merciful; it is thus through change that man evolves. Mistakes are not irreparable. What men call sins do not damn him eternally. Ye sow the seed and ye shall reap that seed where ye sowed it. But once having reaped, ye sow seeds anew; ye are stronger for the lesson ye have learned, albeit it may have been with suffering and with bitter tears and with a breaking heart. It is through change and the learning of lessons that the human soul grows strong, evolves, in other words. It is through change, through habit, through custom, that man's body likewise evolves and improves.

This teaching of Reincarnation is very old, as old as thinking man. All nations have held it. In the Hebrew Qabbâlâh, which is the Theosophy of the Hebrews, there is an old mystic aphorism which tells us that "a stone becomes a plant, a plant becomes a beast, a beast becomes a man, and a man becomes a god." This does not refer to the bodies of each stage; for how would it be possible for a human physical body to become a god? The very profound idea behind this aphorism is that the evolving entity within the physical encasement learns and grows and passes from house to house,

from encasement to encasement, each time entering a better house of life, a nobler temple, and learning newer and nobler lessons in each more glorious house that it finds itself in, than it learned in its previous life or lives. And a further result of this is that the bodies themselves grow and change and evolve as far as they can, *pari passu* with the evolving soul: in other words, that while the inner soul advances and evolves along its own spiritual and intellectual and psychic courses, so also do the various bodies in which it finds its many dwelling-places.

I remember also that the Persian mystic poet, a Sûfî, Jalâlû'd-Din Rûmî, writing on this subject, speaks as follows:

I died from the mineral, and became a plant;
I died from the plant and reappeared as an
animal;

I died from the animal and became a man;
Wherefore then should I fear? When did I
grow less by dying?

Next time I shall die from the man
That I may grow the wings of angels.
From the angel, too, must I seek advance;

Once more shall I wing my way above the
angels;

I shall become that which entereth not the
imagination.

Isn't that beautiful? Consider the profound thought that this wonderful Sûfî poet here gives us. Endless progress, no finalities, no ends, no jumping-off places, no final and absolute stoppages; but always and forever onwards.

This process of continued existence

RELIGIONS, PHILOSOPHIES, AND SCIENCES

in various encasements or bodies is the essence of the doctrine of re-embodiment, of rebirth, which in man, as occurring in his present body of physical flesh, we Theosophists call Reincarnation or refreshing. This natural process of individual re-embodiment takes place through the action of that other natural law, so-called, working everywhere throughout Nature, of which I have already spoken, and which we call Karman, or the Doctrine of Consequences. You may say, if you like, that Karman is the law of cause and effect, that is to say, that a cause once brought about, inevitably is followed by its consequences, its effect, this effect in turn instantly becoming a new cause, and producing another consequence, which instantly becomes in its turn again another cause. And so forth, endlessly, because this chain of causation stretches from manvantara to manvantara, from eternity to eternity; but the entities evolving under its sway and within its scope, which is equivalent to saying everywhere, move always forward, as a generalization of the evolutionary process.

Sometimes the minds of men are bitter and obstinate against their own best interests. They will oppose and fight what they themselves know to be the better thing, and choose the worse. Thus they sow seeds which they must reap at some time as fruits, but, having reaped, they will sow other seeds infallibly, for they can do no otherwise; and thus it is that however low a man may 'fall,' as we say: no mat-

ter what 'sins,' as we say, he may have committed: always he has another chance and other chances for self-recovery, *ad infinitum*. Does anyone who hears this think that this doctrine opens the door to licentious practices or to selfish and evil works, be they in morals or otherwise? If such be your thought ye have not understood the Law. Bitter is the fruit of retribution; for retribution is but a generalizing of the Doctrine of Consequences as applied to results evolving from and upon evil acts. There is no escape from the consequences of an act once done, of a thought once thought, or of an emotion once liberated; for exactly as ye sow that shall ye reap again, until ye learn through bitter experiences the fundamental lesson of life, which is impersonal love.

There is indeed such a thing as a man falling so low, through a continued course of evil thinking and doing, that he finally passes out of the human sphere, that is to say, out of humanity into lower realms, where he nevertheless has always a chance for self-recovery; but such cases are so rare that we need not do more than merely refer to them. It is greatly to the credit of the human kind that such cases of human beings choosing evil for the love of evil are so rare indeed that we merely note them in passing in order to round out the thought — but likewise state that the vast majority of men and women keep sufficient of the holy light burning in their breasts to safeguard them from such a fearful destiny.

Always onwards is the general law,

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

and therefore is the general rule; which means that normal human beings grow greater continuously, albeit in some cases very slowly; grow always nobler, albeit with steps that are often halting and insecure; grow deeper in sympathies and vaster in intellectual powers, grow greater and wider in their aspirations, reaching out ever more widely in their sympathy for their fellows, and indeed, for all that is: because these high qualities follow upon growth. As the ancient Buddhist scripture, the *Dhammapada*, has it, "as the wheel of the cart follows the foot of the ox"—a beautiful metaphor which applies equally to the consequences following upon evil doing.

Now, when H. P. Blavatsky came to the Western World, with the then haughty and arrogant science occupying one side of the grandstand, and the equally haughty and self-satisfied church occupying the other side, what was she to do in order to give her wonderful message initial currency in the world? For this is what she came for; that was her work, and she used every means at hand to begin her work. She did everything that an intuitive mind and a great heart could do. She entered through any logical opening that offered itself, and that opened into paths fit for her message to be launched upon. She neglected no opportunities, missed no chances; and thus it is that she worked for a time with the 'spiritists' because they were at that time more open-minded in the reception of new ideas than were either the self-satisfied church-people on the one

hand, or the equally dogmatic and self-satisfied scientific popularizers on the other hand. Her message thus became more or less known; newspapers began to chat and talk about her personality; she and her message were written about and talked about and gossiped about; and there is no doubt at all that her sensitive heart at times suffered greatly from the misunderstanding of herself and the message that she brought to the world, on the part of the newspapers and the public.

But the main thing was a doing, which was that her message was going out and was beginning to be recognised. She laid all her talents, all her intellectual and psychological powers, indeed all her life, on the altar of her work; she gave up everything that a woman cherishes as most dear: name, personal happiness, fortune, social status, reputation — for as regards this last she was horribly slandered at times by those who feared the message that she was bringing. This message was a religious one; this message was a philosophical one; this message was a scientific one: it was *her* message indeed, yet not hers. She was the Messenger, but, as I have already told you, she neither invented it nor composed it nor syncretized it haphazard and piecemeal from reading of articles and encyclopedias and reference-books dealing with the world's religions and philosophies.

One has but to look at the articles in such encyclopedias as then existed to recognise that she would have found very little indeed in these articles in

RELIGIONS, PHILOSOPHIES, AND SCIENCES

any wise akin to the profound truths that she so widely disseminated. It is only in recent years that Western scholarship has begun to know the profound religions and philosophies of the Orient, and to do something more than simple chronicling of more or less misunderstood Oriental literatures.

Do you realize what the Western World was like in religious and philosophical thought at the time when H. P. Blavatsky came to America in 1873 and founded the Theosophical Society in 1875? It is hard for us men of today to realize the restrictions of thought that then existed as between man and man. Such a word as 'soul' was actually *tabu* in society. A man was considered superstitious who thought that there was anything in him of a permanent nature outside the vibrating — what shall I say? — the vibrating atoms or molecules of his brain, which were supposed to give him the sensation of consciousness; and among countless millions the accepted idea was that when a man died everything of him died and that that was the end of all of him. And, on the other hand, other millions of people thought, or thought that they thought, that the soul was an intangible something, indeed — nobody knew quite what: perhaps the same as the spirit, perhaps not — which, if a man was good, when he died went to heaven, and if he was bad while he lived on earth, when he died went to hell. In either case, an eternity of unearned bliss or an eternity of unearned hor-

rible physical suffering was to be his destiny. These ideas seem incredible to us of our generation, yet they were the ideas of millions of people of that generation.

Let us take some of the scientific ideas. The materialists said that the world is made of matter, and that this matter is composed of various chemical elements. These various chemical elements were supposed to be composed of atoms. Those atoms were considered to be indivisible, hard little bodies, which were practically eternal. They said: If the atoms are not everlasting or eternal we do not know it, and we fancy that they are. No one ever heard of their beginning, even if no one ever heard of their ending. Eternity stretches backwards into the infinite past as well as forward into the infinite future. Whence then came they unless out of the eternity of the past, for here they are? They must indefinitely exist or be eternal, otherwise how came they here?

Think a moment. Do you know what Sir Isaac Newton, the famous Englishman, had to say about atoms? You know, I suppose, that Newton was a scholar; he was a religious man after his own manner and after the religion of his time. He was what the English call a 'Christian gentleman,' but nevertheless he was a student of Greek philosophy. He particularly favored the teachings of Democritus and of Epicurus, belonging to the so-called atomistic school of Greece, who taught — and their teaching has been grossly misunderstood, I may say in pass-

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

ing, even by Newton — that the ultimate particles of life and of being are indivisible. Therefore they gave to these indivisibles the appellation of *Atomoi*, a word meaning things that cannot be divided or cut into two or more pieces, in other words indivisibles.

We Theosophists call these indivisible elements Monads, or what comes to the same thing in other words, *lives*, *life-centers*, *individuals*. I have no time this afternoon to go into the far-reaching philosophy of this thought, but I have given you the hint of the meaning of this conception in other lectures in this our Temple of Peace. We have at some length gone into the religious and philosophical meanings of these words, atoms, monads, and gods. But if you care to follow the thought farther, I refer you to those lectures which are now being published serially in our monthly magazine, *THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH*.^{*} I can say no more this afternoon than this: that the real meaning of Democritus and Epicurus, when their rather vague expressions are correctly understood, is the same meaning regarding these ultimate indivisibles called 'atoms' or 'monads,' that the Theosophist accepts: and this meaning can be more or less illuminatingly alluded to by calling them 'lives,' 'life-centers,' or 'individuals,' as I have just said.

But Sir Isaac Newton, in following but misunderstanding his Greek teachers, spoke thus of the atoms, for he

understood them to be merely ultimate particles of physical matter and nothing more. They are, he said: "Solid, massy, hard, impenetrable, immovable particles . . . so very hard as never to wear or break to pieces; no ordinary power being able to divide what God Himself made one in the first creation."

Since Newton's time, scientific ideas have enlarged, and we now know, following the wonderful discoveries of our more modern scientific researchers, that the atoms are composite things: that they are built up of two kinds of sub-atoms, if you like, one (or some) residing at the center of the atom after the manner of a sun in a solar system, and these are now called 'protons'; while the other kind of infinitesimal particles which go to form the atomic entity, circle around that center, and these they now call 'electrons.'

Please remember in this connexion that our modern scientists call each atom a miniature solar system, because it resembles in its physical structure our own solar system in the great world, and that our own solar system, they say, is but the same type of structure in the large that the atom is in the infinitesimal world. Each is a solar system; each has a central sun, with other bodies circling around that central sun, each in its respective orbit.

Please note that these repetitive types of structure, in the great as in the small, represent very graphically the fundamental Theosophical doctrine based on natural truth, which is so neatly expressed in the ancient Her-

^{*}See *THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH*, 1927-28.

RELIGIONS, PHILOSOPHIES, AND SCIENCES

metic axiom: "As is the great, so is the small; as is the small, so is the great." "As it is above, so is it below; as it is below, so is it above." And this doctrine of repetition, if we may so call it, is based on still another teaching of Theosophy, which we succinctly call the Law of Analogy.

We may well ask ourselves: What is matter? What is the material side of being? May we say in answer to this what we have said for many years last past here in this our Temple of Peace, and in various writings: Matter is mostly holes; matter is mostly spaces; matter is mostly emptinesses. It is obvious that if we consider our solar system, we see that the larger part of it is what is called vacuity or space, the sun and the planets forming but a small part of the space covered within the confines of it; and thus is it exactly the case with the atom. The protonic sun and the electronic planets are but a small part of the space which the atom comprises; and yet out of these atoms is built up all the physical matter which we know of, any kind whatsoever, from the gases to the metals.

Therefore, and please mark this carefully — I am trying to make it as simple as possible — therefore, the world that we see around us, appearing to our physical organs as so hard and solid, is essentially unreal. It is an unreal world to us, it is an illusory world to us, because our physical organs of perception and sensation do not tell us the truth about it. The hard metals that we know, the stones, wood,

flesh and bones, air, water, and all the gases — everything we see or can sense, is mostly composed of holes, so to say.

You remember who Thomas Henry Huxley was: a very eminent English biologist, also a chemist, a writer, and what not else. He was so disgusted, although he was a fervent Darwinist himself, with the materialistic chemical theories of his day, as indeed many other great men even in that time were, that he wrote in one of his books, *Science and Morals*, the following paragraph:

I must make a confession, even if it be humiliating. I have never been able to form the slightest conception of those 'forces' which the Materialists talk about, as if they had samples of them many years in bottle. By the hypothesis, the forces are not matter; and thus all that is of any particular consequence in the world turns out to be not matter on the Materialist's own showing. Let it not be supposed that I am casting a doubt upon the propriety of the employment of the terms 'atom' and 'force,' as they stand among the working hypotheses of physical science. As formulae which can be applied, with perfect precision and great convenience, in the interpretation of nature, their value is incalculable; but, as real entities, having an objective existence, an indivisible particle which nevertheless occupies space is surely inconceivable; and with respect to the operation of that atom, where it is not, by the aid of a 'force' resident in nothingness, I am as little able to imagine it as I fancy anyone else is.

You know that in those days, everything that was, was supposed to be matter and nothing else, but that in some very mysterious way, which nobody could understand, which nobody

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

really knew anything about, there were certain forces in the universe continuously operative likewise, which worked upon and moved this matter. To the question: Whence came these forces? the answer was, We do not really know; but as matter is the only substantial thing in the universe, they must arise out of matter in some way unknown to us. Let us then call them 'modes of motion.' Are the forces then matter? No, because they move matter.

No wonder that men of great intellect revolted from the paradox, nay, were repelled by the obvious contradiction. Yet the materialists doubtless did their best to give some adequate explanation of the nature of force and matter. They had nothing better to offer than a lame hypothesis, and this lame hypothesis they actually rode to its death. But so great was their influence, so all-pervasive at the time was the materialistic conception of things, that only a few brave and intuitive souls ventured to question these scientific dogmas, for that in truth is what they were.

We have learned much about Nature since that time. As I have just said, we now know that the atom itself is 'mostly holes'; and for all that we know, these protons and electrons which compose the atom are themselves composed of particles still more minute. And, if so, are these still minuter particles in their turn simply divisible? Who can tell? Where will you stop, where can you stop, in following with your mind such a conception of the nature of substance?

Oh, that I had the time this afternoon, friends, to give you the Theosophical teachings concerning this fascinating subject! At any rate, if you are interested, read our literature, and begin to think along these lines for yourselves. Reach the same peace of mind and happiness that the Theosophist derives from his studies of his wonderful philosophy. Isn't this a fair proposition? Do not believe anything that your conscience refuses to credit. Believe only that which your own intuition and your soul tell you is true. This admonition may truly be called the keynote of the Message that Theosophy gives to the world; for with us, the first lesson that we learn is our own individual responsibility, and that we can know nothing really which we ourselves have no clear conception of.

Our modern scientists are wiser than their predecessors; and they know more than the latter did. Our moderns have learned new things, and they are today enthusiastically talking about philosophic and scientific problems that fifty years ago would have been considered cause for ostracism in any scientific gathering. One of the last of these remarkable adumbrations of truth is the scientific dictum — which also is the Theosophical teaching — to the effect that force and matter are essentially one; that what we call matter is equilibrated or crystalized energy or force, or forces; and *vice versa*, that what we call force may with equal propriety be called liberated or free or etherealized matter.

RELIGIONS, PHILOSOPHIES, AND SCIENCES

As an instance of the new and remarkably suggestive thoughts that are coming into the minds of our modern scientists, I call your attention to the fact that a British scientist, Sir J. J. Thomson, has recently come to the conclusion that the density of the ether is "two thousand million times that of lead"—two billion times denser than lead, is this intangible, supergaseous-like thing called ether, which is everywhere and pervades everything. Lead is one of the most dense of our metals; and yet the ether, which permeates everything, according to hypothesis is two billion times more dense than is lead!

Another British scientist of quite remarkable reputation, Sir Oliver Lodge — and I quote him not for his religious beliefs, but for his standing as an honest physical researcher — says that the available energy resident in one cubic millimeter of etheric matter, a particle only about the size of the head of an ordinary pin, is estimated to be "a million horse-power working continuously for forty million years"! (*The Ether of Space*, page 95).

Some years ago — in 1924 I think it was — the present speaker during the course of a private lecture in this Temple pointed out that among the ancients, as likewise according to our own Theosophical teachings, the lower part of the ether was supposed to be and actually is far more dense than our own densest metals or minerals. But I likewise pointed out that according to our teachings the ether is not merely matter of one grade or of uniform

density or existing only on one plane, but is septiform or sevenfold counting from its most ethereal part to its densest. Its most ethereal part we call, in our own technical Theosophical terms, Âkâśa, a word which you may translate as 'spirit' for the time being, if you like. Therefore, this ether, which is two thousand million times denser than our lead, is matter, but lower and denser than our most physical matter is: that is to say, it is lower in the scale of the septiform ether than that part of it which our scientific conceptions intuit as necessarily existing on our own plane.

Will you please understand the thought that I am trying to give to you, to wit: that our physical world is not the most material thing in the universe. There are planes or grades of substance-matter far more dense than our own, even as there are planes and grades of substance-matter far more ethereal and tenuous than our own. That more ethereal and tenuous part is what we human beings call 'spirit,' and the other denser and grosser part is what we call 'matter'; but this entire range of substance from spirit to grossest matter is, in the Theosophical teaching, the septiform range of the Âkâśic background of the universe. The entire Cosmos or Universe is composite of this vast range of ethereal substance and things and of material grades of substance and things, and it is therein that man and all other entities whatsoever live and move and have their being, each of such entities withal carrying within his own essence a spark

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

of something still more sublime, which we may call the divine Central Fire. He not merely carries this within himself, and at the core of his being, but it is in very truth his own ultimate essence. Therefore man in his essence is universal, because that essence is an inseparable particle or spark of the universal central Divine Fire.

These words are metaphors, it is true, but while symbols, they nevertheless represent actualities, and it is in the understanding of these actualities that we grow to comprehend the real meaning of the Esoteric Wisdom lying in the background of all the great ancient religions and philosophies: and this Esoteric Wisdom, as I have so often said, is what we Theosophists call Theosophy.

In closing this afternoon, let me leave with you a beautiful thought, which is likewise quite Theosophic, and for that reason I quote it. I suppose that most of you remember the beautiful story of the arriving at illumination of Prince Siddhârtha, who thereupon became Gautama the Buddha, as it is told in the Hindû legends of his life: how he left family, wife, child, father, mother, his kingdom, everything that a man could hold most dear, because there was that urge in his heart to gain wisdom in order to help the world, that urge which every great World-Teacher has in him, urging him on and compelling him, giving him no rest until he finds the truth and gives it to all other beings.

Prince Siddhârtha one night left all he held dear, according to this lovely

legend, and went out from his father's capital with his favorite horse and beloved charioteer, galloping towards the foothills of the Himâlayan mountains. At daybreak he stopped and dismissed his charioteer with his favorite horse, and said to him: "Take back to those whom I love the garments which I now divest myself of. I will return to them when I have finished what I have gone out to do, for I now am on the Path. I shall not rest night or day until I have found the light for all and not for myself alone." And he turned away and took the first steps in silent thought along the path which finally led to the Bodhi-Tree or Tree of Wisdom, under which he finally attained the Awakening. And the charioteer left him weeping and returned along the lonely way to the city of his master's father.

But Siddhârtha-Sâkyamuni went on his road, wandering widely over the land; he tried many systems of thought, he tried many systems of discipline, was satisfied with none, found some good in all, until at last illumination came to him under what the Buddhists call the Bodhi-Tree, the 'Tree of Wisdom.'

Sir Edwin Arnold, in a beautiful poem, *The Light of Asia*, has the following to say about the moment when Siddhârtha attained Illumination or rather Awakening; when the spiritual fire within him, his own essence, burst as it were into flame and illuminated his mind with its holy splendor. Sir Edwin puts it very beautifully as follows: Then he arose — radiant, rejoicing, strong

WHAT IS THE MATTER WITH THE CHURCHES?

Beneath the Tree, and lifting high his voice
Spake thus, in hearing of all times and
worlds: —

“Many a House of Life
Hath held me — seeking ever him who
wrought
These prisons of the senses, sorrow-
fraught;
Sore was my ceaseless strife!

But now,
Thou Builder of this Tabernacle — Thou!
I know thee! Never shalt thou build again
These walls of pain,
Nor raise the roof-tree of deceits, nor lay
Fresh rafters on the clay;
Broken thy house is, and the ridge-pole split!
Delusion fashioned it!
Safe pass I thence — deliverance to obtain,”
for all the world.

The reference to “thou builder of

this tabernacle, thou,” is to the personal self, the builder of the physical house of life in which man lives and moves and sins and makes Karma for future incarnations. This personal self springs out of the Spiritual Self as the green blade springs from the seed; its life is relatively as short as is that of the green blade, but the Spiritual Self lives on forever.

This spirit of self-forgetfulness, friends, here uttered by the founder of the Buddhist religion, also expresses the impersonal spirit of the Theosophical Movement. The search for peace and wisdom and illumination is not for the self alone, but is conducted in impersonal love for all that is.

WHAT IS THE MATTER WITH THE CHURCHES?

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

WE read in the *Manchester Guardian Weekly* that

Among the changes which are remodeling society in our age must be included the decline in church attendance. It is a noteworthy symptom, but its significance is seldom acknowledged so frankly and forcibly as it was the other day by Dr. Douglas Brown, the president of the Baptist Union. The statistics of organized religion for 1929, he said, ‘staggered and humbled’ the churches. They represented a ‘spiritual slump’ which, if it continued unchecked for another ten years, would leave organized religion as dead as the dodo. The implications of this tendency to turn away from the approved custom of church-going have been for some time anxiously discussed in denominational

and inter-denominational conferences. . . . It would seem that the age demands changes in dogma and practice more fundamental than any the churches are prepared to make.

In the report to which the above comment refers we read that the funds are running low and bankruptcy threatened; and the speaker said that it was no use trying to fool themselves: something was radically wrong.

It is impossible not to sympathize with the earnestness and sincerity that has inspired the remarks we have quoted; and it must be our endeavor to throw what light we can on the solution of the question as to what is wrong.

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

The gist of those remarks would seem to be that the churches are failing to afford that light and instruction which the people are seeking for; for it can hardly be supposed that the people prefer darkness and ignorance. But, if this is so, then where does the fault lie?

Our answer, put briefly, is that the churches should strive to get back to the *real* fundamentals of religion; and the first step towards this is a willingness to admit that they have wandered away from those fundamentals. It is our firm belief that all religions are *founded* on truth; but equally strongly do we believe that most of them have departed in many respects from the purity of their original principles. And one respect in which they have thus wandered is in becoming hidebound; that is why they are failing to keep up with the people's needs. The foundations of religion are so broad and universal as to be equally applicable to the needs of all peoples and all times. It is only when a religion or a church within that religion clings to certain forms or certain dogmas suitable to a particular time that it begins to exert a restrictive effect and falls in the rear. It is necessary to point out that, if these churches wish to continue as leaders and helpers of the people in their spiritual needs, they must find out some new source of inspiration; and we urge them to seek it within their own religion by probing more deeply into what we have called the real fundamentals.

If there is one thing which, more

than another, influences the feelings of people towards the churches, it is the question of man's innate divinity and of his individual responsibility for his own salvation. And here we have an intuition of human nature in direct conflict with the characteristic dogma of organized Christianity in general. Moreover — and this is our point — this dogma is not in accordance with the original teachings of Jesus the Christ; for that Teacher assures his disciples that they can follow the same Path and attain the same powers as himself, and urges them to do it. Nothing can be clearer to one who reads the teachings of Jesus with an open mind than that his purpose was to proclaim to his hearers the existence of a Path or Way, which all might tread, and which leads to salvation from the ordinary trammelled life of mankind. Though he claimed to be a 'Son of God,' that claim was not monopolistic: he avers that all men are equally Sons of God and continually urges them to invoke their own essential Divinity.

But for this teaching, the teaching of the Wise in all ages, the churches have substituted something which the people will (as it seems) no longer stand for — the doctrine that man is of himself incompetent and must therefore lean upon supports. In a word, for salvation by the invocation of our own essential Divinity has been substituted the dogma of salvation by assent to a creed and by the vicarious interposition of a personal savior. Here then is one point in which the churches

need to overhaul their teachings and get back to fundamentals, *if* they wish to continue as spiritual guides to the people.

Another most important and most obvious failing on the part of the churches is their inability to satisfy the universal yearning for *knowledge*. People are turning from religion to science, and back again from science to religion, in the attempt to find food for that craving. It would seem that they have found more help from science than from religion; but yet how far is that help from being what they desire! Science at best is concerned with the outward aspect of things, with the physical manifestations of life, with mechanical representations of Nature, and with material applications. Very likely it does not profess anything else; but in any case it does not meet the needs of those who feel that this aspect of life is far from being the most important, and who hunger for knowledge of things beyond the outward and the physical. And what has organized religion to say to this? Is it ready to fill the vacancy thus left by science and to give the people knowledge concerning the laws of life on planes other than the physical?

Speaking once more of science — while admitting that its sphere is limited, we must pay it great respect for many things which it has accomplished within that sphere. It has taught people to respect the unerring justice of natural law and the harmony of the universe; and it is small wonder if people are learning to apply those

principles to life in general. They demand a universe in which law and justice reign supreme and events follow one another in the same logical sequence as they do in the world revealed by science. And, with this in mind, they ask what scope is there for the recognition of these principles in the view of life which is offered by organized religion. What, according to that view, is a human being? When was he created? Whither goes he? To what ultimate purport is his brief life on earth? Must they be required to satisfy their hunger for knowledge with the vague picture of a human soul created at a moment of time, passing a brief moment on this earth, and then for ever disappearing from it to a never-ending (!) life elsewhere? In this picture what is there of law and harmony and reason? The idea of a soul created at a moment of time, and yet going on for ever, is a contradiction in terms, for it would be at the same time temporal and eternal, mortal and immortal. And then, as to the eternal state after death, what *are* the teachings of organized Occidental religion? Are the teachers united among themselves on this point? Something far more definite and promising must be offered if the people are to be drawn to the churches for instruction.

It is a fundamental teaching of religion that every man incurs the natural consequences of his own acts, and that he can in no way escape from these consequences. By this law man is held responsible for all that he does with his free will; he is dealt with justly; he

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

is enabled by his subsequent acts to restore the harmony which he has violated by his former acts. And at the same time there is no effort towards good, however small, which will not bring its inevitable consequence of reward and progress along the true path of human evolution. The existence of such a universal harmony is felt to be a necessity by intelligent people; but organized Occidental religion, instead of confirming and illustrating it, too often contradicts it by teaching that man can escape the consequences of his acts by a special act of divine favor consequent upon the acceptance of certain formulas. And this in the face of such well-known Biblical teachings as that "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," and "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."

Here let it be said again that it is not our purpose to censure Occidental religion, but merely to answer the question, asked by itself, as to what is the matter with it and why the people do not come to the churches. We do assure the pastors that the people desire light and they will turn wherever they may be able to find what they are seeking. They simply refuse to be bound back to out-of-date doctrines that may very well have suited a by-gone age, but which in this age are merely restrictive.

It may be said that we have misrepresented the actual teachings of the churches regarding Christ, salvation, and the future life. It is of course a common fault to misrepresent the views

of one whom you are criticizing, or, as is sometimes said, to set up a man of straw and demolish it. This fault we are naturally anxious to avoid; and so we gladly admit that organized Occidental religion includes individual cases to which our remarks apply to a lesser degree, and that one may find within the pale of the churches some examples of nobler teachings. Nevertheless our strictures are justified as applicable to the general case; as is indeed proved by the complaint of the writers we have quoted. They cannot very well argue at one and the same time that there is something serious the matter and that all is right. If the fault does not lie in the teachings, where does it lie?

To disguise the truth will render service to no one; and the best way to find the solution of a problem is to look it boldly in the face. If any form of obscurantism or self-deception should prevail, the result must necessarily be a failure to find the solution required. There seems no way of sidestepping the plain issue — that, if the churches cannot supply the light and leading which the people demand, they will indeed find themselves deserted; and the people will not lapse into demoralization; they will find elsewhere what they seek. Therefore the churches will have to decide whether they will continue in the old ways and incur the above-mentioned consequences, or whether they will dig deeper into the foundations of their faith in search of something more vital.

And it is necessary to warn them,

that if they do this in a candid spirit and an adequate degree, they must inevitably discover that Jesus did not come to found a new religion, but to re-establish an ancient faith. He was, in fact, one of a long line of Teachers, who, in all ages, have come among men for that same purpose — namely, to revive the ancient faith whenever it seemed to be waning to a dangerous degree. Thus his teachings are those of this ancient faith, which we call the Wisdom-Religion or Secret Doctrine of the Ages; and consist mainly in recalling man's attention to the fact of his own essential Divinity and to his consequent possession of innate spiritual powers. He pointed out for us once more the path of duty and self-forgetfulness and universal Love, whereby man is able to rise above the level of his selfish passions and thus to let the light

from above illumine his mind. He addressed himself in particular to the age in which he lived; and such a Teacher, coming in our day, would similarly address himself to the needs of his age.

In this age the intellectual faculties of man are much developed and very alert; they demand to be satisfied. And to accomplish this it is needful that the people should have teachings broad enough to embrace the entire field of human activity and aspiration. We know of nothing which can do this except the ancient Wisdom-Religion, which is at once Religion, Philosophy, and Science; and which is the foundation of all religions. If the churches are to retain their position as leaders and teachers, they must get back to these essential truths, which lie at the basis of their own religion.

OCCULT POWERS IN MAN: PSYCHOMETRY

C. J. RYAN, M. A.

THEOSOPHISTS are sometimes asked for a concrete demonstration of the hidden powers in man which are so often spoken of as evidence of something deeper than is recognised by modern psychology, and which might indicate the direction humanity will travel towards a higher state of consciousness.

Telepathy immediately comes to mind, and experimental work has demonstrated it so fully that those who deny it are in a very ridiculous position, unworthy of their standing in the

intellectual world. The laws according to which it acts, however, are not understood, and its occurrence is very little under control. Its possibilities are not defined, and it is being strained almost to the breaking point to explain away communication from disembodied entities — spirits of *some kind* — which science resolutely declines to accept.

But, while the telepathic phenomena are difficult to bring into line, there is another power in man, related to telepathy but not identical, which is more

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

amenable to scientific methods of research and less disconcerting to those who have no experience in occult matters. This is called Psychometry, and the writer can speak with some authority of it, having had the opportunity of studying it under unusually favorable conditions.

Psychometry opens the locked doors to the past of man and the earth, doors which cannot be forced by physical means; and, above all, it opens a new field of speculation about the powers in man and the attributes of the Cosmos.

Psychometry is the faculty — natural, but latent in most — by which the inner person cognises subtil influences emanating from such objects as letters, minerals, clothing, animal and vegetable substances, etc.; and possibly one man, woman, or child in fifteen has it. The psychometer holds the article to be examined in the hand or lays it against the forehead, and immediately a series of pictures of events or places associated with it unroll in panorama before him (or, more frequently, before her). The object can be wrapped in paper and chosen at random from a trayful of others, unknown and unseen by the blindfolded psychometer, without interfering with the success of the experiment. With some effort any one of the scenes that flash by can be held and closely examined, and the psychometer has even some control of the direction next to be followed. In testing a letter, the appearance and character as well as the surroundings of the writer are made manifest.

Psychometry was discovered by Dr. J. R. Buchanan in 1840 and announced to the world about nine years later, after careful experimentation. Dr. Buchanan was a successful physician, who founded a Medical College at Cincinnati in 1845. He coined the word 'psychometry' from two Greek words meaning *soul-measurement*, as he declared that the faculty revealed the nature, scope, and *modus operandi* of a Divine soul-power in man. No better term has since been offered.

Dr. Buchanan stumbled upon his discovery in a curious way. Bishop Leonidas Polk, later a Lieutenant-General in the Civil War, mentioned in the course of a conversation that if he accidentally touched a piece of brass in the dark and without knowing what it was, he could taste the metal in his mouth. This started Dr. Buchanan on an intensive research which soon led him to the complete demonstration of the reality of Psychometry, and which has been carried still farther in recent years.

To make the subject clearer I will briefly outline a few illustrations from Denton's *The Soul of Things*, and other sources, and will then give my personal experience with a remarkably gifted psychometer, a former Fellow of the Theosophical Society, now deceased.

Professor W. Denton tried thousands of experiments with his sensitives, most of whom were members of his own family. His little son, Sherman, was very successful, though he was too young to understand the meaning of many of the things that he de-

scribed. The objects were generally wrapped up in tissue paper so that their nature could not be distinguished when held to the forehead; sometimes they were not touched at all. Thought-transference was eliminated by various effective methods.

A piece of hornstone from the Mount of Olives, Jerusalem, gave Mrs. Denton a vivid picture of that city, its chief buildings, and its surroundings, and produced the remarkable statement, "I should think the Bible might have been written here." She did not know what city she was seeing, though she saw that it was Oriental. A small piece of gypsum from the Mammoth Cave, Kentucky, gave the psychometrist, who did not know what she was holding, a clear picture of the known parts of the cave and also of some unexplored chambers. A bit of Devonian sandstone, hundreds of millions of years old, containing the impression of raindrops, brought: "I see a zig-zag flash of lightning, and feel as if drenched with rain."

Picking up at random one out of twenty-three specimens wrapped separately in paper, she described the wonderful Fingal's Cave in Staffa, Scotland, with its basalt columns, the roaring waves, the sea-gulls, and the general surroundings of land and water. In reality she had never even seen the sea, and yet her psychometric description, derived from a fragment of basalt from Staffa, was recognised by those who had been to the Hebrides as quite accurate.

A small piece of volcanic tufa from

Pompeii gave Mrs. Denton a terrifying picture of the destruction of the city, and a bit of plaster from the same place brought lifelike moving pictures of the intimate life of the Pompeians, their houses, temples, sports, etc.

A scrap of mummy-cloth took her to Egypt and caused her to say, "These people are destitute of that hypocrisy which I have frequently noticed, when examining psychometrically. They seem to regard everything as a partial imbodiment of the Divinity, or an imbodiment of some part of the Divinity." A piece of quartz from the copper region of Lake Superior brought clear visions of a sheet of water with cliffs containing veins of copper.

One of the most interesting experiments was made with a shapeless bit of fossil bone from Europe. It aroused an amazing series of pictures of prehistoric man and his activities. Mrs. Denton saw the long, flat heads with low foreheads and great ridges above the eyes, the clumsy but active bodies with the legs bent in a peculiar way, but she thought the people were quite human, though savage in their ways. This psychometric reading is particularly interesting because it so perfectly describes the early Stone-Age Neanderthal Race which is now known to have had all those characteristics. The Neanderthal Race is not ancestral to modern man, but an offshoot which died out ages ago.

Another remarkable corroboration of modern scientific discovery arose in connexion with a psychometric examination of the asteroids, the miniature

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

planets which lie mostly between Jupiter and Mars. The little boy, Sherman, who had never even heard of the asteroids, came across them while looking at Jupiter. He described some of them as being irregular in shape, not spherical, but longer in one direction than another, or 'humped,' a most improbable thing, and likely to throw doubt upon the reality of the vision, at least in 1870. However, one of the most recent textbooks of Astronomy tells us that some of the smaller asteroids present curious variations in brightness that can only be explained by the extraordinary suggestion that "they are not even approximately spherical, but more or less angular."* One is probably like a dumb-bell. How could Sherman have guessed this, when he even did not know that there were any asteroids? He also told of the variety of sizes among them, some being less than a mile across. This is correct.

Before leaving Professor Denton's record a psychometric observation of the Sun by his sister must be mentioned because of its great interest to advanced students of Theosophy, who will appreciate its significance even more than astronomers. To quote her words:

After repeated trials and repulsions, I finally succeeded in entering the sun's atmosphere. . . . It is luminous and intensely magnetic. . . . I am conscious of being at the heart of the influences controlling the solar system realizing . . . that which causes them [the

planets] to revolve round that immense magnet. Here in its intensely magnetic atmosphere, I pause. So dense that it might be regarded as a condensation of all bodies, it is, nevertheless, vapor, composed of many elements; magnetism, such as inheres in the loadstone, being its central life, and which, existing in a much more concentrated form in the body and heart of the sun, causes the planets to revolve round that body. . . .

I go on (into the interior) until all is one molten mass,—not a dark speck in it,—clearer than crystal, yet not crystallized; without flames, without fire, yet far more subtil and pervading than any heat of which we can conceive. Language fails to convey an adequate idea of its calm intensity. I think it is wholly electrical; but will examine further. . . .

I perceive, however, that the sun not only has a motion round its own axis and around a central sun, but that the particles of matter of which it is composed have a constant motion among themselves. The great bulk of the sun is composed of this powerfully attractive, highly condensed, but gaseous material, which reaches to its center. Near the outer portion of this material the transition to the outer layer of the sun commences; the same interior material, however, permeating the whole, and embodying the essential principle of the magnet, without the grosser matter by which the magnet is accompanied.

During the eclipse of the moon, July, 1860, Mrs. Denton attempted to psychometrize the rays coming from the darkened surface of our satellite, and received some impressions which will interest certain students of Theosophy. She said, in part:

What a rough, ragged, rocky scene of desolation this is, everywhere. It is absolutely terrible; it affects my whole system. . . .

The electrical condition of the moon seems to me to be disturbed by the eclipse, and that disturbance is reflected to the earth and

*Professor E. A. Fath, *Elements of Astronomy*, 1926.

back again; but I cannot properly describe it. The disturbance in the electrical condition of the moon and earth seems to be reciprocal; a tremendous vibration is produced that seems unusual.

— *The Soul of Things*, Vol. I, p. 79

The psychometric reading of character or surroundings from letters or even envelopes is the usual exercise of the faculty. A most remarkable example of this is given in H. P. Blavatsky's magazine, *The Theosophist*, for March 1887, and is of particular interest to Theosophists who know how terribly she suffered from misrepresentation. It is vouched for by Dr. Franz Hartmann, once an active worker in the earlier days of the Theosophical Society, and a careful scientific observer. This brief résumé gives the main facts:

The psychometer was an ignorant German peasant-woman who could neither read nor write and knew nothing about Theosophy or the letters used in the experiments. After giving detailed and correct descriptions of the surroundings and persons connected with three ordinary letters held to her forehead, Dr. Hartmann gave her, with some trepidation, he says, a letter purporting to come from one of H. P. Blavatsky's Teachers in Tibet who sent her forth to establish the Theosophical Movement "for the benefit of all creatures." It bore no postmark or other means of identifying its place of origin. He says, "it was one which I had found one day upon my table in my room at Adyar, where a moment before no such letter had been."

As soon as she touched the 'occult' letter the woman cried out in surprise and pleasure at what she saw. She described a hilly landscape in which stood a white temple with a 'Chinese roof' on which some bright objects glittered like the sun. Approaching the temple by a smooth stone walk and steps, she entered and described its polished floor of yellow marble, the vases and paintings, and especially certain square movable plates with "queer things painted upon them"; within the building she saw two persons looking at something on the wall. One was "a very fine-looking gentleman, dressed quite differently from the people in this country (Germany). He is dressed in a loose flowing robe of pure white, and the forepart of his shoes is pointed upwards."

On going out, she described the neighboring mountains, the peculiar vegetation, prickly pears, fir trees, etc.; women and children wearing fur caps and "with soles tied to their feet!" picking up something and putting it into baskets on the borders of a lake. She also saw a curious statue, something like a sphinx, and many other things strange to her.

Dr. Hartmann sent this description to H. P. Blavatsky, who immediately replied, corroborating the woman's psychometric vision. Her letter will be found in full in *The Path* for January 1896; here are a few sentences of special interest:

My dear Doctor: . . . I am worried to death with work. . . . But your letter is so interesting that I must answer it as asked.

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

You will do an excellent thing to send to *The Theosophist* this experiment of yours. It has an enormous importance in view of Hodgson's lies and charges, and I am happy you got such an independent corroboration; astral light, at any rate, cannot lie for my benefit.

I will only speak of number 4, as the correctness about the other three letters you know yourself. I. This looks like the private temple of the Teshu Lama, near Tchigadze — made of the 'Madras cement'-like material; it does shine like marble, and is called the snowy 'Shakang' (temple) as far as I can remember. . . . It stands on an elevation (artificial) and a stone path leading to it, and it has steps — how many I do not remember (I was never allowed inside); saw it from the outside, and the interior was described to me. The floors of nearly all Buddha's (Songya's) temples are made of a yellow polished stone. . . . I do not know the name, but it looks like yellow marble. The 'gentleman' in white may be Master. . . . In those temples there are always movable 'pictures,' on which various geometrical and mathematical problems are placed for the disciples who study astrology and symbolism. . . . The mirror 'Melong' of burnished steel (round like the sun) is often placed on the top of the Kiosque on the roof. I myself took it once for the sun. . . .

'Pine woods' all around such temples, the latter built expressly where there are such woods, and wild prickly pear, and trees with Chinese fruit on that the priests use for making inks. A lake is there. . . . The statues of Meilha Gualpo . . . look like this 'sphinx.' . . . Fisherwomen do use soles alone, like the sandals, and they all wear fur caps. . . .

Yours ever, H. P. B.

Dr. Hartmann tried many other equally successful experiments with this illiterate German peasant; one letter gave her a vivid portrait of H. P. Blavatsky as well as the feeling of her great kindness of heart.

My personal experiences with psychometry, while not so thrilling as that just related, were curious enough and quite convincing to those who took part in them. My psychometrical friend was a devoted worker for Theosophy and, while a natural clairvoyant, had avoided the pitfalls of mediumship or vanity so easy to slip into; in fact only one or two intimate friends were aware that she knew the existence of psychic faculties in herself. In childhood she had suffered severely from mentioning such things, and she had learned wisdom by experience.

My attention was first drawn to Mrs. K.'s gift by a casual remark of hers, "that letter is from a woman." "How do you know?" "That is easy. Bring me as many letters as you like and I will separate the men's from the women's without looking at them." She did so, and then showed that she could distinguish metals by touch alone. We then decided to try more elaborate tests in psychometry. I brought her a small seed which an archaeological friend had taken from an Egyptian tomb. It was wrapped in several thicknesses of paper, but even if examined no one could have guessed where it came from. On placing it upon her forehead she immediately described an ancient Egyptian interment in great detail; she saw the coffin, the procession of mourners, the musicians, the lowering of the body into the subterranean chamber, just as it must have been done several thousand years ago. The vision was so interesting and vivid that she was sorry to put an

end to it by laying the packet with the seed in it aside.

The next experiment was very curious and instructive. An Egyptian Scarab, mounted in gold, in the shape of a Khepera Beetle (the symbol of the Sun-God) was tried. It had been procured in Egypt but there was some doubt as to whether it was a faked antiquity or not. She got no impression of ancient Egypt, but a vivid picture of a number of men working beside a stream, dipping boxes in it and lifting them out, placer-mining for gold, in fact. This was quickly crowded out by a scene on the deck of a liner, with several persons examining the scarab itself. There was an impression of brilliant sunshine, and an intensely blue sea. The natural inference from this was that the scarab was not genuine and that the strongest impressions it carried were from the gold in the mounting and the voyage across the Mediterranean Sea, during which it was an object of careful examination and discussion.

Entirely to eliminate the possibility of thought-transference, I asked a friend to obtain some object of interest in such a way that neither he nor myself could know anything about its history. He brought me a small piece of wood, saying that it was a treasured relic of some important event, but that he knew nothing about it. His friend said he would indeed be amazed if the psychometer could tell anything about it — 'such nonsense,' etc.

As soon as Mrs. K. examined this psychometrically she became agitated,

saying she was horrified at a dreadful scene before her: a number of men were struggling desperately to get out of some kind of room; it was terrible to see their efforts to escape. This passed quickly, and she saw a very long funeral procession with many hearses and with crowds looking on in sorrow. It was passing through a very flat country toward a church far away across the fields. When the owner of the bit of wood read this account (it had been taken down in writing, as she described it, in considerable detail) he was amazed indeed, and said it was perfectly correct: how could she know? The specimen was a bit of oak from the famous old English battleship, the *Royal George* which foundered in 1782 under remarkable circumstances, trapping hundreds of seamen in the lower decks from which very few escaped. Nine hundred were drowned, and the disaster was the subject of Cowper's famous poem beginning:

Toll for the brave,—

The brave that are no more!

All sunk beneath the wave,

Fast by their native shore.

The bodies were rescued and given a magnificent naval funeral at Portsmouth, being buried in a flat district exactly as seen by Mrs. K.

A curious incident with another psychometer demonstrated the truth of a suggestion by Professor Denton that objects in contact sometimes transfer their images, the strongest usually going to the weaker and obliterating it. Several questions were written,

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

folded up and put into a basket. The psychometrist picked out a few at random, and answered the questions very correctly without unfolding the papers. One answer, however, had no relation to the question on the paper in her hand, but related to another paper which had not been tried. The latter had been folded in with the other, and had been pulled out and laid aside. It had, however, left such a strong impression on the paper it had contacted for a few minutes that the psychometer was able to answer the question written on it without the slightest difficulty. The question was a peculiar one and could not have been guessed.

The possibilities of Psychometry are almost unlimited, and no doubt a future and more intelligent age will develop them. It is discussed at considerable length in H. P. Blavatsky's *Isis Unveiled*, in Volume I, pages 182 and 331, to which students are referred. In Volume IV of *The Theosophist*, 1883, H. P. Blavatsky suggests the reading of Denton's *The Soul of Things* for its moral effect, and speaks of having circulated seventy copies in India and of hoping to multiply that by ten very soon. In her own words:

It is a crushing thought to whoever has committed secret crime that a picture of his deed and the very echoes of his words may be seen and heard countless years after he has gone the way of all flesh and left a reputation for 'respectability' to his children. To members of our Society the idea should come home with particular weight, since they live, act, speak, and even think under the observation of those MASTERS from whom no secrets of nature can be hidden if they choose

to explore her arcana. There have been several cases among us of self-reformation due mainly to the conviction of this fact, and if the resources of Psychometry were but suspected generally there would be many more.

One of the most important tenets of Theosophy is the existence of the Astral Light, a tenuous substance, an 'ether' of some kind we might say, which preserves complete records and images of all that happens. Psychometry provides sound, scientific data, capable of being carefully studied, of the reality of this eternal record-book. As H. P. Blavatsky says, in *Isis Unveiled*:

When the psychometer examines his specimen, he is brought into contact with the current of the astral light connected with that specimen, which retains pictures of the events associated with its history. These, according to Denton, pass before his vision with the swiftness of light; scene after scene crowding upon each other so rapidly that it is only by the supreme exercise of the will that he is able to hold any one in the field of vision long enough to describe it.

The Past lives in the Present in actuality. What of the Future? Is not all an Eternal Now?

Psychometry offers extraordinary opportunities for science, especially archaeology, geology and even astronomy. As Professor Denton says:

As new forms of organic being are revealed when we go back to the earlier geologic periods, so new groupings of the stars, new constellations, will be displayed, when the heavens of those early periods are examined by the piercing gaze of future psychometers. An accurate map of the starry heavens during the Silurian period may reveal to us many secrets that we have been unable to discover. . . .

I have good reason to believe that trained

RESEARCHES INTO NATURE

psychometers will be able to travel from planet to planet, and read their present condition minutely, and their past history.

— *The Soul of Things*, I, 273

It is said that advanced Initiates can study the appearance of the heavens at various ages in the past at will, by some method analogous to that of Psychometry, but far more exact. Even the little that is known of Psychometry by the ordinary seer requires a positive effort, and must be carried out in full consciousness. In this it favorably compares with the methods associated with mediumship in all its forms, which require trance or other pathological conditions, and, above all, a *negative passivity* that leaves the medium a possible (and

often an actual) victim to utterly unknown, and often very dangerous, forces — a condition no self-respecting man or woman desires for himself, nor should desire for others. Any unpleasant feelings caused by emotional disturbance aroused by distressing visions or too close connexion with the aura of evil persons, can be immediately dissipated, in the case of Psychometry, by laying aside the object being studied. There is nothing ‘spooky’ about it; it does not offer sensational manifestations from other worlds, and in no way should it be offensive to the scientist. In view of what Psychometry can demonstrate to philosophical minds, its neglect is a reproach to the Academies.

RESEARCHES INTO NATURE

Lucius Annaeus Seneca

(VII Books. Haase's Text; Breslau, 1877)

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

II

(1) *Let us see now in what manner is produced the radiancy which surrounds the orbs.* It is recorded in memory that on the day when the divine Augustus entered Rome, returning from Apollonia, there was seen surrounding the sun a circle of varied hues, such as are customarily seen in the rainbow. The Greeks call this a *halo*; we may most aptly call it a *crown* (*coronam*). In what manner

this is said to appear, I will now set forth.

(2) When a stone is thrown into a pond, we see the water retreat, generating many rings (*or disks*), the first ring being very small, then a wider one, and then others still larger, until the generating impetus dies out and is resolved into the surface of unmoved water. Some such thing we conceive to occur also in the atmosphere (*aere*).

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

When it is denser (*than usual*), it is enabled to react to a blow; and the light of the sun or of the moon or of any other orb beating upon it, forces it to recoil in circles. For a fluid and the atmosphere and anything else which takes form (*or shape*) from a blow, is compelled into such a state as is that of the body which compels. Now all light is round: therefore the air, struck by the light, will assume that mode.

(3) On this account, the Greeks have called such radiancies *threshing-floors* (*areas — halos*) because commonly places prepared for grinding grain are round. Nevertheless, we do not believe these — whether they be *halos* or *crowns* (*arcae sive coronae*) — to be produced near the orbs, for mostly they are distant from those (*orbs*), although they are seen to surround them and to crown them. Such images are produced not far distant from the earth, for our vision, deceived by its natural weakness, supposes them to be actually surrounding the orb itself.

(4) In the vicinity of the sun and stars nothing such can occur, because there the aether is thin. For forms (*shapes*) are wont to be impressed exclusively on gross and thick bodies; in rarefied bodies there is no place where they may consist and inhere. In baths also may be seen some such (*appearance*) around the lamp, on account of the non-lucidity of the dense air. . . . [*Probably a hiatus in the text occurs here.*]

(5) Sometimes they dissolve and

disappear by degrees; sometimes they are broken in some part, and sailors then look for wind in that quarter where the fabric of the corona has suffered diminution: if this occur on the north, then the north wind will blow; if on the west side, then the west wind. An evidence of which is this: that these coronas are produced within that quarter of the heavens within which also the winds customarily arise. [But] the higher bodies have no coronas, since indeed no winds are there.

(6) To these evidences, add also this, that a corona never gathers except in still air and a lazy breeze. . . . [*Another hiatus in the text seems to occur here.*] But most frequently with the south-southwest wind, when the sky is especially heavy and thick. . . . [*Another hiatus here.*] Otherwise it is not customarily seen. For air which is without movement can be moved and drawn out and molded into some sort of shape; but that which is flowing is not acted upon by light, for it offers no resistance nor can it be shaped, because each first portion of it is scattered.

(7) Never, therefore, will any orb surround itself with such an image, except when the atmosphere is dense and unmoved and on that account preserving the ray falling upon it from the round (*source of*) light. And with reason! Turn back to the example which I gave a short while ago: a pebble thrown into a pond or a lake and its neighboring water, makes innumerable circles: but this same thing it will not effect in (*the water of*) a

river. Why? Because the flowing water disturbs all figures. The same thing, therefore, happens in the air, for (*air*) which is quiet may be made to assume form; but that which is carried along and which flows does not react according to its own properties, and every blow and impinging form is carried away.

(8) These *coronae* of which I have spoken, when they have uniformly fallen to pieces, and have vanished away of themselves, atmospheric quiet and rest and tranquillity are signified [and then look thou for rain]; when they suffer diminution in one part, in that quarter wind arises whence they have melted away; if they are broken in several places, there will be a storm.

(9) Why this happens, may be understood from what I have already set forth. For if the entire face has decreased, it shows that the air is steady and therefore quiet. If a part (*of the corona*) is destroyed, it shows where the air is pressing upon it, and hence that region will send forth wind. But when it is everywhere torn and rent apart, it is manifest that on all sides the corona is undergoing attacks, and that the air in a state of disturbance is dashing (*upon it*) from this point and from that. So that out of this changeableness of the sky which is agitating so many things and which is everywhere in labor, it appears that a tempest of various winds is about to break.

(10) These *coronae* are noticed commonly at night, about the moon and the other orbs, but rarely in the daytime, so that certain Greeks abso-

lutely deny their appearance then, though records refute them. The cause of this infrequency (*during daylight*) is this, that the light of the sun is very strong, and the air being heated and agitated by it, is much rarefied: [while] the energy of the moon is more sluggish and hence more readily withstood by the surrounding air.

(11) Likewise the other orbs are weak (*in their light*), nor can they (*easily*) pierce the air by their energy. Therefore their images are captured and retained by matter more solid and more resistant (*than the impinging light itself*). For the atmosphere must not be so dense that it exclude and cast off from itself the impinging light; nor so tenuous and thin that it offer no hindrance to the incoming rays. This proportion is met with at night, when the orbs strike with a gentle light the surrounding air, and not forcibly and violently, and penetrate a thicker (*air*) than is commonly the case in the daytime.

III

(1) The *rainbow*, on the contrary, does not appear at night, except very seldom, because the moon lacks energy sufficient to pierce the clouds and suffuse them with color, such as they receive when touched by the sun; for thus they fashion the appearance of the multicolored rainbow, because some parts of the clouds are swollen, others are very low, and certain parts are too gross to transmit the solar rays: others, again, are too weak to exclude those rays. This inequality

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

mixes alternately the light and shade, and produces that marvelous variety of color in the rainbow.

(2) Another cause of the rainbow is given in the following way: We see, when a water-pipe is broken in some place, the water spurting out through a small hole, and sprayed against the sun obliquely situated: it shows an example of the rainbow. Thou wilt see the same thing happen, if at any time thou carest to watch a fuller at work: when he has filled his mouth with water, and thus lightly sprays clothing spread stretched on a frame, there appear in the air thus filled with spray, various colors, such as shine in the rainbow.

(3) Thou wilt not doubt that the cause of this phenomenon resides in moisture, for no rainbow ever appears except in cloudy weather. But let us examine how it comes about. Some say that one kind of mist transmits the solar rays, and that another kind, of denser nature, hinders their passage: that, therefore, from the former is sent forth radiance and from the latter shade, and thus from the interaction of the two the rainbow is produced, of which the part is brilliant that gives entry to the solar rays and that part is darkest which excludes them and casts shadow on the parts next to it.

(4) Others deny this to be the case: that it would be obviously true, had the rainbow two colors only — if it were composed solely of light and shade. But now

*When a thousand different colors
shine,
The very transition deludes the eyes:
Where touching they seem the same,
yet the extremes are different.*
—OVID, *Metam.*, vi, 66

We see therein something of flame-color, something of yellow, something of blue; and other (*tints*) drawn out in subtil lines, after the fashion of a painting; so that, as the poet says, whether they be distinct colors thou canst not know, unless the extremes be brought together. For the bands deceive: so much so that what in the wonderful art of Nature begins in almost identical tints ends in another most dissimilar. How then can two colors — of light and shade only — make it, when one is obliged to compute them as innumerable?

(5) Certain ones think the rainbow to be produced as follows: Where rain is falling, individual drops of the falling rain are, each one, a mirror; from each such drop, therefore, an image of the sun is produced. Hence many images, innumerable indeed, carried downwards and in headlong fall, are confounded together. The rainbow, in consequence, is a blending of many images of the sun.

(6) They deduce this as follows: On a calm day, they say, set out a thousand basins; each one will show an image of the sun. Or on individual leaves place a drop (*of water*); each one will show an image of the sun. But a large body of standing water, on the other hand, will show but a single

image. Why? Because every surface, circumscribed and surrounded by its own limits, is a mirror. For instance, separate a pond of large size into parts: there will be as many images of the sun as there are divisions. Restore the pond as it was before, and it will show thee but one image. It is utterly unimportant how small may be the fluid or the division: if it has limits, it is a mirror. Therefore the numberless drops of rain which the shower brings down, are so many mirrors; they have just so many images of the sun. These, on the other hand, to one looking at them, appear confused, nor do the intervals appear which separate each from each, distance preventing them from being seen. Finally, in each one appears an image, but confused by all the others.

(7) Aristotle declares the same thing: "From every smooth surface," he says, "the rays of vision are bent back. But there is nothing smoother than water and air; hence, even from thick air, our (*rays of*) vision are reflected back to us. Where sight is dull and weak, the impinging against air anywhere is slight. Some people labor under such a state of ill-health that they themselves seem to meet themselves, that they see their likeness everywhere. Why? Because the weak power of the eyes cannot penetrate even the air nearest to them, but halts."

(8) Thus, what dense air does to others, to these (*persons*) all (*air*) does: (*air*) of any kind whatsoever is strong enough to repel the rays of

feeble vision. But *water* much more powerfully reflects back the rays of our sight, because it is grosser and cannot be completely overcome, but detains the rays of our eyes and reflects them back whence they issued. Hence, when there are many drops of rain, there are just so many mirrors; but because they are small, they show the hues of the sun without form. Next, when in innumerable rain-drops falling without intervals, the same hue appears, an image comes into being, not of many and intermittent likenesses, but of one, lengthened and continuous.

(9) "How," thou askest, "dost thou say to me that it (*the rainbow*) is (*formed*) of many thousands of likenesses, there where I see not one? And why, since the color of the sun is one, the (*color*) of the likeness is variegated?" That I may refute not only the arguments thou hast advanced, but others which also should be refuted, it is necessary for me to speak as follows: Nothing is more deceiving than our vision, not only in those things which the diversity of stations withholds it (*vision*) from accurately examining, but also as regards those which it discerns just at hand: an oar in shallow water has the look of a broken oar; fruits (*seen*) through a glass seem much larger to observers; in a long portico the intervals between the columns seem to diminish in the distance.

(10) Return to the sun itself: This, which reason proves to be larger than the [whole] earth, our vision so diminishes that wise men have contended

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

that it is a foot in diameter; we know it to have the greatest velocity of all (*orbs*), yet none of us sees it move, nor would we believe it to advance except that it is seen to have advanced. The world itself which glides along in headlong velocity and repeats its risings and settings in a moment of time, none of us feels to be in movement; why, then, art thou surprised that our eyes do not separate the drops of rain, and that the distinguishing of minute likenesses by observers, fails over a long distance?

(11) It can appear doubtful to none that the rainbow is a likeness of the sun, dewy, and formed in a hollow (*or concave*) cloud, a fact which will appear to thee from the following: it is always opposite to the sun, higher or lower in proportion as the sun is sinking or rising, (*the bow*) moving contrariwise. When the sun is sinking it is more highly placed; when the former is high, it is very low. Often such a cloud is at one side of the sun and produces no bow, because then it bears no likeness (*received*) in a straight line.

(12) But the variety of hues arises from no other cause than because a part of the coloring is sprayed from the sun and part is in the cloud itself. Moisture [indeed] at times draws out blue bands, at times green, at times others similar to purple and yellow and flame-colored: two colors, one weak and the other strong, effecting this variety. Thus also, the purple dye does not leave the same shell-fish in one mode: it depends on how long a time

it is worked whether the resulting dye be deeper or more watery; whether it be frequently soaked and boiled or perhaps simply steeped once.

(13) It is therefore no wonder if, when there are two things, the sun and the cloud — that is body and mirror — as many kinds of colors are expressed as those two can be brightened or dimmed to many sorts: for the one color arises out of a fiery light, and the other out of a weaker and gentler.

(14) In other matters, examination is uncertain where we have nothing that we can hold in our hands, and conjecture has a wide field: but here two causes of the rainbow appear, the sun and the cloud, for it (*the bow*) is never seen in clear weather nor in a cloud when the sun is hidden. Therefore undoubtedly it arises out of these, and is not from one without the other.

IV

(1) Moreover this should be added, which is equally manifest: that the likeness is rendered after the manner of a mirror, for never is it rendered except in reverse, that is, unless what appears stands out of another part, out of another than what it shows. Reasons which do not merely persuade but convince are advanced by geometers, and no one can have any doubt that the rainbow is a likeness of the sun badly expressed, on account of the defective nature and form of the mirror. Meanwhile, we shall enter upon other demonstrations, which can be understood easily.

(2) Among other evidences that the

rainbow is thus derived, I add this, that it is so rapidly formed: for a great and party-colored object is woven together in a moment of time in the sky, and with equal rapidity disappears. Now nothing so quickly appears as a likeness in a mirror, yet the latter makes nothing, but merely reflects. Parianus Artemidorus sets forth what kind of cloud it must be which renders such a likeness of the sun. "If," he says, "thou makest a concave mirror, that it be a curved section of a sphere, and if thou standest outside of the center, those who are standing near thee will be seen to be in inverse position to thee and nearer to thee than to the mirror." "The same thing happens," he says, "when we look at a round and concave cloud from one side, that a likeness of the sun (*seems to*) descend out of the cloud and appear nearer to us and more directed towards us. Its coloring is flame-tinted from the sun, blue from the cloud, other tints being minglings of both."

V

(1) Against the foregoing, the following are said: Two theories regarding mirrors exist: some think that simulacra (*phantoms*) are to be seen in them, that is, that figures of our bodies are emitted and cast off from our bodies; others, that no likenesses in the mirror (*are seen*), but the bodies themselves are seen bent back in the process of vision—reflected back upon themselves. Now it pertains not at all to the point how we see whatever we see;

(2) but (*how*) a likeness is rendered faithfully by the mirror. For what things are more dissimilar than the sun and the rainbow, in which neither the shape of the sun nor its color nor its magnitude appear? The rainbow is by far ampler than the sun, and by far more ruddy in the parts where it shines than is the sun: different also in its other hues.

(3) Then, if thou claimest the air to be a mirror, it is needful to grant to it [*the same smoothness of body*], the same quality, the same brilliance. But no clouds have the similitude of a mirror: we frequently go through them, nor do we see ourselves in them. They who ascend to the summit of mountains see a cloud, yet do they not see their likeness in it.

(4) Individual raindrops are so many mirrors. I grant it. But this I deny, that a cloud is formed from raindrops. A cloud has certain things out of which raindrops may be formed, but not from the cloud itself. Nor, in fact, has the cloud water, but the matter of water-to-be.

(5) We may concede, then, that innumerable drops exist in the clouds and that they render an image,—not, however, that all form one image, but each its own. Next, join mirrors together: they do not unite into one likeness, but each particle incloses within itself a similitude of the thing. There are certain mirrors formed out of many smaller ones which, if thou placest an individual man in front of them, shew a crowd, each single particle shewing its own image. These,

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

when they are connected and conjoined, nevertheless shew each one its own reflexion and make a multitude from one. Besides, they do not confuse the crowd, but separate the outstanding (*crowd*) into individual images. But the rainbow being circumscribed in a single shape, there is but one image in the whole.

(6) "What then!" he says, "does not water spraying forth from a broken pipe, or dashed up in spray by oars, customarily shew forth something similar to the hues that we see in the rainbow?" It is true; but this arises not out of the cause which you are desirous of evidencing, that each single droplet receives a likeness of the sun. For the droplets fall too quickly for them to form the likeness. Lack of movement is necessary for them to shew a copy of what they receive; what then happens? This: they shew color, not a likeness. Moreover — as Nero Caesar says most eloquently:

*The Cytherean doves gleam with
quivering necks,*

and the necks of peacocks, whenever bended, also glisten with various hues: — shall we then liken mirrors to feathers of this kind, whose every inclination passes into new tints?

(7) Clouds have no less a different nature from mirrors than have birds, which I have mentioned already; and chameleons and other animals are thus hued, whose color is either changed from themselves when in anger or inflamed with desire they vary the nature of their skins from the humors

suffused within, or from the incidence of the light which falls upon them either directly or obliquely.

(8) What then similar to mirrors have clouds, since the former are not transparent, and the latter transmit light? the former dense and solid, the latter rarefied in texture? the former all of one matter, the latter fortuitously composed of diverse [*things*], and on that account discordant nor for long coherent? Further, we see at the rising of the sun a certain part of the heavens redden; we see clouds at times of a flame color. What then hinders, that in the manner by which they receive this one color from meeting the sun, many may be drawn from them, though they have not the quality of the mirror?

(9) "But," he says, "thou hast placed among thy arguments that the rainbow is always brought forth opposite to the sun, because no likeness is rendered even by a mirror unless the latter be opposed (*opposite the exciting cause*). Now," he says, "we agree in that. For in the same manner that the thing is to be placed with regard to the mirror in order that its likeness may be conveyed thereto, so, in order that clouds may be tinged, must the sun be placed suitably, for the same results do not ensue from its shining everywhere. And for this result the beating of the solar rays is sufficient."

(10) The above are set forth by those who declare the cloud (*merely*) to be colored (*by the sun*). Posidonius and they who conclude these phenomena to be effected after the manner

of a mirror, have this by way of answer: "If any color at all were (*of itself*) in the rainbow, it would be permanently there, and would be seen the more clearly the nearer it is (*to the observer*). Now the image of the rainbow, which is bright when seen from a distance, vanishes when it is approached."

(11) I do not assent to this objection when I examine the statement itself. Why? I will say. Because, while the cloud indeed is colored, yet this is not so that its color appear everywhere; nor is (*the cloud*) itself everywhere visible, for no one who is within such a cloud sees it. What wonder, then, if its color be not seen by him who does not even see the cloud itself? Yet that cloud is, though it may not be seen; and precisely so is the case as regards its coloring. It (*is not*) then a proof of a color-illusion which vanishes (*from sight*) to those approaching it. The same thing happens as regards the clouds themselves, nor are they mere cloud-illusions because they are not seen.

(12) Besides this, when it is said to thee that the cloud is suffused by the sun, it does not mean that its color is burned into it as in a hard and stable and permanent body, but as in a body which is fluid and undefined, receiving nothing more than a brief semblance. There are also certain colors which

shew their intensity by a change of position: the Tyrian purple (*for instance*), which, proportionately as it is finer and richer, thou needest to hold the higher, so that it may shew its brilliance. Nor yet for that reason has that purple no color because the finest shade it has it does not shew in whatsoever manner it is displayed.

(13) I am of the same opinion as Posidonius in this: that I judge the rainbow to be produced in a cloud formed after the manner of a concave and circular mirror, having the form of a (*concave*) section of a sphere. This cannot be demonstrated without the assistance of geometers, who, by arguments leaving no doubt, teach that it is an effigy of the sun, but different. Nor do all mirrors reflect properly: there are some which thou wouldst dread to see, they render with such great deforming the distorted shape of those looking into them, the likeness being preserved, but worsened. There are some, which, when thou lookest into them, give thy proportions as might please thee, so greatly have the shoulders widened, and the form of the entire body is increased beyond human limits. Some shew pleasing appearances, others unpleasing; others distort and invert. Why then is it wonderful that a mirror of such a kind is produced also in a cloud, by which an imperfect presentment of the sun is rendered?

(*To be continued*)

H. P. BLAVATSKY: THE MYSTERY

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

PART TWO: PHILOSOPHICAL AND SCIENTIFIC

CHAPTER XIII—THE VISIBLE WORLDS

"It is not the world in which blossom the transitory and evanescent flowers of personal lives which is the real permanent world. but that one in which we find the root of consciousness, the root which is beyond illusion and dwells in the eternity."

—H. P. BLAVATSKY: *The Key to Theosophy*, p. 176

WE now turn to the scheme of Nature as it lies open before the perception of the senses that we possess. As preceding chapters have already set forth, it would be utterly impossible to understand the background of the visible universe without remembering and taking into full consideration in our study of that physical universe that it is rooted in the invisible worlds and spheres and planes, as hereinbefore described. It is, in fact, as there said, only the mirroring or reflexion of what exists in the part of Universal Nature behind the veil of the outward seeming.

The visible world that we humans know somewhat of with the sense-apparatus that evolution has given us at the present time, is, as already pointed out, merely one cross-section of the Boundless All. As the human host, or any other host indeed — but we are at the present moment limiting our observations to the human host — passes on in its evolutionary course into what are now the invisible worlds, any one such invisible world which the human

host then enters will be for the time being, its 'physical' cross-section of the Universe.

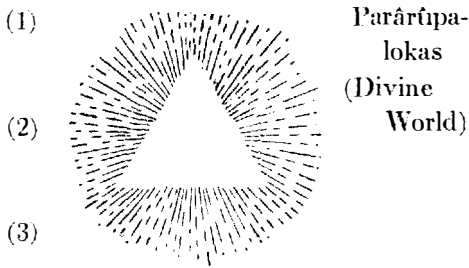
Our meaning should be very plain. What we call a physical world is merely that world in which we — or indeed any other host of entities — happen to be sojourning at the time and cognise through the sense-apparatus of the vehicles in which we then are. Consequently the adjective 'physical' applies *mutatis mutandis* with as much accuracy and right to the lowest or most material degree of any such invisible world or sphere, as it does to our present world.

When we pass out of this present physical sphere, it will become invisible to us; and the world into which we shall pass will be the visible world. This conception or rather fact of evolutionary experience lies behind the meaning of certain technical words used in the ancient world-religions and world-philosophies, such as are found in the Sanskrit, where the *rûpa*- (or 'material') and *arûpa*- (or 'immaterial') worlds or planes are mentioned;

and these words are to be construed strictly in accordance with what has just been said.

Now, in order more clearly to set forth the schematic delineation of the hierarchical structure or constitution of the Universe as described in preceding chapters, the following diagram will doubtless assist the reader; and in drawing this schematic diagram we employ for purposes of illustration the names given to the respective planes or spheres that are used for that purpose in Brâhmanism.

Other religions have their own respective names and respective methods of dividing the hierarchical structure.



- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| (1) | } Arûpa-lokas
(Spiritual
spheres) |
| (2) | |
| (3) | |
| 1. Satya-(Brahma-) loka | } Rûpa-lokas
(Material
worlds) |
| 2. Tapar-loka | |
| 3. Janar-loka | |
| 4. Mahar-loka | } |
| 5. Swar-loka | |
| 6. Bhuvar-loka | |
| 7. Bhûr-loka | |

The reader will here notice first, and beginning from the bottom, that the four lowest are called the *rûpa*- or material worlds. These are the worlds of 'form' in ascending degrees of ethereality, that is to say, the higher they

are the more ethereal they are. The Sanskrit word *loka* means 'place' or 'locality,' or, as we Theosophists say, a world or sphere or plane; whilst the word *rûpa* means 'form.'

Now 'form' is here employed technically — not in the strict, popular sense in which it is used in English — but it signifies rather an atomic or monadic aggregation about the central and indwelling consciousness, thus forming a vehicle or body thereof. *Arûpa* equivalently means 'formless,' but this word 'formless' is not to be taken so strictly as to mean that there is no form of any kind whatsoever; it merely means that the forms in the spiritual worlds as outlined in the above scheme are of a spiritual type or character, and of course far more ethereal than are the 'forms' of the *rûpa-lokas*.

We might express the technical meaning better by saying that *rûpa-lokas* are *lokas* or worlds where the body-form or vehicle is very definitely outlined in matter; whereas in the *arûpa-lokas*, or the spiritual worlds or spheres or planes, the vehicle or body is to be conceived of rather as an enclosing sheath of energetic substance. If we were to speak of the entities of these *arûpa-lokas* as containing bodies of light, it would be close to the real idea, because even in modern physical science, light is substantial — as Theosophy, and therefore the Ancient Wisdom, likewise teach it to be, although not a substance exactly of our material world.

Nevertheless, as has several times

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

already been said in preceding chapters, these *arûpa-lokas* or the three worlds above the *rûpa-lokas*, are as seemingly solid and substantial to their respective inhabitants as is our own material sphere *Bhûr-loka* to us, and as are the other three *rûpa-lokas* to their respective inhabitants. All this matter of solidity or substantiality is obviously merely a relative question. The three highest *rûpa-lokas* to us inhabitants of the lowest or *Bhûr-loka* are of course relatively immaterial to us, and so indeed they are. Even more so are the three higher or *arûpa* or spiritual spheres much more immaterial or ethereal to us, though, as just said, they are as substantial or seeming solid to their inhabitants as is our physical sphere to us.

Note further that the seven lokas of this schematic diagram, which include the three of the *arûpa* and the four of the *rûpa*, include all the *manifested* universes — that is to say, the universes subject to manifested imbodiment, counting from the spiritual down to the spheres of most material density, and therefore actually including — though it is not sketched in this schematic diagram — even what we Theosophists allude to as the ‘Mystery of the Eighth Sphere.’ Concerning this last or Eighth Sphere nothing further can be said in a published work, except the passing statement that it is a sphere even more material than is our earth, and may perhaps be best and most briefly described as the sphere of ‘absolute’ matter: in other words, the lowest possible stage or step of our own

Home-Hierarchy, in which last stage matter has reached its ultimate in density and physical accretion.

Beneath this last stage begins a new Hierarchy; just as on the higher stage, in other words above our own present Home-Hierarchy, could we consciously ascend along the various stages or degrees or rungs of the Ladder of Life, we should pierce through the laya-center or ‘singular point’ there existing into the lowest possible stage of the next superior Hierarchy.

As regards the ‘triangle in radiation’ or radiating triangle, which the above schematic diagram also presents, and which we have called the *Parârûpa-lokas*, this triangle represents in symbolic form the aggregative summit or acme or top of the Ladder of our own Home-Hierarchy, and is to us Children of this Hierarchy our Divine World, as the scheme shows.

This Divine World is not only to be considered as the divine Seed whence flow forth in the cosmic Periods of Manifestation the seven grades or steps below it which the diagram shows, but it is also the Goal towards which and into which all shall again be ultimately resolved when such a hierarchical or cosmic Period of Manifestation shall have concluded its course of evolution in self-expression.

It is, however, the purpose of this chapter to set forth with more definiteness than has been done in preceding chapters the real characteristic and nature of our physical sphere, which, in a larger sense perhaps than the Brâhmanical system employs, Theosophy

would place in the lowest or seventh degree or stage of the above scheme, the *Bhûr-loka*, and would include therein not only our earth and our solar system, but our entire physical Home-Universe, which, as has before been said, includes all within the physical encircling bounds of the Milky Way.

The first conception that the reader should grasp, for it is absolutely essential to a correct understanding of our theme, is the fact that the Universal Life-Consciousness-Substance which pervades everything and which is at the back of and 'above' all of our own Home-Universe, manifests in every minutest part or detail of that Home-Universe. Such manifestation naturally takes the form, speaking in a general way, of its source: in other words, takes the form of Life manifesting as individual *Lives*. Therefore, every minutest point — for a 'point of consciousness' is even smaller than the infinitesimal figure which chemists call an atom—every minutest point of the Kosmic Being is a monadic Center or Life.

As H. P. Blavatsky sets the matter forth in her own inimitable and wonderful style, in her *The Secret Doctrine*, Volume I, page 49:

Esoteric philosophy teaches that everything lives and is conscious, but not that all life and consciousness are similar to those of human or even animal beings. Life we look upon as "the one form of existence." manifesting in what is called matter; or, as in man, what, incorrectly separating them, we name Spirit, Soul, and Matter. Matter is the vehicle for the manifestation of soul on this

plane of existence, and soul is the vehicle on a higher plane for the manifestation of spirit, and these three are a trinity synthesized by Life, which pervades them all. The idea of universal life is one of those ancient conceptions which are returning to the human mind in this century, as a consequence of its liberation from anthropomorphic theology. Science, it is true, contents itself with tracing or postulating the signs of universal life, and has not yet been bold enough even to whisper "Anima Mundi!"

This limitation of scientific thinking was expressed with the voice of authority by the wisecracks of science in H. P. Blavatsky's day, but as the great Florentine Galileo Galilei is reported to have said, "Nevertheless it moves." Science, too, is moving ahead rapidly; and today we have the brightest luminaries in their scientific writings not merely hesitatingly pointing with uncertain finger to their acceptance of a cosmic life-energy behind all phenomena, but in some cases these luminaries are courageous enough and intuitive enough absolutely and openly to proclaim it.

We have given in another chapter the statement of Professor Eddington, to the effect that life and consciousness are at the back of matter and energy, thus voicing Theosophy or the archaic Wisdom-Religion, and this is equivalent to saying that everything that is, is a Life.

Hence all the visible worlds existing in our visible sphere or plane, are but huge agglomerates of living entities or lives in all-various degrees of evolutionary development. Not only are they all: suns, planets, comets, nebu-

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

lae, meteors, and what-not: each one of them based in even its physical being on such aggregates of Lives, infinitesimal and other, but on some of these celestial bodies at least there are also, as there are on our earth, hosts of living entities possessing self-conscious mind and will, such as we human beings on this earth have.

It is these Lives that, driven or rather urged by their self-evolved karmic potentiality behind them, follow the various pathways of karmic destiny, and eventuate in this or in that or in some other form or self-expression of the invisible host behind.

As H. P. Blavatsky again says so very truly in her *The Secret Doctrine*, Volume I, pages 260 and 261:

Science teaches us that the living as well as the dead organisms of both man and animal are swarming with bacteria of a hundred various kinds; that from without we are threatened with the invasion of microbes with every breath we draw, and from within by leucomaines, aerobes, anaerobes, and what not. But Science never yet went so far as to assert with the occult doctrine that our bodies, as well as those of animals, plants, and stones, are themselves altogether built up of such beings; which, except larger species, no microscope can detect. So far, as regards the purely animal and material portion of man, Science is on its way to discoveries that will go far towards corroborating this theory. Chemistry and physiology are the two great magicians of the future, who are destined to open the eyes of mankind to the great physical truths. With every day, the identity between the animal and physical man, between the plant and man, and even between the reptile and its nest, the rock, and man — is more and more clearly shown. The physical and chemical constituents of all being found to be identical, chemi-

cal science may well say that there is no difference between the matter which composes the ox and that which forms man. But the Occult doctrine is far more explicit. It says: Not only the chemical compounds are the same, but the same infinitesimal *invisible lives* compose the atoms of the bodies of the mountain and the daisy, of man and the ant, of the elephant, and of the tree which shelters him from the sun. Each particle — whether you call it organic or inorganic — *is a life*. Every atom and molecule in the Universe is both *life-giving* and *death-giving* to that form, inasmuch as it builds by aggregation universes and the ephemeral vehicles ready to receive the transmigrating soul, and as eternally destroys and changes the *forms* and expels those souls from their temporary abodes. It creates and kills; it is self-generating and self-destroying; it brings into being, and annihilates, that mystery of mysteries — the *living body* of man, animal, or plant, every second in time and space; and it generates equally life and death, beauty and ugliness, good and bad, and even the agreeable and disagreeable, the beneficent and maleficent sensations. It is that mysterious LIFE, represented collectively by countless myriads of lives. . . .

Yes indeed does the Great Theosophist very nobly set forth the teachings of Theosophy in the two extracts which precede. Everything, no matter how small, no matter how great, is an evolving *Life*, and hence, as every one of these visible bodies in the Universe around us is but an aggregate of such lives, we have here a clue to the real meaning of many of the ancient philosophers who spoke of the suns and stars as being living entities, or what the ancient Greeks called 'ensouled entities' ζῶα, *Zôa*, from which comes the word 'Zodiac,' used even in our current astronomical books, and meaning the circle of the 'Living Ones'; and which

the Latin philosophers called *Animals* — a word of course which they used with the original Latin meaning of *animate entities*, and not in the restricted meaning of modern European speech, signifying only the beasts. *Animals* and *Zôa* of course mean the same thing in the two respective tongues.

It may interest the Occidental student to know also that even some of the greatest of the early Christian Fathers taught exactly the same thing — we mean that the suns and stars were 'living beings,' for such indeed is the explicit teaching of the great Greek theologian Origen, as well, doubtless, as of Clement, another one of the great Christian Fathers, and, like Crigen, belonging to the Alexandrian School of Christian theology.

Of course every student of Christian ecclesiastical history knows that many of the doctrines of Origen were officially condemned and anathematized, first at the Home-Synod convoked by the Patriarch Mennas, under authority of the Imperial Rescript issued by the Emperor Justinian I, a Synod held about the year 538; and Origen's opinions were again condemned at the Fifth General or Oecumenical Council held in 553, also by order of the Emperor Justinian. But this condemnation and anathematization was engineered very largely by the secular powers of the time in response to the urgings of a powerful body of the then existing priesthood, and was an act which, while it changed the theology of the Christian Church in succeeding centuries to a large degree, took place

over the very vigorous protest and complaints of an almost equally powerful body of the then existing Christian priesthood and community.

For the sake of their intrinsic interest, a few passages from Origen are quoted here. In his work on *First Principles*, chapter vii, section 2, he speaks as follows:

Not only may the stars be subject to sin, but they are actually not free from the contagion of it;

and in section 3, he says:

And as we notice that the stars move with such order and regularity that these movements never at any time seem to be subject to derangement, would it not be the highth of stupidity to say that so consistent and orderly an observing of method and plan could be carried out or accomplished by beings without reason. . . . Yet as the stars are living and rational beings, unquestionably there will appear among them both advance and retrogression.

Again Origen observes in his tract *Against Celsus*, chapter xi:

As we are persuaded that the sun himself and the moon and the stars also pray to the supreme deity through his Only-begotten Son, we think it improper to pray to those beings who themselves offer up prayers.

And again in the same tract *Against Celsus*, chapter lxxvii, Origen remarks once more, quite after the Christian manner of his time:

For we sing hymns to the Most High only and to his Only-begotten who is the logos and also God; we praise God and his Only-begotten, as also do the sun, the moon, the stars, and all the multitude of the heavenly host.

Furthermore, in order to show the

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

early Christian view about the innate vitality working in and through the celestial bodies as vehicles of that vitality, the reader will find in the *Lectur to Avitus*, of the Latin Father Jerome, the following passage which repeats Origen's teachings:

Respecting the heavenly bodies, we should notice that the soul of the sun, or whatever else it ought to be called, did not begin to exist when the world was created, but before that it entered into that shining and luminous body. We should hold similar views regarding the moon and the stars.

It is also interesting to note that despite the condemnation of the views of Origen and his School by the two Constantinopolitan Councils above mentioned, those views prevailed more or less in secret throughout the Christian community, and lasted until a very late period of Christian history, indeed even into the Middle Ages. The ecclesiastical writers of the Dark and Medieval periods have many passages with reference to the sun and stars which, historically speaking, are understandable only on the supposition that they are more or less distorted reflexions of the views of Origen and his School, which in themselves, as we have already pointed out, were distorted reproductions from original so-called Pagan teachings.

The exact meaning of this old doctrine of the celestial bodies being animate entities, each one having its past and of course its present and likewise its future as such an animate being, was very largely lost even at the time of the Councils of Constantinople men-

tioned above. The idea was not that the stars and other shining celestial bodies were in their physical forms 'angels' or 'archangels,' but that each one was the 'dwelling' or vehicle or channel of expression of some 'angelic' entity behind it.

Certainly this conception approaches far closer to the Wisdom-Religion of the archaic ages, today called Theosophy, than might appear on first thought, although our own views are founded on sound philosophical principles and scientific facts of invisible Nature.

But all such doctrines as those of Origen just described were already largely degenerate in the time when Origen and his School enunciated them to the Christian Community, and were, furthermore, more or less distorted from their original Pagan meaning by the theological mental bias of the men who taught them. It is to the Ancients themselves that we must turn, if we wish to gain a clearer and more definite outline of the original thought; and it may be said in passing that it is from Plato in especial, and from Pythagoras and his School, that are derived these doctrines which certain ones of the Christian Fathers took over and modified for their own especial purposes.

The truth of the whole matter is this: each and every celestial body, whether it be nebula, comet, sun, or star, or hard and rocky planet like our own earth-sphere, is a focus or psychoelectric lens, if we may so express ourselves, through which pour the energies and powers and substances pass-

ing into it from the invisible spheres, after the manner that we have before hinted at.

It is through the laya-centers, or through Sir James Jeans' 'singular points,' that these Circulations of the Cosmos take place, and each such sphere, whether star or planet, comet or nebula, has at its heart such a laya-center or channel of communication, through which pass in both directions, upwards and downwards, the forces and powers and substances just spoken of.

Furthermore, these Circulations pass not merely to higher realms: that is to say upwards and downwards so far as any physical sphere in the superior worlds is concerned: but also pass upwards and downwards so far as the inferior but also invisible worlds or planes are concerned.

Turning for a few moments to our physical science, we have the most progressive of its luminaries setting forth a body of speculations regarding the atom and the characteristics of atomic physics which lends itself in a most admirable way in support of the Theosophical teachings regarding the same things, which we have already briefly outlined.

When material substance existing in and of the atom, the ultimate material constituent — and we here allude of course to the electronic theory — is said to be naught but electric charges, respectively of positive and negative type, which by their interactions produce the physical universe surrounding us, we enter at once upon the in-

visible realms, for these invisible realms are causes of the energies working in and behind and through the atomic sphere or body or garment or veil — call it by what name you like — which forms the material world.

Nor is this all, for there are brilliant minds today which are beginning to speak of certain still more subtil and particular points of material substance, which they call photons, which apparently either exist in the core of the electron and thus compose the electronic activity itself, or are connected with the protonic or central nucleus of the atom.

The future will doubtless show more clearly what actually does lie behind and within the electron, and how and why the latter, in connexion with the protonic nucleus of the atom, produces the phenomena of radiation. Other scientists also of a philosophical type are now beginning to talk of 'emergence,' at least in biology: that is to say that behind or within living entities in particular, and doubtless in the so-called inanimate sphere of matter, there are factors which 'emerge' through the rigidly governed physical activities of the material world.

We may mention Professor Lloyd Morgan, a British scientist, in this connexion, and other scientists who belong to his school.

All these ideas or speculations or theories or hypotheses are like the straws which show which way the wind is blowing: that is to say, the new spirit which has entered into the minds of scientific men, driving old ideas like

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

chaff before it; and all these theories of course are directly related to and depend upon the characteristics of the physical world which surrounds us.

These theories come to us from two directions: from a study of the atomic structure in the microcosmic sphere, and from a similarly advancing study, on a macrocosmic scale, of the worlds or spheres of physical space.

One of the most beautiful as well as profound and interesting teachings of the Ancient Wisdom regarding the visible worlds — an observation which applies with equal force to the invisible — is that each such visible world is not merely a focus of the subtil and ethereal essences and energies pouring through it, but each one such visible world also exists as an entity within the life-sphere, or within the encompassing life, of an Entity still more vast; so that, as Paul of the Christians truly said with reference to Man, each such visible globe “lives, moves, and has its being” in some other Entity of still greater magnitude.

Who can say where and when limits should be placed to this view? In natural reality there are no limits in any direction; but there are indeed limits or frontiers in a secondary sense, in view of the hierarchical structure or constitution of the Universe. Each such Hierarchy of course has its beginning and has its end, in other words, its highest and its lowest points, and these are the frontiers or the limits *for itself*; but they are not real limits in the last analysis, because either the beginning or the end of any Hierarchy

is but its point of junction or union with a superior or an inferior Hierarchy, respectively, thus continuing in both directions the endless Ladder of Life.

But there is another and still more fascinating manner of looking at this endless chain or concatenation of entities and things: the continuation of the hierarchical structure through and into the invisible realms, or, in other words, continuation extending ever more inwards; and indeed this is the point of prime importance for anyone to understand who wishes to get some comprehensive view of what is meant by the words, “the hierarchical structure or constitution of the Universe.”

Nature, in the sense of the Boundless All, is in itself, that is to say, *per se*, frontierless and limitless in all directions; and through the All extends the illimitable network or web of Cosmic Being. It is these Hierarchies which form the inner constitution of the Universe, and each such Hierarchy may be figured to the mind as an organic entity or organ of the Cosmic Organism. In a very similar manner man’s inner constitution is builded, for it is indeed but a reflexion or mirroring, as the ancient Hermetists would have put it, of the constitution of the Universe. Just as man in all the stages or degrees of his inner constitution: in other words, in all his principles: is builded up of vast hosts of Lives in which he is the monadic and inspiring entity and through which he works and in which he lives and moves and has his being,

precisely so is the Universe constructed.

All these Hierarchies are builded up of incomputably numerous multitudes or hosts of Lives, and through them all and in them all lives and works and has its being what the ancient Pythagoreans called the Cosmic Monad. Remember, however, that these Cosmic Monads are as numerous in Boundless Infinitude as are the countless hosts of minor beings in which they live and work. Each one such minor entity, it matters not at all what its evolutionary stage may be, has its own monadic center, and therefore is a learning and evolving entity.

The general principle of cosmic cooperation, to use familiar words, which is so readily deducible from the observations which precede, is one of the phases of the doctrine of Universal Brotherhood, as we Theosophists call it; for this interlocking and interblending scheme extends everywhere, in the invisible worlds as well as in the worlds which are visible.

Another phase of this our doctrine of Universal Brotherhood is that all things whatsoever, great or small, are rooted in the same Cosmic Source, whence they proceeded in the beginning of the primordial periods of World-Evolution, and towards which they are journeying back.

Every visible world is therefore the seat of a most marvelous complexity and activity of Life — or more accurately of Lives, of which, as before said, every such visible world is entirely builded. It is in these worlds,

invisible or visible, that these hosts of evolving entities find their fields of self-expression. Our own earth is a very good example, with its various families of offspringing children, which we call the various kingdoms: Mineral, Vegetable, Animal, and Human, as well as the three Elemental Kingdoms which precede the Mineral. All these entities are evolving together, albeit in different evolutionary grades.

Here we see the wide basis that morals have in the hierarchical construction of Nature, for morals, however men may view them, or however they may be delineated in human philosophical outline, are based on this hierarchical structure of Nature itself. No man can live unto himself alone, he must, whether he will or whether he nill, live unto others as well. The single human being is but one individual droplet in the vast and on-rushing River of Evolving Entities. It is when man realizes his essential oneness with spiritual Nature, and his inseparable links with the visible and the intermediate spheres, that he begins to understand his duties to all other beings, and begins truly to live, and to extend the range of his sympathies to all that is. Thereby he comes into harmonious relationship with all that is, and instead of opposing and battling with other entities and things, he becomes helpful, and obtains a growing understanding of them, because in proportion as he understands himself, he understands other entities also.

The schematic diagram which was given towards the beginning of this

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

present chapter has been already explained as referring to three Divine Worlds or planes or spheres and seven Worlds of Manifestation; and it was explained that these seven worlds of manifestation are themselves divided into two readily divisible parts: the upper or so-called relatively *Arûpa-* or 'formless' worlds in the sense hereinbefore explained, and the four lowest or distinctly material or vehicular, or Worlds of Form.

It is seen, therefore, that, strictly speaking, any Hierarchy is composite of ten degrees or stages or steps or, if the highest of all counting downwards, or the first, is considered to be the same as the lowest of the next superior Hierarchy, we have nine degrees or stages or steps descending in successive ranges of worlds or planes. The differences therefore between seven and ten, or again nine, is merely a matter of viewpoint and enumeration, and has no significance in itself.

Any reader conversant with the theogonical mythological aspect of ancient and presently existing Oriental religions and philosophies, knows how frequently the numbers ten, nine, seven, five, four, and three occur therein in relation to the various families or groups or Hierarchies of the worlds and of the beings and things which inhabit them.

There still remains for consideration a number of outstanding Theosophical doctrines which will be discussed in chapters on 'Evolution,' 'Man,' 'Karma,' 'Reincarnation,' respectively; and matters that have been but briefly

alluded to in foregoing parts of this book will therein be developed more at length.

By this time the reader surely must have come to some conclusion of his own regarding the immense grasp of philosophical and scientific subjects which H. P. Blavatsky, the Great Theosophist, had. In the greatest of her works, *The Secret Doctrine*, all that has been heretofore outlined or sketched in this present book is there contained, either in brief or in much fuller form than the compass of this book permits the present authors to follow. The true Theosophist loves his great first Leader and Teacher, with a love that is based on sound reasons and in no wise is dependent upon a merely personal predilection for one whose mental capacities and whose instincts of the heart provoked admiration. Not only did H. P. Blavatsky teach men how to know themselves, whence they came, what they are, and whither they are going, but she gave them new hopes in life, for she taught them a new meaning of Life, in elucidating the marvelous Wisdom-Religion of the archaic ages.

What work can be more sublime than giving back to man man's soul? And this in brief is precisely what the Great Theosophist, H. P. Blavatsky, did. It is the awakened soul only that can recognise the soul in others, for the mere brain-mind is so closely in-wrapped in its own limited sphere of likes and dislikes, prejudices and aptitudes, predilections and attractions, that it has small power of observation

THE SEA

for the problems and tribulations that afflict other souls equally with itself; but the spiritual soul in each one of us soars above all these things, recognises principles rather than details, sees the roots of things, and feels the unbreakable bonds which unite man to man, and man to the Universe and to the hosts of countless entities which infill it.

To say that man is, as the Great Theosophist did so truly, a god in the core of his being, passing through the present evolutionary stage of life, is to give a suggestion to the thoughtful

mind which has proved itself to be exceedingly fruitful. Yes, the Great Theosophist taught man to find himself; and thus enabled her followers to understand the meaning of the ancient Delphic Oracle: *Man, Know Thyself*; for in knowing himself, man by degrees comes to know the Universe.

The Great Theosophist's work was sublime and inexpressibly beautiful, for the Harmony of Nature streamed through her consciousness into the lessons regarding life and being that she taught. We are grateful!

THE VOYAGE

THE SEA — I

Kenneth Morris, D. Litt.

GOD stores his joy in the Sea
Which is both force and dream,
And there is no aspect of him
But is distraught with glee,
Sunlit days and dim,
And whether black-blue or a gleam.
He laughs in the face of day;
He is full of hills and hollows;
Wave chases wave away,
And wave after wave follows —
Wave after wave comes after.
God stores in the Sea his laughter!

And he stores his song therein:
By God, I would rather be
The ingenious-spirited Sea
Than all renown else win,
And enjoy even Shakespeare's fame
Or have Li Po for my name.

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

Or use such pride and power as Dante's,
Or the sorrow of Cervantes:
For a greater muse is the Sea's
Than inspired any of these;
And he rhymes not word with word
But sea-bird with sea-bird,
And above all, wave with wave —
No two waves the same;
And he chanteth a fine stave
With wave and wave for rhyme,
Shall last as long as time;
And his billows quake and thunder
As he drenches with fierce glories
Nesses, cliffs and promontories:
God stores in the Sea his wonder —
In the Mountains and the Sea;
And it is better with me —
Better by far, to be
Their brother and dear ally
Than to win aught else 'neath the sky.
Proud of them both am I!

SS Schwaben: off Guatemala
January 17, 1930

DID THE WORLD NEED H. P. BLAVATSKY?

GRACE KNOCHE, M. A.

THE new light flashed upon the world of thought when H. P. Blavatsky brought out from ancient hiding the forgotten wisdom-teachings of Theosophy, made it possible (if not always easy) to trace our now divergent lines of thinking back to their common fusion-point in the Wisdom-Religion of Antiquity. Old as the eternal hills — older, in truth, for continents have risen and sunk and risen again since this primeval Doctrine was brought first to mankind — the body of teach-

ing called 'Theosophy' had been so utterly lost sight of by Western scholars, and its few known fragments so misinterpreted by scholars of the older East, that when H. P. Blavatsky brought it once again to light, it was new as an unborn sunrise. Hence the classic charge that she 'invented' it. As well charge the physician who tears away the blinds and lets the sunshine in upon a wasting patient, with having invented the Sun!

All of which has been so fully set

forth in her own writings and in those of her Successors — William Quan Judge, Katherine Tingley, and the present Theosophical Leader, Dr. G. de Purucker — that it were needless and impertinent both for a mere student to essay new arguments in behalf of so easily verified a fact. But there is a question in some minds still, mostly younger minds, and we find ourselves reverting to it as May Eighth draws near again: 'White Lotus Day,' the anniversary of the passing of this Teacher so wise, so great, and so beloved. Did the world *need* H. P. Blavatsky? *Why* did she undertake this so thankless task? Was the world in need of a great physician's care? And was the need real, or only an imagined one, that induced those years of drudgery at the writer's desk which gave us *Isis Unveiled*, *The Secret Doctrine*, *The Voice of the Silence*, those titanic editorials and scholarly contributed articles in the three magazines of which 'H. P. B.' was Founder-Editor — *The Theosophist* in India, *Lucifer* in England, and in Paris *La Revue Théosophique*? Did the world *need* that torrent of articles in English, French, and Russian that poured from this tireless pen, preaching Karman, Reincarnation, the Duality of human nature, man's unassailable Divinity, and the reality of Spiritual Life? Did the world *need* that undimmed, peerless effort of this Teacher, so persistently pointing out, with an optimism that no smoke-screen of persecution could obscure, the shining goal that rose beyond and above the quagmire

of our strife-mad, war-obsessed, unbrotherly, reckless Present? Why did she continue to protest that mankind *needed* her message from out Anti-quity? Were not things going on well enough?

Hardly. No thinker will deny that when H. P. Blavatsky began her work the world was in the throes of unrest, discontent, agitation, and growing tendencies to fanaticism on the one hand and unreasoning iconoclasm on the other. In the effort to escape such incredible doctrines as that of hell-fire, the damnation of infants, predestination, and the rest; sincerely convinced, in addition, that the teachings of Jesus were as impractical as they were simple and plain, the world was running full tilt into materialism. And to the voices rising up in denial of soul, in denial of compassion, altruism, the reality of spiritual life, as if determined to smother the last faint hope in human hearts,* H. P. Blavatsky sent out

*We need not refer to Spurgeon and others who in H. P. Blavatsky's day dangled their listeners without compunction over the fires of an actual brimstone hell, nor to the frank materialism encountered both in literature and science. All this is well known or may be ascertained. But as evidence that H. P. Blavatsky's message is in place right now, we offer the following fugitive quotations from current writers:

"Altruism is Egotism on the recoil. . . . Altruism has never done anything but harm in the world and never can."

— Charles Ferguson

"Abstinence seems to me to be a refusal of experience."— H. G. Wells

"Universal love would insure universal catalepsy. . . . Hate, dissatisfaction, discontent,

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

her challenge: All men are brothers; Altruism is the only path to Peace; Love is the basic law of being; Man is a child of Divinity; Life is a school of experience, a school with many classrooms ranging through life after life; Suffering is the price of growth; Death is the open door to Life, and he who lays down his life for a brother, a principle, or a Cause — he alone shall save it. Her whole vast ethical message is epitomized in the present watchwords of The Theosophical Society, from the pen and heart of its present Leader, Dr. G. de Purucker:

“LOVE IS THE CEMENT OF THE UNIVERSE ! LEARN TO FORGIVE AND LEARN TO LOVE ! EACH ONE OF YOU IS AN INCARNATE GOD: BE IT !”

Between *Genesis* in the dead-letter sense and the conclusions of materialistic science there was an unbridged chasm. Between arbitrary creation by a personal God and descent from apedom, there was no middle line — not the status of things today, of course,

contempt, are the sacred fires that must be forever kept burning. . . . Hate is ethical. Hate destroys trammels.”

— *Benjamin de Casseres*

And Spengler, in his *Decline of the West*, tells us that world-peace is a chimera, a ‘hopeless impossibility’ — that, in short, world-peace will come only when man, weary and war-ruined, “becomes a plant again, dumb and suffering — a busy, not inadequate swarm, over which the tempest of soldier-emperors passingly blows.” And he characterizes the course of evolution as “a noble drama *in its aimlessness, noble and aimless* as the course of the stars, the rotation of the earth”!

but certainly the status fifty-five years ago. Science confined its researches only to the body and its plane; theology, deluding itself with the idea that it sponsored the soul, was in some aspects in the grip of a materialism even more gross — resurrection in the flesh, for instance.

Occidental psychology was in a state of ‘confusion worse confounded,’ clamped motionless in the vise of matter and no two schools agreeing even upon the main propositions. Spiritualism had initiated a widespread interest in things with which the wiser, older East had for long ages been familiar *and against which all its philosophies warned*: the running after spooks and shells. The moral and physical ruin of mediums was balanced by the equally widespread moral ruin of proponents of hypnotism and vivisection.

Medicine was — and is yet, to the degree that it is interested in serum-therapy, hypnotism, and vivisection — sailing full tilt into the maelstrom of black magic,* repudiating every law of justice and mercy to build up the animal in man.

Moreover, at the time when H. P. Blavatsky began her work — and this, note, was at one of those Theosophical cycles that are regularly marked in historic sequence — the psychic faculties of mankind, of which the increasing interest in mediumism forewarned, were already opening out. Enough disaster had come already from run-

*Read ‘Black Magic in Science’ in *Studies in Occultism*, volume II, by H. P. Blavatsky.

ning after the denizens of a supposed 'spirit-land' to prevision the inevitable result if this flowering of the more subtil faculties should take place in an age given over to phenomena-hunting, money-getting, selfishness, jealousy, and personalism. And these things marked the general trend. Unless something came to change its direction, humanity would plunge downward inevitably — as nations, races, and even worlds, the Teacher tells us, have plunged before.

There were, it is true, good men and women in every community; there were remedial agencies everywhere; but they had lost their hold on public confidence and nobody knew what next to do. Press and pulpit both agreed that while it were well to preach the ethics of Jesus the Christ, no state could hope to practise them and live. In a word, humanity was drifting rudderless in a tempest-swept sea upon whose horizon there shone no steady light. To quote from H. P. Blavatsky herself:

The world of today, in its mad career towards the unknown — which it is too ready to confound with the unknowable, whenever the problem eludes the grasp of the physicist — is rapidly progressing on the reverse, material, plane of spirituality. It has now become a vast arena — a true valley of discord and of eternal strife — a necropolis, wherein lie buried the highest and most holy aspirations of our Spirit-Soul.

— *The Secret Doctrine*, I, xxii

Between man and man, between nation and nation, the lines of separation laid down by false standards of patriotism, were becoming with every

year more and more pitilessly tense. And yet, though unperceived by the many, the voice of the Soul was here and there making itself heard. The Christos-Spirit was stirring to recognition, pushing to new birth, to await — crucifixion again, or re-enthronement? Who could say? It was a question. In a very real sense, with the grip of materialism tightening, with science disclaiming interest in the existence or reality of soul because it could not be caught and 'cultured'; with life's profounder questions left unanswered by religions that had lost their way, the dispassionate student of the history of that time can readily see that 1875 marked a focus or fusion-point of great contending forces, and that the destiny of humankind was in the balance.

The very desperation of the search that was going forward along so many lines showed that human hearts were conscious of some great need,— pitifully conscious, but who or what could meet it? Real thinkers knew perfectly well that they had lost the key to the situation, and thus for that key they were looking. But alas! they were looking in the wrong place! That key is not to be found in laboratories, but in the human heart and in its great Illuminator, the Wisdom of the Ages: Theosophy.

One would imagine, at first glance, that such a state of things would be encouraging to a real Teacher. Here were a multitude, searching, pleading, asking; here was the Teacher with the priceless boon they craved. How easy!

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

But it was not so easy as it looked. Pride and conceit were in the saddle, pessimism and despair on foot; there was impatience of, even contempt for, anything like 'Leadership,' and blissful ignorance of anything not yet on religion's chart or that of modern science. Would human minds, thus psychologized, be likely to follow the Wisdom-path, if shown it? How many would even know what it was?

Well, anyway, H. P. Blavatsky was sent forth to make the attempt, and she had the courage to go *and to stay by*—though she well knew beforehand the cost. To quote from the writings of her colleague and Successor, William Quan Judge:

That she always knew what would be done by the world in the way of slander and abuse, I also know, for in 1875 she told me that she was then embarking on a work that would draw upon her unmerited slander, implacable malice, uninterrupted misunderstanding, constant work, and no worldly reward. Yet in the face of this her lion-heart carried her on.

Nor was she unaware of the future of the (Theosophical) Society. In 1875 she told me in detail the course of the Society's growth for future years, of its infancy, of its struggles, of its rise into the 'luminous zone' of the public mind; and these prophecies are being fulfilled.

How much humanity needed her, H. P. Blavatsky knew very well. She said clearly that she came

to revive and popularize the knowledge of the ancients upon these major human problems, and to plant "the seed of mysticism" in the "soil of brotherhood"—a mysticism that, as stated, was already being diverted into lower psychic chan-

nels. But before seed can be sown the wise Sower breaks the soil and rips open the winter-hardened crust. And this she did. The greater the opposition, the harder the crust, the deeper her plowpoint was set, for dogmatic beliefs seemed to cling the tighter because so near to not being wanted at all. Herein lies the explanation of those trenchant editorials of protest against ignorance and sham.

H. P. Blavatsky was accused of preaching against Christianity. No libel ever given currency was ever more completely one. "No Theosophist has ever spoken against the teachings of Christ," she wrote in her magazine *Lucifer*, and other citations to support this could be given. Her crime was that she declared Christianity *practical*—she would have it really *tried*. For this crime she was arraigned, and found—guilty!

With regard to the world of religion the situation was indeed a curious one. Here were the different and differing sects and religions, in the persons of some of their exponents, reviling, persecuting, and repudiating the Teacher who would bring to them *Religion*—the Mother-Religion of the world from which the warring sects all sprang. It was as if children who had wandered far afield and lost their way should meet their once-loved mother on some dark and devious by-way where she had gone to look for them—and should repudiate all relationship, scorning her who gave them birth!

But if H. P. Blavatsky protested and thundered against the cant and in-

sincerity of the day, it was more than balanced by the pathetic eagerness with which she sought out every sign of awakening spiritual life, every sign that pointed to even a faint understanding of Brotherhood and compassion, and by the quick, generous internationalism with which she held out her hand to all who voiced higher ideals of conduct or gave promise of doing so. Her admiration for Dickens's compassionate instinct, and especially for the genius of Carlyle, was as profound as for that of her own countryman, Dostoyevsky. When the Society for Psychical Research was first formed, an editorial commending the high purposes *it claimed to have* and bidding it God-speed, was her noble-hearted introduction of this Society to the thinking Orient. How this was rewarded is well-known; and instances might be multiplied.

Little more than half a century has passed since H. P. Blavatsky began her spiritual warfare, yet today, what change on every hand! Dogmatism, riddled with Truth's shafts, is well nigh spent. While the clergyman who does not preach the immanent Deity, the mystic Christ, the Kingdom of God within, prayer to "the Father that seeth in secret" instead of before the gaze of men, Evolution, Karma, Life as a school of experience, and Love as the supreme law, is positively behind the times. Liberalism in religion has come, and come to stay, and we owe it to ourselves and to common justice to mark the fusion-point in history initiating so potential a change.

Science, which pilloried this courageous Teacher because of the ground on which she stood, is today pushing — and not so slowly, either — towards that very ground. Address after address by the President of the British Association for the Advancement of Science in later years — as pointed out by the present Theosophical Leader, Dr. G. de Purucker, — might have been taken, in parts, from Theosophical books. Every year, almost every month, sees new recruits to the Theosophical banner — Religion and Science are One. The world's real thinkers are turning today, in mingled admiration and despair, to the Wisdom of the Ancients, nowhere accessible, be it noted, in ungarbled and undistorted form, save in the writings of H. P. Blavatsky and her Successors, William Quan Judge, Katherine Tingley, and the present Theosophical Leader, Dr. de Purucker. Since this is a fact, there can be no objection to stating it.

Alfred Russel Wallace alone stood out as an advocate of the scientific teachings put forth by H. P. Blavatsky, but he was at one time a Fellow of the Theosophical Society, and his own writings are evidential testimony of close study of the Theosophical teachings, in particular those teachings which set forth the origin, evolution, and destiny of Spiritual Man. Why do not people more generally know these facts?

We judge things inevitably by their fruits. That is an aphorism long written in terms of the general reaction

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

when the fruits loom into view. But we should not stop at that stone. Gratitude should find a voice right here. Shall the Sower of the seed be forgotten or overlooked, now that the worldwide harvest from her sowing is being gathered in by other hands — by millions, indeed, to their inestimable benefit? Surely not.

There can be no question that when H. P. Blavatsky let loose the energies of her soul, obedient to her Teachers and for sheer Compassion's sake, potencies resident in the general human heart, but hitherto dormant, quiescent, quite undreamed of by the majority,

were quickened, fired, hurled, impelled to action. The Soul was set to work. If indeed we are, as leaders in both religion and science now tell us, 'on the threshold of a new period in life-studies'; if indeed we are, as every outer evidence and every intuition of the seeing mind proclaims, at the opening of what the present Theosophical Leader, G. de Purucker, has given us every reason and every right to name "the Cycle of the Buddhic Splendor" — does it not behoove us to ask ourselves, in grateful humility: Who led us to this high vantage? Who first planted The Standard there?

THE POPOL VUH

P. A. MALPAS, M. A.

(Translated from the text of Brasseur de Bourbourg)

CHAPTER VIII

HERE is the story of the defeat and death of Zipacna when he was conquered in his turn by the two young men, Hunahpu and Xbalanqué.

What wounded the heart of these young men is that the four hundred young men of whom we have spoken above had been killed by Zipacna.

He ate only fish and crayfish by the banks of the rivers, and this was his sole nourishment each day; by day he went about seeking his food, and by night he carried the mountains on his shoulders.

Then Hunahpu and Xbalanqué made an artificial crayfish of great

size and they put on it a head of ek.* Well, then, the ek was gathered in the forests where it exists everywhere.

Of that they made the great claws of the crayfish and they made the little claws of the pahac;† they put on it a shell of stone and this made the back of the crayfish.

Then they put this kind of turtle into the bottom of a grotto at the foot of a great mountain, in the hope of

*A wild plant with big leaves with which the natives ornament triumphal arches, etc.

†B. de B. says he does not know the pahac; but paak is a sort of anona or custard-apple.

being the conquerors of Zipacna. The name of the mountain is Meavan.

Then the young men went to meet Zipacna on the bank of a river. Where are you going, young man? they said to Zipacna. I am going nowhere. I am only seeking my food, young men, replied Zipacna.

What is your food? Only fish and crayfish. But there are none here that I can find. This is the second day that I have eaten nothing and I am exhausted with hunger, said Zipacna to Hunahpu and Xbalanqué.

There is a crayfish down there at the bottom of the ravine, they said. Truly it is a great crayfish and it will be a famous morsel for your dinner. But it nipped us when we tried to catch it and we are afraid of it. Not for anything in the world would we go and catch it now, said Hunahpu and Xbalanqué.

Have pity on me and come and show me where to go, young men, said Zipacna. For nothing in the world would we do so. But you go there; you cannot lose the way; follow the bank of the river and you will come to the foot of a great mountain where the river flows noisily by at the bottom of the ravine. Go that way and you will be sure to find the place, replied Hunahpu and Xbalanqué.

Alas! How unfortunate I am! Where then is it to be found, young men? Come and show me the way. There are plenty of birds which you can go and shoot with your blowpipes, and I know where they are, replied Zipacna.

His humility found grace with the

young men. Will you know how to catch it, they continued, if we return thus for your sake, for it is very certain that we did not try any more because it at once sought to bite us when we stooped and entered the place where it was. Then we were overcome with fear, crouching as we entered, yet we all but caught it. So you will have to go in yourself, stooping as we did, they said to him.

Certainly! replied Zipacna, going on with them. Then when they came to the place, Zipacna went to the bottom of the ravine where the crayfish was lying on its side presenting a very red surface, because it was at the bottom of the ravine that they had hidden their enchantment.

All goes well, replied Zipacna, rejoicing. I wish it were already in my mouth. For truly he was dying of hunger. Well, he was going to lie flat on his face and try to enter, when the crayfish started up and began to move.

Then he came back. Have you not caught it yet? asked the young men. Not yet; but it has started to rise just as I was going to catch it. But perhaps it would be best for me to go right in, he replied.

Then he began to enter again crawling on his stomach. Well, then, he did enter, and only his feet were showing, when the great mountain, mined below, and finally becoming detached, came and covered his breast; he did not return, and Zipacna was changed into stone.

Such in its turn was the destruction of Zipacna by the young men, Hunah-

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

pu and Xbalanqué. It is he, says the old tradition, who made the mountains, and who was the elder of the two sons of Vukub-Cakix.

He was overcome at the foot of the mountain called Meavan,* and thus he who was the second of those who became proud was only conquered in a supernatural way. There remains one more yet whose story we are going to relate.

CHAPTER IX

Well, then, the third of those who became proud was the second son of Vukub-Cakix, called Cabrakan. It is I who destroy the mountains, he used to say.

However, Hunahpu and Xbalanqué also conquered him. Then Hurakan, the Flash of Lightning and the Thunderbolt which strikes, spoke to Hunahpu and Xbalanqué, in this wise:

Let the second son of Vukub-Cakix be humbled in his turn; such is our will; for it is not well what they do on earth, exalting their glory to such a degree of greatness and power; then let it be so no more.

Entice him gently over there towards the east, said Hurakan again to the two young men.

Very well, mighty lord, they replied. It is not well what we see. Is it not You who are, is it not You who are

*Meavan is a high mountain washed on the South and East by the Chixoy or Lancadón, one of the great branches of the Uzu-macinta in old Quiché. The river is also called the Río de Scapulas.

Peace, You the Heart of Heaven, added the young men, hearing the word of Hurakan!

Well, then, Cabrakan was at this moment occupied in moving the mountains; no matter how gently his feet struck the earth, the great mountains were immediately torn apart, and also the little mountains, because of him.

It is then that he was met by the young men. Where are you going, young man? they said to Cabrakan. I am not going anywhere; I am only here overturning the mountains, for I am he who casts them down; I am continually occupied in doing so, he said in reply.

Then in his turn Cabrakan said to Hunahpu and Xbalanqué, What is the motive of your coming? I do not know that face. What is your name? asked Cabrakan.

We have no name. We are only hunters with the blowpipe and we catch birds with birdlime in the mountains; we are orphans, having nothing of our own, young man.

We only go about among the mountains, small and great, young man. But we have seen a great mountain and where it is there are great precipices to be seen. Truly it rises to a great height and it is so high that it rises above the tops of all the mountains.

So we have been unable to catch even one or two birds there, young man. But is it true that you overturn all the mountains, young man? said Hunahpu and Xbalanqué to Cabrakan.

Have you really seen the mountain that you speak of? Where is it? I

shall see it and I shall throw it down. Where did you see it?

It is down there by the rising sun, replied Hunahpu and Xbalanqué.

It is well. Show us the road, he said to the young men.

Not at all; it is necessary that we should take you between us and that there should be one of us on your left hand, and the other on your right hand, because we have our blowpipes. If there are any birds we will shoot them, they replied.

They went joyously on their way, trying their blowpipes. They did not use balls of earth or clay in the tubes but in using their blowpipes they brought down the birds by blowing alone.

Cabrakan was astonished. Then the young men built a fire and put their birds to roast before the fire; but they rubbed one of the birds with *tizate** and put white dust round it. See what we are giving him to excite his appetite by the smoke which will arise from it. This bird is to be his undoing. Just as we make the earth envelop *this bird*, so will we bring him to earth and in the earth we will bury him.

It is great; it is wise to think of forming the created thing at the moment when one goes to sow the seedlings and when the day is about to appear, said the young men.

As it is a quite natural thing to the

*Tizate. Zahcab or Tizate, from the Nahuatl *ticatl*, a very friable whitish earth used for polishing metals, making cement, etc.

heart of men to desire to eat and to crush between his teeth, the heart of Cabrakan covets this bird which we have prepared, said Hunahpu and Xbalanqué, the one to the other. Meanwhile they roasted the bird which was cooked and took color in turning, the gravy streamed from all parts of the bird with its fat, which exhaled the most appetizing odor.

And behold, Cabrakan experienced the keenest desire to eat of it, so that his mouth watered and he kept it open and the saliva ran down because of the appetizing odor of the bird.

Then he asked: What is that dish that you have there? Truly nothing is so savory as the odor which I smell. Give me then a little of it, he added.

Then they gave Cabrakan a bird, and this was to be the occasion of his ruin. Then when he had finished the bird they set out again, going in the direction where the sun rises, to the place where the great mountain was.

And behold, Cabrakan, already staggering and shaking in feet and hands, had no more strength, because of the earth with which they had rubbed the bird which he had eaten. He was incapable of doing anything with the mountains and could no longer overturn them.

Then having been bound by the young men, his hands were fastened behind his back and he was made prisoner by the young men. They tied his neck and his legs together and, laying him on the earth, they buried him there.

Such was the downfall of Cabrakan,

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

really accomplished by Hunahpu and Xbalanqué alone. But it would be impossible to tell all that they did here on earth.

And now we will likewise tell of the

birth of Hunahpu and Xbalanqué, for we have first of all recounted the story of the defeat of Vukub-Cakix, with that of Zipacna and Cabrakan, here upon the earth.

SECOND PART

CHAPTER I

WELL, then, we are here going to tell the name of the father of Hunahpu and Xbalanqué. But we will throw a mysterious veil over their origin; we will cover with mystery the narrative and history of the birth of Hunahpu and Xbalanqué; we will only tell the half of it and only a part of what concerns their father.

Here then is the story. The name of each of them is Ahpu, Shooter with the Blowpipe, as they are called, and their parents are Xpiyacoc and Xmucané. By them in the night were engendered Hunhun-Ahpu and Vukub-Hunahpu,* by Xpiyacoc and by Xmucané.

Well then, these Hunhun-Ahpu were two; † they had engendered two legitimate sons. And the name of the first born was Hunbatz, and Hunchouen the name of the second. ‡

But the name of their mother was

* Vukub-Hun-Ahpu, 'Seven-a-shooter-of-the-Blowpipe.' Perhaps 'each one of the seven.' B. de B.

† Here Hunhun-Ahpu ceases to be the name of a single individual.

‡ Hun-Batz, perhaps a thread or a monkey or ape. The eleventh sign or day in the Tzendal, Quiché, and Cakchiquel calendars. Hun-Chouen, the eleventh sign in the Maya calendar, means 'one who beautifies himself.'

Xbakiyalo.§ Thus was named the wife of Hunhun-Ahpu. As to Vukub-Hunahpu, he had no wife, for he was a celibate.

But by nature these two sons were very great sages, and great was their knowledge; they were seers here upon earth and their life, like their character, was altogether good.

Hunbatz and Hunchouen, the sons of Hunhun-Ahpu, were taught all the sum total of knowledge. Hunbatz and Hunchouen became clever in everything; they were players of the flute, singers, blowpipe-shooters, painters|| and writers, sculptors, jewelers, goldsmiths.

Well, then, Hunhun-Ahpu and Vukub-Hunahpu every day played at dice and ball. And every two days they all four practised, and great numbers gathered in the hall of the *jeu de paume*.¶

And the Voc, the hawk, came to see them. This Voc is the messenger of Hurakan, of the Lightning which flashes from the cloud, and of the

§ B. de B. says this is a symbolic name like the rest.

|| A painter means a writer as well.

¶ Hom; this tennis-hall was really a temple consecrated by mysterious rites, says B. de B.

Thunderbolt which strikes. Well, then, this Voc was not far from the earth here, nor far from Xibalba,* for in an instant he came from heaven to Hurakan.

Whilst they were dwelling here upon earth the mother of Hunbatz and Hunchouen died. And behold whilst they were traveling towards Xibalba, they played at ball, which Hun Camé and Vukub Camé,† monarchs of Xibalba, immediately heard.

What is it then that is being done on earth? Who are those who make it tremble and who excite so much tumult? Send someone to see instantly; bring them here and let them come and play at ball, that we may conquer them. In truth we are no longer obeyed by them, no longer have they respect or reverence for our being, and they do nothing else but fight one another above our heads, said all those of Xibalba.

Then they all took counsel together, and Hun Camé and Vukub Camé are the names of the supreme judges. Well, then, all the princes were tributaries of their empire, and each of these princes was only so at the will of Hun Camé and Vukub Camé.

Xiqiripat and Cuchumaquik‡ were

*Xibalba is a large country in Central America. also 'hell' and perhaps has other symbolism attached to it.

†Hun Camé, a corpse. Vukub Camé; seven corpses. Cam or camey, a corpse. is the seventh of the signs of the months.

‡Xiqiripat means 'flying basket'; Cuchumaquik, 'gathered blood,' also 'liquid gum elastic,' quik.

the names of the lords whose office was exercised over such people as had a bloody flux. Yet others were called Ahalpuh and Ahalgana,§ and these also were princes.

Well, then, their duty was exercised in making men swell, making humors come to their legs, and making them turn livid in the face, which is called Chuganal;|| this was the office of Ahalpuh and Ahalgana.

Other lords were Chamiabak, he who wears a ring of bone, and Chamiaholom, he who wears a death's-head ring; they were mace-bearers of Xibalba; their maces were nothing but bones. Their office consisted in making men thin to the point that having only a fleshless head and bones, when they died, there was nothing more than a skeleton to take. Such was the employment of Chamiabak and Chamiaholom, as they called them.

Then there were the lords named Ahalmez, he who works filthinesses, and Ahaltacob, he who produces misery. Their office was to detect men in cases of treason, and whether one of them found a man before or behind his house, that man had the misfortune to fall mouth upward on the ground and find death there. This was the office of Ahalmez and Ahaltacob, as they called them.

Then came other lords named Xic

§Ahalpuh, 'he who produces the pus or corrupted matter'; Ahalgana, 'he who produces the water that comes from wounds.'

||What the Indians call Chuganal is a kind of jaundice.

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

and Patan, the sparrowhawk and the basket which serves for carrying burdens, etc. Their office consisted in making men die on the road, from what is called sudden death; they bring the blood to a man's mouth and make him die while vomiting blood. It is the duty of each of them to squeeze the throat and chest of the man so that he should perish on the road, making the blood come suddenly to his throat while walking. Such was the office of Xic and Patan.

And behold they united in counsel to pursue and chastise Hunhun-Ahpu and Vukub Hunahpu. What those of Xibalba desired was to deliver Hunhun-Ahpu and Vukub Hunahpu to scorn, with their bucklers of leather, their rings, their gloves, their crowns, and the helmets with which they were clad.*

We will now tell of their journey to Xibalba, when they left behind them Hunbatz and Chouen [*i. e.*, Hunchouen], the sons of Hunhun-Ahpu. Well, their mother was already dead, so next after that we will relate the defeat of Hunbatz and Hunchouen by Hunahpu and Xbalanqué.

CHAPTER II

Then arrived the envoys of Hun Camé and Vukub Camé. Go, you others, Ahpop-Achih,† go and carry

*B. de B. points out that these are the different objects used by the players.

†Ahhpop-Achih, a title of the court of Xibalba which we find long after at that of the kings of Quiché. Ahpop, from *ah*, possessive particle, and *pop*, a mat or carpet, that is,

this message to Hunhun-Ahpu and to Vukub-Hunahpu, and tell them: Come with us. Let them come, the princes say to you; let them come and play ball here with us; let us refresh our faces with them. In truth we are astonished at their great feats. So let them come, say the princes.

Let them bring the instruments they use to make all that noise with, their rings and their gloves, and likewise let them come with their balls of gum elastic, said the princes. Tell them: Come. Thus was it said to the messengers.

Well, the messengers were owls.‡ Arrow-of-an-Owl, One-leg-of-an-owl, the Macaw-owl, and the Head-of-an-owl; thus were named the messengers of Xibalba. Arrow-of-an-Owl was swift as an arrow; the peculiarity of One-leg-of-an-owl was that he had only one leg. As for Macaw-owl he seemed to be surrounded by fire, and lastly Owl's-head had nothing but his head and wings; he had no legs.

These four messengers had the rank of Ahpop-Achih or captains of guards. Immediately after leaving Xibalba they arrived with their message on the top of the tennis-hall, where Hunhun-Ahpu and Vukub Hunahpu were to

'master of a carpet,' because only the lords had the right to sit on a carpet. Achih, 'he who comes with the kidneys or rib' (*ih*, kidneys or rib). Achih, Latin *vir*, man, hero, warrior, guard, etc. Ahpop-Achih, 'Captain of the Guard.'

‡The name Turcur or Owl seems to indicate their place of origin. Tucurub, the Owls, in Mexican Tecolotlan, now San Miguel Tucuru in the Department of Verapaz, Guatemala.

play at *pelote* or ball in the playing-hall of Nimxob Carchah, as it was called.

Well, then, the owls sent to the hall of the ball-game delivered their message in the order in which they had formulated it. It had been given by Hun Camé, Vukub Camé, Ahalpuh, Ahalgana, Chamiabak, Chamiaholom, Xiqripat, Cuchumaquiq, Ahalmez, Ahaltocob, Xic, and Patan, for those were the names of all the princes.

Is it quite certain that King Hun Camé and that Vukub Camé have thus spoken? Is it really true, cried the two brothers, that we must accompany you? Let them bring all the instruments of their diversion, the princes have said. It is well. First wait a moment; we are going at once to take leave of our mother, they replied.

Then they went to their house, and said to their mother, for their father was already dead: Behold, our Mother, we are going away. But our journey will be useless. The messengers of the king have come to take us. Let them come, he has added, say those who are sent to fetch us.

But this little ball of gum elastic will remain as a witness of our existence, they added. Then they went and hung it in a niche in the roof of the house. Then, afterwards, we will still play at ball, they added. As for you, make music; occupy yourselves with singing, with painting and writing and with carving; warm our house and warm the heart of our grandmother, they said to Hunbatz and Hunchouen.

At the moment of taking leave of their mother, Xmučané was overcome with emotion and she wept. We are leaving, but we are not yet dead. Do not be afflicted, said Hunhun-Ahpu and Vukub Hunahpu on leaving.

Then Hunhun-Ahpu and Vukub Hunahpu set out and the messengers took the road before them. Then they commenced to descend by the road which goes to Xibalba.* The first steps are very steep.

When they had descended they arrived at the bank of a rapid river, running at the bottom of deep gorges, called Nuzivan-Cul, 'my gorge or ravine,' and Cu-zivan, 'gorge or ravine,' which they passed. They likewise passed over foaming waters covered with calabash trees, and the calabash trees were innumerable; but they passed them without being hurt.

Then they arrived at the bank of a river of blood; they passed it by without drinking its water. Next they came to another river with only water in it; so far no one had been able to catch them in any trap. They crossed this river also. Next, they arrived at a place where four roads met and there they let themselves be taken to the four roads.

*Note on the position of Xibalba. When at Coban in 1860, the natives indicated to Brasseur de Bourbourg a mountain forty or forty-five leagues to the northwest, called by them Xibalba-tzul or Mountain of Xibalba in the direction of Ocotingo. The steep declivity mentioned seems to refer to a regular ladder two or three thousand feet high between unfathomable precipices.

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

One of these roads was red and another black; the third was white and the last was a yellow road; this made four roads. And behold, he of the black road spoke: It is I, I who must take you. I am the King's Road, said he of the road.*

Here then they were taken in a trap; for they found themselves directed on the road to Xibalba, and on arriving at the hall where the Kings of Xibalba were enthroned, they recognised that they had lost the game. Well, then, the first that they saw seated were a mannikin and a man of wood, put there by those of Xibalba; they were the first whom they saluted. Hail, Hun Camé! they said to the mannikin. Hail, Vukub Camé! they said again to the man of wood.

But these did not reply to them at all. And immediately the kings of Xibalba burst out laughing, and all the princes with them made a great noise of laughter, because they looked upon Hunhun-Ahpu and Vukub Hunahpu, whom they had just tricked, as already conquered; and they laughed very heartily.

Then Hun Camé and Vukub Camé added: It is very well. You have arrived. Tomorrow prepare your head-ornaments, your rings, and your gloves, was said to them.

Sit upon our seats of honor, was said to them. But their seat of honor was only a red-hot stone; and seating themselves upon this seat of honor they

*In Ximénez, it is the road itself which speaks.

were burned; in fact they rolled about on this throne without finding any relief, and when they tried to rise the seat burned them.

Then those of Xibalba began to laugh again; they wept from laughing, they choked with laughter, and by dint of laughter all the princes of Xibalba threatened to become struck with apoplexy.

Go to your dwelling where they will bring you your torch of resin and your cigar† to make you sleep, they said to them.

Next they arrived at the House of Darkness, where there was only Darkness in the inside of the house. Meanwhile those of Xibalba took counsel: Let us sacrifice them tomorrow and let them die as soon as possible, for their game is an insult to us, said those of Xibalba to one another.

Well, then, their splinter of resin was a round arrow made of pine which they call Zakitok, or the white silex, the pine of Xibalba; owing to the way they played the contest was very sharp and was bound to come to an end quickly and thus encourage the efforts of those of Xibalba to defeat them.‡

†*Ziq* or *cig*, tobacco, and by extension, cigar, or, sometimes, pipe.

‡There is here a play on the word *cha* or *chah*. *Cha* is the word, and the arrow, and the point of the arrow, obsidian or silex. *Chah* is more or less the same, but more particularly to wash, wound or insult, also pine or splinters used as torches. *Chah*, long, or *Chaah*, means ashes or tennis-game and other things. The least inflexion changes the meaning.

ANCIENT HISTORY OF THE HUMAN RACE

AS RECORDED IN *THE SECRET DOCTRINE* BY H. P. BLAVATSKY

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

II

THE Monad^{ic} Host from the Moon may be roughly divided into three great classes:

1. The most developed Monads (the Lunar Gods or 'Spirits,' called, in India, the Pitris), whose function it is to pass in the first Round through the whole triple cycle of the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms in their most ethereal, filmy, and rudimentary forms, in order to clothe themselves in and assimilate the nature of the newly formed chain. They are those who first reach the human form (if there can be any form in the realm of the almost subjective) on Globe A, in the first Round. It is they, therefore, who lead and represent the human element during the second and third Rounds, and finally evolve their shadows at the beginning of the Fourth Round for the second class, or those who come behind them.

2. Those Monads that are the first to reach the human stage during the three and a half Rounds, and to become men.

3. The laggards; the Monads which are retarded, and which will not reach, by reason of Karmic impediments, the human stage at all during this cycle or Round, save one exception, which will be spoken of elsewhere as already promised.—I, 174-5

The modern mind will not grasp at first all that is implied in the term 'Monad.' For help there must be a constant reminder from the Stanzas that the whole Universe is in reality the Absolute, having emerged from that essence, and infused to the last atom with that life.

It [the Monad] is not of this world or plane, and may be compared only to an in-

destructible star of divine light and fire.
—I, 174, Note

It cannot be said to develop, yet around it gather higher and higher forms of life through its infinite incarnations. It passes from the lowest kingdoms up to the highest spiritual, yet is ever one and the same Monad.

The Monad is a drop out of the shoreless Ocean beyond. . . . It is divine in its higher and *human* in its lower condition—the adjectives 'higher' and 'lower' being used for lack of better words—and a Monad it remains at all times, save in the Nirvânic state, under whatever conditions, or whatever external forms. . . . The Kabalists say correctly that 'MAN becomes a stone, a plant, an animal, a man, a Spirit, and finally God.' . . . But by 'Man,' the divine Monad is meant, and not the thinking Entity.—II, 186

The above suggests an interpretation of the quotation from the *Book of Manu*, in *Isis Unveiled*, Volume II, page 263, by H. P. Blavatsky, as follows:

Plants and vegetation reveal a multitude of forms because of their precedent actions; they are surrounded by darkness, but are nevertheless endowed with an interior soul, and feel equally pleasure and pain.

And from *The Secret Doctrine*:

Everything in the universe throughout all its kingdoms, is CONSCIOUS: *i. e.*, endowed with a consciousness of its own kind. . . . There is no such thing as either 'dead' or 'blind matter.'—I, 274

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

The number seven upon which the Universe is built also appears in the kingdoms, there being three elemental ones below the mineral which we know. It will be seen that the whole process of development represents wheels within wheels, every stage running through all the forms over and over again. For example, every Monad, as well as every Globe, is the arena of the same evolution, only repeated each time on a higher scale. Again, each Round develops one Element.

Thus, in the first Round the globe, having been built by the primitive fire-lives, *i. e.*, formed into a sphere—had no solidity, no qualifications, save a cold brightness, nor form nor color; it is only towards the end of the First Round that it developed one Element, which from its inorganic, so to say, or simple Essence, became now in our Round, the fire we know throughout the system. . . .

The Second Round brings into manifestation the second element—Air. . . . From the *second Round, Earth—hitherto a foetus in the matrix of Space—began its real existence: it had developed individual sentient life, its second principle.*

The *Third* Round develops the *third* principle—WATER; while the Fourth transformed the gaseous fluids and plastic form of our Globe into the hard crusted, grossly material sphere we are living on.—I, 259-60

To one trained in nineteenth century science, perhaps the most unexpected feature of evolution as here given is its spiritual nature. It is the soul that shines through all. Matter is but the outer covering of spirit, and even matter, being born from the same source, being its other pole in fact, is spiritualized. There is no chance or haphazard arrangement. Every de-

tail of growth is directed from within outward, by Intelligence, by Law, by Compassion.

The whole Kosmos is guided, controlled, and animated by almost endless series of Hierarchies of sentient Beings, each having a mission to perform. . . . They vary infinitely in their respective degree of consciousness and intelligence; and to call them all pure Spirits . . . is only to indulge in poetical fancy. For each of these Beings either *was*, or prepares to become, a man, if not in the present, then in a past or a coming cycle (Manvantara).—I, 274-5

. . . As the work of each Round is said to be apportioned to a different group of so-called 'Creators' or 'Architects,' so is that of every globe, *i. e.*, it is under the supervision and guidance of special 'Builders' and 'Watchers'—the various Dhyâni-Chohans.—I, 233

. . . The Dhyânîs watch successively over one of the Rounds and the great Root-races of our planetary chain. They are, moreover, said to send their Bodhisattvas, the human correspondents of the Dhyâni-Buddhas . . . during every Round and Race. Out of the Seven Truths and Revelations, or rather revealed secrets, four only have been handed to us, as we are still in the Fourth Round, and the world also has only had four Buddhas so far.—I, 42

Likewise Man is "the handiwork of hosts of various spirits"—as to his form; his physical matter; his moral, psychic, and spiritual nature. Further, his body is composed of countless myriads of Lives.

Science teaches us that the living as well as the dead organisms of both man and animal are swarming with bacteria. . . . But Science never yet went so far as to assert with the occult doctrine, that our bodies, as well as those of animals, plants, and stones are themselves altogether built up of such beings; which, except larger species, no microscope

ANCIENT HISTORY OF THE HUMAN RACE

can detect. . . . Not only the chemical compounds are the same, but the same infinitesimal *invisible lives* compose the atoms of the bodies of the mountain and the daisy, of man and the ant, of the elephant and of the tree which shelters him from the sun. Each particle — whether you call it organic or inorganic — *is a life*.— I, 260-1

All of this will be given later in more detail; and now we shall return to the Monads from the Moon.

The Lunar Deities or Pitris fashioned the physical man, while the Agnishvâttas, or Kumâras, are Solar Deities, lords of the *Inner Man*. Very little is told in detail before the beginning of our Fourth Round. No doubt the conditions would be impossible for us to conceive, and in any case, do not here so much concern us. The earliest Rounds were devoted to the developing of the kingdoms below the mineral, all of which, of course, are an essential part of our present bodies. Each Round foreshadowed the coming kingdoms, evolving that which was to become a mineral, a plant, an animal, a man, and approaching form more and more in each Round. Through all of these states the Lunar Monads passed until knowledge of their conditions became instinctive and absolute. The more advanced, as was said earlier, preceded — the enormous period of three and a half Rounds being necessary for the arrival of all.

The most developed Monads (the lunar) reach the human germ-stage in the first Round; become terrestrial, though very ethereal human beings toward the end of the Third Round, remaining on it (the globe) through the 'obscuratation' period as the seed

for future mankind in the Fourth Round.

— I, 182

These are they who became the pioneers for the future human race — but only in its physical aspect, as will be explained later.

But before this comes to pass, there were enormous periods when conditions were gradually shaping themselves, when many exotic exuberances of the forces not yet marshaled into order, came into being — forms and events evidently not a part of the general plan. The Fourth Round had started; the early beginnings of human life were imminent. The Earth is represented in the Stanzas as being impatient.

STANZA I

2. Said the Earth: "Lord of the Shining Face, my house is empty. . . . Send thy sons to people this wheel. Thou hast sent thy seven sons to the Lord of Wisdom. . . . Send now to thy servant the same.

3. Said the "Lord of the Shining Face": "I shall send thee a fire when thy work is commenced. Raise thy voice to other Lokas. . . . Thy men shall be mortals. The men of the Lord of Wisdom, not the Lunar Sons, are immortal. Cease thy complaints. Thy seven skins are yet on thee. . . . thou art not ready. Thy men are not ready."

4. After great throes she cast off her old three and put on her new seven skins, and stood in her first one.

STANZA II

5. The wheel whirled for thirty crores* more. It constructed Rûpas:† soft stones that hardened; hard plants that softened. . . . After thirty crores, she‡ turned round.

*Thirty crores — 300 million years.

†Rûpas — forms. ‡She — the Earth.

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

She lay on her back; on her side. . . . She would call no sons of Heaven, she would ask no sons of Wisdom. She created from her own bosom. She evolved water-men, terrible and bad.

The Design was not behind these forms. They might be an expression of Nature's superabundant energy before things were quite ready.

It was the Moon (Omoroka) who presided over the monstrous creation of nondescript beings. . . . — II, 115

STANZA II (*Continued*)

6. The water-men, terrible and bad, she herself created from the remains of others,* from the dross and slime of her first, second, and third† she formed them. The Dhyânîs came and looked. . . . The Dhyânîs from the bright Father-Mother, from the White Regions they came, from the abodes of the immortal mortals.

These higher Beings had a special interest in the human bodies which were to people earth. Their destiny was bound up with them. When more is told of them later, the meaning of the strange expression 'immortal mortals' will be plain.

STANZA II (*Continued*)

7. . . . Our flesh is not there. No fit rûpas for our brothers of the fifth. No dwellings for the Lives. Pure waters, not turbid they must drink. Let us dry them.

So the Flames came, and many others, and slew the Forms which were two-faced and four-faced. After the destruction was ended, and Mother-Earth was bare, and great geological changes were complete:

*Mineral, vegetable, and animal remains.

†Rounds.

‡Mother-Earth.

STANZA III

12. The great Chohans called the Lords of the Moon, of the airy bodies. "Bring forth men, men of your nature. Give them their forms within. She‡ will build coverings without. . . ."

And now we come to the Pioneers spoken of above, who were the Lords of the Moon, being the most advanced Monads. If they gave the design, Nature would be able to carry this out and form suitable bodies. But she was utterly incapable of initiating the work. These Pioneers, through the aid of a long series of Beings, one might also say of almost infinite grades, had reached on the Fourth Globe of the Fourth Round, the human stage in large astral forms. They attained this development of form that they might provide bodies for the future men of this earth — for themselves, in fact. These Lords, known also as Lunar Pitris, were called to undertake the task of guiding the next step in the evolution of human bodies. When therefore the order from their superiors comes, they

ooze out their astral doubles from the 'ape-like' forms which they had evolved in Round III. And it is this subtil, finer form, which serves as the model round which Nature builds physical man.— I, 180. See also Vol. II, p. 115

And the agencies are not the blind forces modern science proclaims, but lives of varying degrees and kinds of consciousness, which either make up, or help those who do make up, the slowly evolving human form.

Thus, as we shall find, for the first three

THE DEATH PENALTY AGAIN ON TRIAL

and a half Root-Races, up to the middle or turning-point, it is the astral shadows of the 'progenitors,' the lunar Pitris, which are the formative powers in the Races, and which build and gradually force the evolution of the physical form toward perfection.—II, 110

THE DEATH PENALTY AGAIN ON TRIAL

ASTRID BERG, M. A.

"For water is a movable, wandering thing, but the land which it covers is permanent."

SO Blackstone in discussing (if I mistake not) Rights of Things. And apt words they are in the present argument on the question of capital punishment, for below the movable and wandering waters of opinion and debate, let us hope there lies a permanent something to penetrate to and examine, and possibly to bargain for and annex in the good old common law way. Heaven help us, if there is not!

The question of capital punishment, or the death-penalty as English writers have it, is now before the English House of Commons and the journals have given generous space to discussion of pros and cons. *The Spectator* offers prizes for the three best essays on the subject, said essays to be judged on their merits, irrespective of whether the arguments be for or against. The effort no longer seems to be to find a place in the sun, but a place so firmly secure that one may venture to cast a line from it.

But water moves and wanders and often is so muddy and roiled that any firm land which may be under it is as likely as not unperceived. The principal difficulty in the present debate

seems to be sheer want of bedrock to stand upon. But there *are* universal principles, and there *is* bedrock, and only to the degree that one's footing is firm upon them is the worthwhile injected into this debate. Or rather into pleas and replications, for the whole of England is a trial-court just now.

Well were it for the world if the trial of the issue could be broadcast, for there should be human thought on this subject if Love concerns itself at all with human law. Justice and Mercy, poles of the same world of universal moral law, aspects of the same Spiritual Reality, fundamentally not two but one, are the concept upon which, in the last analysis, all stable argument must hinge.

Every impulse of the heart pleads for mercy, for pity, for the justice of 'another chance,' but the heart can convince only to the degree that the head can utter its convictions and frame its message — a message, moreover, that must have in it, to be wholly sound, the element of Antiquity. The painfully new is useless, and the attempt to hatch new arguments and new ideas on this subject has reduced many contributions to the level of hopeless

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

mediocrity. Ranged beside the new stands the emotional. They are a curious pair.

It is neither likely nor reasonable that a question so intimate to the very nature and well-being of humankind as that of the death-penalty should exist without solid defense on one or the other side. Universal order does not fashion things in that way, and right has never gone undefended yet where carried to the purer levels where its proper defense lies.

It was in this mood of reflexion that I pulled down my Blackstone the other day, dusted him off and turned to the section on criminal law where, I vaguely remembered, he brought Antiquity very close by his sane words. Blackstone knew, and made bold to say that he knew, in spite of derision that is lasting even to this day, that "no human laws are of validity if contrary to this"—*i. e.*, the Law of Divine Justice, or in his own quaint words, "the Law of God." (His biographer tells us, by the way, that this odd notion of his is "a fallacy perhaps not yet quite expelled from courts of law!" So a Theosophist has an additional reason for dragging this old law-writer into a controversy which, as a matter of fact, he might almost be said to have started.)

Blackstone in his now neglected *Commentaries* was one who perceived the firm land underneath that 'movable, wandering thing' flowing over it. No one has invited him into the present case as yet. The *Commentaries* are not writings for law-students only.

The lover of good literature does not live who would not find both instruction and delight in the greater part of that ponderous work, judged solely by the literary standard. A depth of sincerity pervades it. The style has both clarity and charm. A poet and philosopher was lost to the eighteenth century when Blackstone took chambers in the Middle Temple, but a matchless law-writer was found.

Turn then to his discussion of the nature of crimes and their punishment, and the English code of criminal law, the 'doctrine of the pleas of the crown.' The very opening paragraphs prepare one for the reiterated plea for compassion that would fall like recurrent hammer-strokes on the adamantine general heart. That is something to be noted in an age when children of ten and thirteen were subjects for the death-penalty, when a man might be hanged for petty theft—as many were—when no less than a hundred and sixty acts were declared by Parliament to be felonies without benefit of clergy, and when the doctrine of *lex talionis* was literally enthroned.

Little studied today excepting in abbreviated or compendium-form, less read, practically unknown outside of the legal profession, the subject still of caustic criticism on the part of eminent legal minds who have no patience with philosophy unless it keep its proper place (which is not in a law-court), and who would vote Love out of the forum wholly—nevertheless, a Theosophist would suggest to those who want to inject something *really* new

into the present debate, a careful reading of the *Commentaries*, Book IV. Blackstone's comments on the English common law are not those of a critic, much less of an unfriendly mind. His devotion to, his pride in, his almost adoration of, "the wisdom of the English law" is so constant and unimpaired throughout this work that whatever he says on the subject of the death-penalty must be given additional, indeed preponderant weight, as declarations against interest. There are passages, especially some in regard to property, that are amazing to us today, so bound up was his interest, his very life and thought, in a set will to elucidate where right and defend or explain where wrong. Yet on the death-penalty the heart, the whole man, speaks; and as the good Theosophist that he is, we believe he is entitled to speak here. Some fugitive quotations then, first from his definition of criminal law, which he tells us very simply

should be founded upon principles that are permanent, uniform, and universal; and always conformable to the dictates of truth and justice, the feelings of humanity, and the indelible rights of mankind. . . .

Yet, either from want of attention to these principles . . . and adopting in their stead the impetuous dictates of avarice, ambition, and revenge . . . from giving a lasting efficacy to sanctions that were intended to be temporary . . . or from, lastly, too hastily employing such means as are greatly disproportionate to their end . . . the criminal law is in every country of Europe more rude and imperfect than the civil.

Modesty and hesitation are put

aside, however, on this one topic and he boldly declares it to be his duty, regarding the outrageous penalties that existed in his day,

to hint them with decency to those, whose abilities and stations enable them to apply the remedy.

. . . though the end of punishment is to deter men from offending, it can never follow from thence that it is lawful to deter them at any rate or by any means; since there may be unlawful methods of enforcing obedience even to the justest of laws.

Blackstone dismisses the argument "that it is found by former experience that no lighter penalty (than the death-penalty) will be effectual," as "that loose argument" and hastens to add:

For, is it found, upon farther experience, that capital punishments are more effectual? Was the vast territory of all the Russias worse regulated under the late empress Elizabeth than under her more sanguinary predecessor? Is it now, under Catherine II, less civilized, less social, less secure? And yet we are assured that neither of these illustrious princesses have, throughout their whole administration, inflicted the penalty of death; and the latter has, upon full persuasion of its being entirely useless, nay, even pernicious, given orders for abolishing it entirely throughout her extensive dominions. . . .

We may further observe that sanguinary laws are a bad symptom of the distemper of any state, or at least of its weak constitution. The laws of the Roman kings, and the twelve tables of the *decemviri*, were full of cruel punishments: the Porcian law, which exempted all citizens from sentence of death, silently abrogated them all. In this period the republic flourished; under the emperors severe punishments were revived; and then the empire fell.

To shed the blood of our fellow creature is a matter that requires the greatest delibera-

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

tion and the fullest conviction of our own authority,

even though as Blackstone wisely (almost humorously) remarks: "it is much easier to extirpate than to amend mankind." Nevertheless he declares

it is a kind of quackery in government, and argues a want of solid skill, to apply the same universal remedy, the *ultimum supplicium*, to every case of difficulty.

He quotes from the preamble of Statute I. Mar., st. 1, c. 1.: that

the state of every kind consists more assuredly in the love of the subject towards their prince, than in the dread of laws made with rigorous pains; and that laws made for the preservation of the commonwealth without great penalties are more often obeyed and kept, than laws made with extreme punishment,

and referring to the incredible number of so-called 'crimes' in his day punishable by death, he advances an argument altogether too little taken note of. In the closing paragraph of the first chapter on the subject of the criminal code, he says:

So dreadful a list, instead of diminishing, increases the number of offenders. The injured, through compassion, will often forbear to prosecute; juries, through compassion, will sometimes forget their oaths, and either acquit the guilty or mitigate the nature of the offense; and judges, through compassion, will respite one half of the convicts, and recommend them to royal mercy. And among so many chances of escaping, the needy and hardened offender overlooks the multitude that suffer; he boldly engages in some desperate attempt, to relieve his wants or supply his vices; and, if unexpectedly the hand of justice overtakes him, he deems himself peculiarly unfortunate, in falling at last

a sacrifice to those laws, which long impunity has taught him to contemn.

Prophetic words, as all who know something of crime-conditions in certain parts of the United States where the death-penalty is still enforced and where the miscarriage of justice is a scandal, do not need to be told.

For the *lex talionis* Blackstone reserves his sharpest thrust. And it is the most deserving, for has any pronouncement or edict, in all the history of humankind, ever done so much to harden human hearts and close human minds to the ancient plea of pity and love as the old Mosaic command to take an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth? We know of none. He disposes of this almost as if disdainful of wasting words upon it:

As to the *measure* of human punishments . . . it will be evident, that what some laws so highly extolled for its equity, the *lex talionis*, or law of retaliation, can never be in all cases an adequate or permanent rule of punishment. . . .

There are very many crimes that will in no shape admit of these penalties, without manifest absurdity and wickedness. Theft cannot be punished with theft, defamation by defamation, forgery by forgery, adultery by adultery, and the like.

One wonders what the gods are thinking as they view this childish spectacle, interminable, age-old, of divine beings lost in debate over obvious truth and fact? Do they laugh at us? Do they weep? For both there is provocation.

The English people love their own law, though its inadequacies and even demerits its most earnest lovers do not

deny. It stands as an honest expression of imperfect human understanding of laws so divine and mystical that they were thought to be something else. Blackstone grasped this fact. We recommend as a contribution of merit in the present debate that at least the first chapter of Book IV in the priceless *Commentaries* be spread upon the minutes of our daily press, if not *in extenso* then in some form not too abridged to preserve its vitality, its fine logic, and its compassion — in a word, its genuine Theosophical touch.

It will cure the itch to devise ever 'new' arguments in the case, and give the general mind the chance, too long deferred, to busy itself with rational ones. Best of all, a step will be taken towards the Ancient Wisdom, Theosophy, and the light it throws. All that Blackstone says is in effect a brave clearing of the path, but the teachings of Theosophy alone have power to throw convincing light upon that path and make the final clearing possible. Karman, Reincarnation, Brotherhood as a fact in Nature, long-observed truths about death and the after-death states, the doctrine of human duality — these and other teachings all condemn the death-penalty as both savage and inane. For death under Theosophy is *life*; in killing the body we do not kill the man but merely give him

added power along the very lines he has set his will to follow. We but liberate forces of hate and revenge that while the man lived we could hold in leash and might even hope to transmute, but which, the man once killed, however legally, are for ever beyond our control. Was ever a statute more stupid than such a one as this? Was ever a scheme more inane than one which would penalize the innocent, the living, and merely free the guilty, piling up dead for dead?

The world is tired of 'movable and wandering things,' in ethics and philosophy both. It is time we found something permanent to plant our mental feet upon. It is time someone moved the adoption as Watchwords of the World, of the new Watchwords of our Theosophical Era, words taken from the writings, the teachings, and the *life* of the Theosophical Leader, G. de Purucker:

LOVE IS THE CEMENT OF THE UNIVERSE.
LEARN TO FORGIVE AND LEARN TO LOVE. EACH
ONE OF YOU IS AN INCARNATE GOD. BE IT!

Send these once ringing round the world and arguments will die of inanition, Love will come back to her throne to share it with Reason again, and capital punishment will be only one of many things to survive but as evil memories of a blind and cruel past.



"What is meant by 'the City of Brahman'? That from which, O pure one! all things emanate, that wherein they are sustained, and that whereunto they finally return, is Brahman, the formless."— *Yajñavalkya-Samhitā*

AEROPLANES AND LEMON-GUMS

Kenneth Morris, D. Litt.

WHEN I lie in the dry grass
Where winged drowsy insects pass;
With lemon-gum and sweet sage-smell
And wormwood's haunting oxymel
Strong on the air; and in the sky
Through blue empty regions fly
Aeroplanes that shore and drone:—
As I lie here alone,
And heed the little singing things
And no less, those man-made wings:
What do ears and heart hear
But your voice, Earth dear,
As your poems you intone?

When I hear the breeze sigh
Through the lemon-gums near by
Drowsily; and from the shore,
Some wave ride in with slow roar,
And break the lazy silence where
The blueness sparkles; when the air
Glitters dry; and no sound comes
Else, but when some insect hums,
And far in lonely heaven again
The rumor of an aeroplane:
What in it all does the heart hear
But the song you sing, Earth dear,
Through men as through the lemon-gums?

*International Theosophical Headquarters,
Point Loma, California*

THE ORIGIN OF THE CHRISTIAN EASTER

BORIS DE ZIRKOFF, B. A.

AT the sources of the Nahr-Ibrahim, half-way between Byblus (the modern Jebeil) and Baalbek, the remains of an old sanctuary can be seen by the weary traveler who ascends the romantic and wooded gorges between the ragged rocks of the Lebanon. It is the ancient temple of Aphaka (the modern Afka) dedicated to Astarte, the Phoenician Aphrodite.

THE ORIGIN OF THE CHRISTIAN EASTER

The miserable little village which marks the site of bygone glories stands among groves of walnut-trees on the brink of the abyss. Around it are the towering grandeurs of mighty cliffs; below rushes the river, which emerging from a deep cavern in the heart of the rock, and falling in innumerable cascades, disappears in the depths of the awful glen. Here and there the rocky walls are covered with dense vegetation; at other places they are barren and desolate. The deeper one looks into it from the top of the mountain, the more somber and imposing appears the wild gorge. Sprouting from the fissures and crannies of majestic boulders, a green veil of vegetation creeps towards the roaring waters of the stream. It is one of those sites which arouse in every man a feeling of awe. It is as if the hand of a Supreme Being had from time immemorial dedicated the spot to be the image of the elemental forces of Nature.

Facing the source of the river, which in the days of old bore the name of Adonis, are seen some massive hewn blocks and a column of Syenite granite — the last remains of the temple. From its natural terrace the eye beholds the towering range of rocks and cliffs, while far away, from the shores of the sea, when the sun is setting, golden rays flood the wild gorge, cast fantastic shadows on the somber forests in the depths below, and paint in crimson and purple the spears of the high ramparts. Desolate as the gorge may seem, one can see here and there a poor village or monastery nestling on some

beetling crag, high over the din and foam of the waters. The wild landscape has attracted man from immemorial antiquity.

It is here that, according to the old legend, Adonis, the beautiful youth beloved by Aphrodite, was killed by a boar while hunting. This legend is, however, the Greek form of a much more ancient story which we can trace to the archaic Sumerian people and the Babylonian religion. Adonis is the Semitic Adon ('lord'). His worship in its primitive form was practised ages before Greek civilization. It was the god Tammuz — or, more fully, Dumu-zi-abzu, which in the old Sumerian language meant 'true son of the deep water.'*

If we turn to the religious literature of Babylon we see that Tammuz was considered the lover of Ishtar, the great Mother-Goddess. Every year he was supposed to die; he passed to the subterranean world, and Ishtar went in quest of him

to the land from which there is no returning,
to the house of darkness,
where dust lies on door and bolt. . . .

The great god Ea dispatched a messenger to rescue the goddess. Then the stern queen of the underworld, Alatu or Eresh-Kigal, against her own will allowed Ishtar to be sprinkled with the Water of Life and to depart

*See P. Jensen, *Assyrisch-Babylonische Mythen und Epen*, Berlin, 1900, p. 560. H. Zimmern, in E. Schrader's *Die Keilschriften und das alte Testament*, Berlin, 1902, p. 397.

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

with Tammuz, whom she had kept imprisoned. The descent of Ishtar to the Underworld is one of the most impressive and beautiful passages of the old Babylonian literature. The latter contains several hymns to the departed Tammuz — laments which were sung by the people in the early summer to the shrill music of flutes. An effigy of the dead god was made and washed with pure water; it was anointed with oil and clad in a red robe. Around it rose the fumes of incense, which were supposed to raise him from the dead, breathing into his nostrils the breath of new life.*

According to Jerome, the month of Tammuz was June, but there are no certain data by which to fix the real time of the ceremonies of Tammuz, except the fact, known by analogy with other religions, that the bewailing and the resurrection of the god took place in the early summer. The reader is doubtless familiar with the passage in *Ezekiel* (viii, 14) which refers to the weeping women of Jerusalem lamenting the death of their god.

But to return to Adonis, the Syrian Tammuz. His myth and rites were localized and celebrated in two principal places: at Byblus, the Semitic Gebal, on the coast of Syria, there where the river Adonis (the Nahr-Ibrahim) reaches the sea; and at Paphos in Cyprus. Both were also seats of the

worship of Astarte. It is interesting to note the ancient legend which made Cinyras, the king of Byblus and of Paphos, the father of Adonis. Moreover, it is said that this very Cinyras founded the sanctuary of Aphaka in the wild gorge of the Nahr-Ibrahim, and dedicated it to Baalath Gebal, the Baal of Byblus, the Greek Aphrodite. Now *cinyra* in Greek is the same as *kinnor* in Semitic, *i. e.*, a lyre. So that the 'father' of Adonis seems to be a counterpart of David, the 'harper,' who, though not the 'father' of Jesus, was yet his direct ancestor according to the claim of the Gospels and the belief of every orthodox Christian. We remember also that *kinuros* in Greek means 'plaintive' or 'wailing,' and that the god Tammuz or Adonis was 'bewailed' by the people who worshiped him, an analogy with the story of Jesus, his resurrection and the bewailing of his death by women.

But the analogy does not stop here. Adonis is said to have been born from a myrrh-tree, the bark of which bursting, after a ten months' gestation, allowed the infant to emerge into the world. A little later we find this legend transfigured into another and most suggestive shape. Adonis is said to have been born from a virgin called Myrrh, turned into a myrrh-tree after she conceived. It is well known to every one who has visited an orthodox Church that myrrh is used during the ceremonies. In the same way myrrh was used at the rites of Adonis. Incense was also burnt, just as it is today during the services. It was also

*See A. Jeremias, *Die babylonisch-assyrischen Vorstellungen vom Leben nach dem Tode*, Leipzig, 1887, pp. 4 *et seq.*; M. Jastrow, *The Religion of Babylon and Assyria*, pp. 565-76.

THE ORIGIN OF THE CHRISTIAN EASTER

burnt by the ancient Hebrews in honor of the Queen of Heaven, who is identical with Astarte, Aphrodite, Ishtar, Isis, and a host of others.

The same god was worshiped by the nomadic people of Harran, and over all Syria. An Arabic writer of the tenth century,* speaking of the rites of Adonis among the 'heathen,' says:

In the middle of the month Tammuz is the festival of el-Bugat, *i. e.*, of the weeping women, and this is the Ta-uz festival. The women bewail him because the Lord slew him so cruelly, ground his bones in a mill, and then scattered them to the winds. The women eat nothing which has been ground in a mill during this festival.

All we know about the rites of Adonis is derived mainly from the Greek writers. Similarly to the festivals of Babylonia, at those of Adonis in Western Asia and Greece, the death of the god was annually mourned; laments and wailing spread all over the land, especially among the women. Images of Adonis were made in life-size and carried out for burial. They were dressed in colored robes, and then thrown into the river or the sea.† The number of days Adonis was supposed to be dead, *i. e.*, to travel in the Underworld (as Jesus was supposed to have visited Hell) varied with each nation. In some places his revival was celebrated on the following day. In others, his death lasted for three days and culminated in his resurrection.

*Quoted by D. Chwolson, *Die Ssaabier und der Ssaabismus*, ii. p. 27; *id. Ueber Tammuz und die Menschenverehrung bei den alten Babyloniern*, p. 38.

At Byblus, the great Phoenician sanctuary of Astarte, the death of Adonis was mourned to the wailing of women, with weeping, lamentation, and beating of the breast; next day Adonis was supposed to come to life again and ascend to heaven.‡ It is curious to note that the festival being held in the spring coincided with the discoloration of the river Adonis (Nahr-Ibrahim). The red earth peculiar to that part of the Lebanon was washed down by the rains and gave a red hue to the waters rushing towards the sea. It was considered a symbol of the blood of Adonis, as he was believed to have been wounded at that time by a boar on Mount Lebanon. The flower of Adonis was the scarlet anemone. It was sacred to him; according to popular tradition it had sprung from his blood. One of the epithets of Adonis was Naaman, meaning 'darling.' The Arabs of today still call that flower 'wounds of the Naaman.'

If we pass to Alexandria we shall see that two images were displayed at the festival which took place in the summer. They were the images of Adonis and Aphrodite. Beside them people set up ripe fruits, cakes, plants growing in flower-pots (so-called 'gardens of Adonis'), and green bowers twined with anise. The women in mourning attire bore the image of the dead Adonis towards the seashore and

†Plutarch, *Alcibiades*, 18; *id. Nicias*, 13. Theocritus, xv. 132 *et seq.*

‡Theocritus, xv.

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

after long ceremonies and lamentations committed it to the waves. In their songs they expressed the hope that the god would arise again.

If we pass to Attica, we meet with the same rites, celebrated at the height of summer, as evidence shows.* Adonis was also bewailed by the Argive women, in the Pireus, and at Solyma in Caria. The same celebrations were held at Antioch,† which town, by the way, was one of the earliest seats of the worship of Christ.

As we turn to Cyprus we find that there were on that island two seats of the worship of Adonis; one at Amathus, on the south coast, where a sanctuary of Aphrodite was the center of rites and ceremonies closely resembling those of Osiris in Egypt; and the other, by far the more important, at Paphos, on the southwestern side of the island. Paphos is the modern Kuklia, and the antiquity of that sanctuary is lost in the night of time. According to Herodotus‡ Paphos was founded by Phoenicians coming from Ascalon. We know that Ascalon was itself a center of worship of Adonis and Astarte, where the latter goddess resided in the guise of a mermaid bearing the name of Derceto. There, as well as at Paphos, fishes and doves (similar to those of the Christians, which are said to be the emblem of the Holy Ghost) were sacred to her.

*Plutarch, *Alcibiades*, 18; *id. Nicias*, 13.

†Ammianus Marcellinus, xxii, 9, 15.

‡Lucian, *De dea Syria*, 14. The name *Derceto*, like the more correct *Atargatis*, is the Greek corruption of 'Attar,' the Aramaic form of Astarte.

At Paphos, moreover, doves were found as ornaments on pillars consecrated to Adonis and Astarte.

We now come to a point which shows to what extent modern Christian Churches borrowed from the Pagan religions during the few centuries of their independent existence. Aphrodite of Paphos had for her symbol a white cone or pyramid; similarly a cone or pyramid was the emblem of Astarte at Byblus (Geba), the native goddess whom the Greeks called Artemis at Perga in Pamphylia — where she bore the title of 'Anassa,' that is 'Queen'—and of the sun-god Helio-gabalus at Emesa in Syria. Now it is well known that the Greek Church celebrates Easter by making a kind of white cake in the shape of a pyramid which is called *pas'ha*, a word borrowed from the Israelites. The cake is made of sour milk, sugar, raisins, and other sweet or spicy ingredients, and is eaten on Easter Day as well as during the following week or two. We have here a geometrical form identical with that sacred to Adonis and Aphrodite displayed on the very day which commemorates the event.

It was customary at Paphos to anoint with oil the sacred cone dedicated to the goddess: a solemn festival preceded the ceremony, in which people from Lydia and Caria participated. The same custom of anointing a sacred stone (of different shape) was observed in the temple of Apollo at Delphi. This old custom is still extant at Paphos, where the peasants of Kuklia, in honor of the Maid of

THE ORIGIN OF THE CHRISTIAN EASTER

Bethlehem, anoint the cornerstones of the ruined temple of the goddess of Paphos.*

As to the Greek version of the myth of Adonis, we have but to open Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (x, 503 *et seq.*) to find that the god was represented as a beautiful youth beloved by the same goddess who appears under so many names and titles all over the world, ancient as well as modern. In his infancy the goddess hid him in a chest which she gave in charge of Proserpine, Queen of the Netherworld. When the Queen opened the chest she refused to give the young god back to his mistress because of his beauty. Zeus interfered in the dispute and the quarrel was settled by his decree, according to which Adonis should abide with Proserpine in the Underworld for one half of the year, and with Aphrodite the other half. Adonis was killed later on by a wild boar (in some mythoi by the jealous Ares). The laments of Aphrodite were bitter.

The Hebrew festival of the Passover seems to have had its origin in the old Babylonian system, wherefrom the Hebrews borrowed all their months and days. Passover is celebrated on the 14th day of Nisan, the first month of the Hebrew year. In this very month there was a celebration held by the ancient Babylonians. In the remotest antiquity it was the feast in honor of Bau, the goddess of fertility and abundance, who was praised as

the 'great Mother.' After the southern cities were conquered by Babylon, the priests of Merodach (Marduch) or Bel transformed the feast of Bau into a Merodach-festival. It was called Zagnuku. It was the beginning of the New Year with the old Babylonians. Like the Jewish Passover, the festival of Zagnuku extended over several days of the month (presumably eleven). There was a procession in which the image of the god was carried, with hymns and songs of lamentation changed later into songs of joy.

So far we have seen that the death of a god, the laments of his worshippers, the burial of his image, and his ultimate resurrection accompanied with joyous songs and celebrations, are not the monopoly of Christian nations; for it appears to have been a custom spread all over Asia Minor and Palestine, as well as over the valley of the Euphrates and Tigris.

But it is especially when we turn our eyes to Phrygia and to ancient Rome that the real interest begins to manifest itself. Attis was to Phrygia what Adonis was to Syria. In fact, the ancients very often identified them, and their rites were almost identical. Like the latter god, Attis was said to have been a young shepherd beloved by Cybele, the Mother of the Gods, goddess of fertility, who was worshiped all over Phrygia.† Some legends tell us that he was the son of Cybele. However, the more usual story informs

*See D. G. Hogarth, *A Wandering Scholar in the Levant*, London, 1896, pp. 179 *et seq.*

†Rapp, in W. H. Roscher's *Lexicon d. griesch. u. röm. Mythologie*, ii, 1638 *et seq.*

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

us that Attis had a miraculous birth.

His mother, Nana, was a virgin, who conceived by putting a ripe pomegranate in her bosom. There are different accounts of his death. According to some, Attis was killed by a boar, while hunting. According to others he unmanned himself under a pine-tree and bled to death on the spot. This last version was the local story told by the people of Pessinus, where was the center of the worship of Cybele.* After his death Attis is said to have been changed into a pine-tree, at least Ovid tells us so (*Metam.*, x, 103 *et seq.*).

It was in 204 B. C., that the worship of Cybele was introduced into Rome. The small black stone (perchance a pyramid also), which was supposed to be the symbol of the goddess, was brought from Pessinus to the Roman capital and installed in the Temple of Victory on the Palatine Hill. This occurred in the middle of April.† The 'Mother of the Gods' brought with her the worship of Attis, together with all the legends pertaining to this god. The Emperor Claudius incorporated the worship of the sacred tree (the pine-tree) into the established religion of Rome and thus transplanted the Phrygian festivals into the Roman Empire.‡

*Hippolytus, *Refutatio omnium haeresium*, V, 9, pp. 168, 170 ed. Duncker and Schneidewin. About the death of Attis under the pine-tree, see Arnobius, *Adversus Nationes*, v, 5 *et seq.*

†For the stone see Arnobius. *Adversus Nationes*, vii, 49.

‡Robinson Ellis. *Commentary on Catullus*,

It is especially from the Romans that we derive our information concerning the great spring festival of Attis and Cybele, which took place annually in the great capital of the ancient world.§ So important is the analogy and even the identity of that celebration with the Christian festivities of Easter that a glance at its course will give us valuable suggestions as to the real origin of our present-day spring feast, and its inner relation to the festival of Christmas.

On the 22nd of March a pine-tree was cut and brought into the sanctuary of Cybele, where it was treated as a great divinity or rather as a symbol thereof. There were special tree-bearers who carried the symbol through the streets. When arrived at the temple, the trunk was swathed with woollen bands and the whole was decked with wreaths and violets in profusion. The violet was sacred to Attis as roses and anemones were sacred to Adonis. Thereafter the effigy of a young man symbolizing Attis himself was tied to the middle of the stem.|| Prejudices

Oxford 1876, pp. 206 *et seq.*; H. Hepding, *Attis*, pp. 142 *et seq.*; Fr. Cumont, *Les Religions Orientales dans le Paganisme Romain*, Paris, 1907, pp. 68 *et seq.*

§On the festival see J. Marquardt, *Römische Staatsverwaltung*, iii, 370 *et seq.*; the calendar of Philocalus, in *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, i (2), p. 260, with Th. Mommsen's commentary; G. Wissowa, *Religion und Kultus der Römer*, pp. 264 *et seq.*; H. Hepding, *Attis*, pp. 147 *et seq.*

||Julian, *Orat.* v. 168C, p. 218; Joannes Lydus, *De mensibus*, iv, 41; Arnobius, *Adv. Nat.* v, chs. 7, 16, 39; Hepding, *Attis*, pp. 86, 92, 93, 96, 152 *et seq.*

THE ORIGIN OF THE CHRISTIAN EASTER

apart, the ceremony appears to be a real crucifixion. Let us see what followed next!

On the second day of the festival, the 23rd of March, the chief ceremony seems to have been a blowing of trumpets.* The third day, the 24th of March, was known as the Day of Blood. The Archigallos, or high priest, drew blood from his arm and presented it as an offering.† We firmly believe that the disgusting ceremonies ascribed by some writers to the priests of Attis belonged to the period of degeneration of that worship and had nothing to do with the original purity of the rites. It is the fate of every worship to be degraded and fall into the mire of superstition and black magic, once the spirit of it has departed.

The Day of Blood witnessed the mourning for Attis who was supposed to be dead. The effigy was buried;‡ the worshipers fasted from bread, like the women of Harran when they wept for Tammuz. Many evidences show that the fast was a preparation for the sacramental meal.

As soon as night came the sorrow of the mourners was turned into joy. A light shone in the darkness; the tomb was opened, and the god was said to have risen again from the dead. The priest touched the lips of the weeping

people with balm and announced the resurrection of the god, as the modern priest touches with oil the forehead of the weeping people today and announces the rising of Jesus Christ. Firmicus Maternus says that the resurrection of Attis was hailed as a promise that the mourners will also issue triumphant from the grave.

On the next day, the 25th of March, which was the vernal equinox as reckoned in the Roman calendar, the resurrection of the god was celebrated with a wild outburst of joy and glee. At Rome it was something like a carnival; it had the same character in some other places. It was the Festival of Joy — *Hilaria*. Because of that, in perfect accordance with the ancients, some writers called Easter Sunday the 'Sunday of Joy' — *Dominica Gaudii*.

The 26th of March was a day of repose. The festival had its end on the 27th. On that day there was a procession to the brook Almo which flows into the Tiber just below the walls of Rome. The priests placed the image of the goddess Cybele on a wagon drawn by oxen. The procession moved out through the Porta Capena preceded by the nobles walking barefoot. The high priest washed the car, the image, and the oxen, with the water of the river, strewed them with flowers freshly culled, and returned to the city. The festival was over.§

We cannot enter into details concerning the same festival in connexion with

*W. Warde Fowler, *Roman Festivals of the Period of the Republic*, p. 62.

†Trebellius Pollio, *Claudius*, 4; Tertullian *Apologeticus*, 25.

‡Diodorus Siculus, iii, 59; Arrian, *Tactica*, 33; Firmicus Maternus, *De errore profanarum religionum*, 3 and 22.

§Arnobius, *Adv. Nat.*, vii, 32; Silius Italicus., *Punic.* viii, 365.

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

the myth of *Osiris* in Egypt. Suffice it to say that every one who has studied that myth in all its different versions is aware that *Osiris* is the Egyptian counterpart of *Attis*, *Adonis*, and all the mangled, the crucified, and the risen gods of the world. The Egyptians celebrated their festival of the Resurrection every year; it was called the feast of *Ptah-Sekari-Osiris*, and was held in the month of *Choiak*. This rite is otherwise known as the 'erection of the *Tat-pillar*.' The god *Osiris*, killed a few days before, rose again in full strength and vigor; cut into pieces, he was believed to be reconstituted without a single bone of his body having been broken. The analogy with the Gospel-story is interesting.

Even among the old Scandinavians the resurrection of nature was personified as a goddess named *Ostara*. From there it is that the modern Christian festival derives its name; all the learned treatises and scholastic theories notwithstanding, we assert that the word *Easter* (the Anglo-Saxon *easter*, *eastran*, the German *Ostern*) does not come from the East, and is not so much akin to the Greek, or to the Latin *oriens*, *aurora*, according to the etymology of the German school, as to that goddess named *Ostara*; and also that the modern spring-festival is by no means the alleged Christian truth of which, according to a great scholar, "the heathen myths are dim presentiments and carnal anticipations," but on the contrary a plagiarism — name, rites, and all, from that heathen religious world.

Ostara was the symbol of the renewal of life in nature and was worshiped in early spring; the pagan Norsemen exchanged at that time colored eggs — which nowadays have become *Easter-eggs*. The *Egg* was the emblem of generative power, of birth and rebirth, cosmic as well as human. It was extant throughout antiquity. Eggs hung in the old Egyptian temples, and every one who has seen a Mohammedan mosque will testify to the presence in it of the same egg-symbols hanging over the walls or painted on them. Other religions and civilizations corroborate the same facts all over the world.

Such is the evidence advanced by the ancient world as to the antiquity of the celebration today called *Easter*. It testifies to the ingenuity with which the early Christian Church borrowed from the religions which preceded it. For what do we see today? In the Greek orthodox Church during the whole of *Good Friday*, an image of the dead *Christ* is exposed to view; it is covered with fervent kisses by the crowds; a melancholy service with monotonous dirges follows. Late at night the image is carried through the streets on a bier adorned with flowers. After the procession has returned to the church the service continues until midnight, at which hour the priest suddenly appears and announces to the mourning people the glad tidings that 'Christ is arisen,' to which the crowd replies: 'He is arisen indeed.' At once the whole city bursts into wild joy, with shrieks and shouts, followed by discharges of cannon and musketry

THE ORIGIN OF THE CHRISTIAN EASTER

and a general gorging with lamb and wine. This is the *Hilaria* of the modern generation.

Once we were traveling in Sicily in the spring. On the Friday before Easter in every commune a procession takes place; the image of the dead Christ is carried to burial; the rear of that procession is made up of boys and girls, representing saints, and carrying the emblems of Christ's Passion. As we entered Castranuovo, the Deposition from the Cross was taking place. It was performed by the priests; the coffin of the dead Christ was surrounded with Jews armed with swords; behind them walked the *Mater Dolorosa* herself. The emblems of the Crucifixion were periodically carried in front and behind the procession; the cortège slowly moved through the narrow streets of the little town, with hymns, lamentations, dirges, and weeping of women.

The same sight met us in Salaparuta: Calvary was erected in the Church; at the words *emisit spiritum* the figure symbolizing Christ on the cross was made to bow its head by means of machinery, while trumpets were sounded and guns fired. Then one could hear the strains of a funeral march. Christ was removed from the cross and put into a coffin; then followed the burial-ceremony performed in a fictitious sepulcher. But the greatest surprise awaited us on Easter Saturday at about midnight: from the sepulcher arose Christ's image which was elevated to the altar by pulleys. The sight was as unexpected as terrifying for

those whose blind faith had not altogether killed their sense of proportion. No ancient religion ever attained to such a pantomime even in its most materialistic aspect.

The crucifixion of a god, his burial and resurrection, are seen thus to have been a tradition common to peoples and civilizations of ancient times, and the connexion which exists between the crucifixion on crosses or trees and the ultimate revival of the dead god has a deep esoteric meaning which Theosophy fully explains. The Christian festival of Easter is the latest heir of the ancient and archaic beliefs, traditions, and celebrations. Moreover, it is a distorted representation, devoid of the inner spirit which animated the ancient rites. Jesus is the most recent personification of the so-called Saviors. Let the reader remember Wittoba crucified in space, Marsyas, the Phrygian Silenus, tied to a pine-tree, Attis, Osiris, and others, even to the Scandinavian Odin who was called the Lord of the Gallows (Calvary, perchance), or the 'god of the hanged,' represented as sitting under a tree. He is said to have been sacrificed to himself, as we learn from the weird verse of *Havamal* (139 *et seq.*):

I know that I hung on a windy tree
For nine whole nights,
Wounded with the spear, dedicated to Odin,
Myself to myself.

Nor are these gods the only ones whose fate seems to have been connected with trees. In Greece the great goddess Artemis was hanged in effigy in her sacred grove of Condylea among

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

the Arcadian hills; she was called the 'Hanged One.'* The same legend was told of Hecate of Ephesus; of Asphalia in Phthia, probably a form of Artemis; in Rhodes the fair Helene was worshiped under the title of 'Helen of the Tree,' and many other gods and goddesses of the ancient as well as the new world were inshrined in the legendary frame of exoteric traditions hiding profound truths.

The festivities of Christmas adopted the ancient festival of Mithra — the Unconquered Sun — celebrated on the 25th of December at the winter solstice, and the Easter-celebration of the Christian world was settled upon the day of the death and resurrection of Adonis and Attis and all.

In early days the death and resurrection of Jesus was celebrated on the 25th of March without regard to the state of the moon, on which later Christianity has founded all her festivals and calendar reckonings. Ancient writers show to us that this was so. Unable to destroy the devotion of the ancients to their gods, unable to obliterate from their minds the images which haunted their lives generation after generation, unable to replace the old

*Pausanias, viii, 23, 6 *et seq.*; Clement, *Protrept.* ii, 38, p. 32. ed. Potter.

traditions by new ones, *which it had not*, the Christian Church resorted from time immemorial to the wise policy of adapting to the old festivals the ideas of the risen Christ. It has changed their names; it has poured new wine into very old bottles; and by so doing it has neither changed the meaning of the rites nor has it made them any more Christian. The Festival of St. George has replaced the ancient pagan Festival of the Parilia; the Feast of St. John has replaced the Midsummer festival of water; the Festival of the Assumption has superseded the Festival of Diana; the Feast of All-Souls has replaced an old heathen and universal celebration of the dead; the Nativity of Christ takes the place of the Nativity of the Sun; and Easter, the Jewish Passover — the *Pas'ha* of the Slavonic nations — replaced the rites of Adonis, Attis, and other gods.

Yet, in spite of the testimony of the ancient world, in spite of the mountain of traditions, rites, ceremonies, and beliefs professed and practised in antiquity, in spite of impartial scientific investigations, the pagan origin of Easter is silently ignored; its connexion with the 'heathen' world is denounced, and, *mirabile dictu*, the festival is declared to be a Christian one.



"By combining science with religion, the existence of God and immortality of man's spirit may be demonstrated like a problem of Euclid."

— H. P. BLAVATSKY, *Isis Unveiled*, I, p. vi

THE BEWITCHED MIRROR

PRINCE A. TZERETEF

(Reprinted from *The Theosophist*, June 1880, H. P. Blavatsky, Editor)

A FEW years ago I purchased at Moscow an old and long-deserted house. The whole building had to be repaired and almost rebuilt. Unwilling to travel from Himky, my summer residence, to town and back several times a week, I decided to superintend the work personally and to take up my abode on the premisses. As a result of this decision, a room was hastily prepared for me in the main building. It was in August; all my acquaintances and friends had left the city; nowhere to go, no one to talk with; it was the dullest period in my life.

Once — as I well remember, it was on the 27th of August — after passing the whole morning in the intellectual occupation of disputing with the carpenters, having rows with the masons, and debates with the furniture men, and thus spoiling several ounces of blood — a torture known but to Moscow proprietors — I was sulkily eating my dinner at the Gourinsk Inn, when — O joy! I met with two old and valued friends. I pounced upon them and would not let them go before they had accompanied me home, and taken a cup of tea with me. After talking over various subjects with more or less animated debate, the conversation chanced to turn upon Spiritualism. As a matter of course, none of us believed in spirits, every one of us hastening to bring forward the thread-

bare and commonplace arguments which usually serve on such occasions.

“Do you know, Yurey Ivanovich,” said to me one of my friends, “that I was actually assured the other day that there was nothing in the world more terrifying for a person than to stand alone, at midnight, before a mirror, and with two lighted candles in one’s hands, to thrice repeat loudly and slowly one’s own name, without dropping the eyes from the reflected image? I was told that it produced the most awful feeling of nervousness. Few men are capable of such a feat.”

“It’s all bosh,” remarked his companion, getting up to take his leave of me. “This superstition is of the same kind as that other one, of being unable to eat champagne out of a soup-plate with a large spoon, without perceiving the devil at the bottom of the plate. I tried it myself and nothing happened. However, you can make the mirror-experiment yourself. In your deserted and empty house, the thing must come out quite solemn. Well, goodbye; it is getting late, and our train leaves to-morrow at nine.”

They went away. My servant came to inquire whether I needed him for anything else; and, being answered in the negative, went off to bed at the other end of the large house, where he slept in some far-off hole. I was left alone.

I feel positively ashamed to confess

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

what happened after that — yet I must do so. How the idea of trying that experiment with the mirror could have entered into my head — the head of a respectable husband, father of a large family, and a Judge — I know not, but it did. It was like an obsession. I looked at my watch, it was a quarter to twelve — just the very time. Taking a lighted candle in each hand, I proceeded to the ball-room.

I must tell you that the whole width of my new house was occupied by a large and very long hall, lighted with windows at the two ends. It was just then under repairs. Along the walls there stood scaffoldings, and the place was full of lumber and rubbish. At one side an enormous glass door opened into the conservatory and garden; at the opposite one there was a gigantic looking-glass over the mantel-piece.

A better spot for the evocation of spirits could hardly be found. It is with difficulty that I can now describe or account for the state of my feelings, while I was passing along the deserted and gloomy passage leading to the ball-room. I had been so thoroughly annoyed during the whole day, so prosaically irritated, that my mental state could hardly be favorable to experiments of such a kind. I remember well that, upon pushing the heavy door open, my attention was drawn to the once elegant, but now very damaged, carving upon it, and that I was calculating how much money I would have to lay out for its thorough repair. I was calm, completely calm.

When I entered, I was caught in an

atmosphere of decay, dampness, white-wash, and fresh lumber. The air was heavy; I felt oppressed with heat, and yet chilly. The enormous windows, stripped of their blinds and curtains, stared in oblong black squares upon the naked walls; the autumnal rain (which I had even suspected while in my room) was drizzling against the window-panes; trembling at every gust of wind, the glass rattled in the old window-frames; while the draught, creeping through the crevices and key-holes, whined and sung, filling the old house with mournful cadences. The very sound of my footsteps seemed to awaken a strange and weird echo. I stopped — but the sound did not stop at once; it went on slowly dying away until it broke with a soft and wearisome sigh.

A strange sensation suddenly and irresistibly got hold of me. It was not fear — no, but a kind of sickly, melancholy feeling in the heart. Aroused by the silence reigning in this old uninhabited mansion and by the unusual surroundings, there now awoke at the bottom of my soul much of that long-forgotten past which had slumbered for so many years amid the wear and tear of commonplace daily life. Who knows whence and why these unbidden guests now came trooping before the eyes of memory, bringing forth a series of pictures with them; scenes of early childhood and youth; remembrances and sweet recollections, hopes unfulfilled; and grief—heavy sorrows which I had lived through and thought over?

All this arose at once and simulta-

THE BEWITCHED MIRROR

neously with its images of the past and the present; crowding in upon me at all sides, it confused and entangled the clearly defined pictures, and replaced them with vague recollections. But, as in our dreams, when the sorrow of the preceding day as well as the expected joy of the morrow never leave us completely free from their grip, so over all these dreamy recollections, whether joyful or melancholy, spread, like the cold and heavy mist of an autumnal rainy day, the cold and dull reality. A hopeless, an unaccountable weariness got hold of me, enveloping my whole being as in a ghostly shroud.

The sudden noise of a rat, disturbed in its nocturnal wanderings, put an abrupt stop to the wanderings of my imagination. I slowly approached the mirror, pulled off its brown cover, and shuddered at my own reflexion: a pale, sorrowful face, with dark flickering shadows upon it, looked at me with an unfamiliar expression in its eyes and upon its stern features. I could hardly realize it was my own.

The whole interior of the large hall with its lumber and scaffolding, its veiled statues, and the enormous garden door at the end of a double row of pillars, was reflected in the mirror. The weak, waving light of the two wax candles was hardly able to chase the darkness lying in thick black shadows under the lofty ceiling, upon which the heavy chandeliers with their innumerable crystal drops painted fantastic spots; from my legs extended two gigantic shadows, branching off upon the inlaid floor and merging into the

penumbra of the corners; at every movement these shadows ran swiftly right and left, now lengthening, at another moment shortening. Again I glanced at my watch; it wanted three minutes to midnight.

Placing a chair before the looking-glass, I laid my chronometer upon it, and with the two lighted candles clenched in my hands stood before the mirror, awaiting midnight. All was quiet and the silence around was profound. Naught was heard but the ticking of my watch, and the occasional fall of a rain-drop passing through the old leaky roof. And now the watch hands met; I straightened myself up; and, firmly looking upon my own countenance in the mirror, pronounced slowly, loudly and distinctly, "Y-u-r-ey I-va-no-vich Ta-ni-shef!"

If I had failed before to recognise my own face, that time I was utterly unable to recognise my own voice! It was as if the sounds reached me from far, far off; as if the voice of another somebody had called me. I went on staring at myself, though never taking my eyes from the face. The reflexion had become paler still, the eyes seemed immeasurably enlarged and the candles trembled violently in *its* hands. All was quiet; only my two shadows began moving swifter than ever; they joined each other, then separated again, and all at once began rapidly growing, elongating themselves, moving on higher and higher. They slipped along the veiled statues, flung their clear-cut, black patches upon the white walls, climbed along the pillars, sepa-

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

rated upon the ceiling and began approaching nearer and nearer.

"Yu-rey I-vano-vich Tanishef!" I slowly pronounced again my name; and this once, my voice resounded in the old hall more muffled than ever. There was in it something like a note of sorrow, reproach, and warning. No, this voice, so soft, with tones in it so broken, was *not my voice!*

It was the familiar voice of some one I knew well, who was near and dear to me. I heard it more than once, whether in my dreams or waking hours. . . . It had hardly died away, when a window-pane, jingling and tinkling under a new gust of wind, suddenly burst. It was as if a harp-chord had broken; its pure, metallic ring filled the room, and was caught up by the wind which began its long and lugubrious dirge, a song of awe and sorrow. Unable to resist the first impulse, I took my eyes for one instant from the mirror, and was going to turn abruptly round, when suddenly recollecting that I had to keep my eyes fixed upon it all the time I looked again, and — remained rooted to the spot with horror.

I found myself no more in the looking-glass! No; I was not asleep, neither was I insane; I recognised every smallest object around me: there was the chair with my watch upon it; and I saw distinctly in the mirror every part of the room reflected; the scaffolding and statues, and the drop-lights were there, all of them as they were before. But my shadow had also disappeared, and I vainly searched for it upon the inlaid floor. The room was

empty; it had lost its only tenant. I — I myself had gone, and was there no more!

An inexpressible, wild terror got hold of me. Never, in the range of the experience of my whole life, had I experienced anything approaching this feeling. It seemed to me as if I were living over this same event for a second time; that all this had happened to me before, on the same spot, illuminated by that same flickering light, in this same identical, heavy, gloomy silence — that I had experienced all this, and had waited here before now, feeling that something was going to happen, that it noiselessly approached, that invisible and inaudible, it is already near the door, that this empty ball-room is a—stage, whose curtain is slowly rolling up, and that one second more, one more effort, but to pronounce once more my name — only once — and that door will noiselessly open.

The name, the name, I have to pronounce it for the third and last time — I repeated over and over to myself mentally, trying to summon up my courage and collect my thoughts. But all my will-power had gone. I felt like one petrified, I was no longer my own self, but *a part* of something else; I could not and did not think; I only instinctively felt that I was being irresistibly drawn into a vortex of fatal events, and went on staring like a maniac into the mirror, in which I saw the empty hall with everything in it, but — myself!

With a desperate, superhuman effort, I shook off that state of paralysis

and began to utter my name for the third time: "Yur-ey Ivano-vich Ta . . . !" but my voice broke down, and my tongue clave to the roof of my mouth, at the shrill, trembling, extraordinary tones which made the whole house vibrate with echoes in the midst of this ominous silence. The wind howled and moaned, the doors and windows violently trembled, as the knob of the entrance door slowly but audibly and distinctly turned. Uttering a shriek of terror, I threw down both the lights and pressing my head between my palms, rushed out of the room like a madman.

What happened after that I know not. I came to my senses only in the

morning, when I found myself in bed, in my own room, and with a dim mist working in my brain. Gradually I recalled all the incidents of the preceding night, and was just going to decide in my own thoughts that the whole was but a dream, when my servant handed me, with a look of blank amazement, my watch and the two candlesticks that the workmen had just found before the uncovered mirror in the ball-room.

I have narrated a FACT: though to explain it is more than I could undertake. One thing I know well, I will evoke myself before a looking-glass no more, and strongly advise others never to attempt the experiment.

IS MATTER CONSCIOUS?

T. HENRY, M. A.

IN our comfortable theories of the universe we usually forget some things which are quite unexplainable by those theories, but which are so familiar that they do not arrest our attention. One of these is instinct in animals. What explanation have we of this marvelous faculty?

Animals have not our reasoning mind, yet some intelligence enables them to do all that is necessary, often showing itself in a wonderful way, such as the building of clever nests by birds, and especially in the many marvelous things which insects do. Further, animals frequently take precautions a long while ahead, as in the matter of growing extra fur when there is going to be a cold winter, or building higher

up to escape a coming flood. In such cases their intelligence is superior to our own; for which one of us has sense enough to avoid irrigating the day before a heavy rain? My father told me, when I was a child, that men have intellect and animals have instinct; and, beyond implying that such was the ordinance of the Creator, he let it go at that. I acquired a new definition, but nothing else.

What other explanations are there? As to the atomo-mechanical theory of the universe, or materialism as it is sometimes called, that cannot give an explanation worth a row of pins; both this theory and the theory of an almighty Creator do no more than assert the fact and assign its cause to

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

some inscrutable power, either a divine will outside Nature or some equally mysterious power within Nature.

Sometimes our difficulties are created by ourselves. Is it possible that in this case we have first asserted that animals have not intelligence, and then proceeded to try to explain why they have? The natural inference from the facts would seem to be that animals have intelligence, but that it is of a different kind from ours; and that it is sometimes superior to ours, and sometimes inferior, and on the whole inferior. Very much like comparing the powers of a knight and a queen in chess.

A very good way of learning about a particular thing is to take our eyes off it and cast them around; to enlarge the compass of our view, in fact. Let us therefore look away from the animal kingdom for a moment and consider the other kingdoms. What about the plants? Shall we again begin by asserting that they have no intelligence, and then trying to explain why they behave like intelligent beings? Each plant has intelligence enough to carry out its life in every detail, and that is saying a great deal. If it is preferred to give some explanation of the behavior of plants other than that they are intelligent, we make no objection; only we hope people will not ask us to explain their own theories to them. If it be said that there are forces latent in matter, such as chemical affinity, attraction, and the like, we say that this is merely dodging the issue; for such forces, whatever they may be sup-

posed to be, amount in the long run simply to intelligence and nothing else. We cannot get away from the fact that plants behave intelligently and know exactly what to do. They have intelligence, but it is of a different grade and kind from ours.

Next take the mineral kingdom. How shall we explain the behavior of chemicals in a test tube, the phenomena of heat or light or electricity? Again we must either posit intelligence, of a kind, or fall back on a substitute, an alias, a makeshift. We vote for intelligence, but leave the field open for those who prefer affinity or attraction or gravitation or inertia. Maybe the so-called inorganic world is not run by intelligence but by the law of thermodynamics and entropy; and maybe the spirit that actuates man in all his achievements is simply his behavior and nothing else. Or, perhaps a locomotive is impelled by its own motion and not by its steam. In short, it matters not how many terms we may invent to describe results or proximate causes, the final conclusion must be that intelligence reigns even in the 'inorganic' world. The only alternative to this conclusion is that chaos and haphazard rule. Take your choice.

Thus there is intelligence everywhere; but it would be a very singular circumstance if it was all just like our own. And it would be very foolish to argue that any intelligence which is not just like our own is not intelligence at all. Intelligence produces order and achieves orderly results. If there is nothing else besides intelligence which

does this, then it follows logically that what produces orderly results is intelligence. We leave the middle term open for consideration: what else can you name that produces orderly results? The laws of Nature? But are these edicts, and, if so, whose edicts? Or are they merely formulations of what happens, without an explanation of why it happens?

The Universe is composed of intelligent beings of many grades and kinds. Some of them have intelligence enough to repeat the one thing they have learned. This is called habit. The 'laws of Nature' are largely of this kind. In the behavior of the kingdoms below man there is more of habit than with him. But even with man there is much habit. The so-called unconscious or automatic functions of our organism are carried on to a great extent in this way; but we also have a higher grade of intelligence which can interfere and modify these habitual actions of our mechanism.

The universal mind operates everywhere, but in the kingdoms below man there is no intermediate self-conscious mind between the universal mind and the organism through which it is acting. Therefore the animals follow out the dictates of the universal intelligence blindly and act from impulses which they do not understand or reason about. Such is 'instinct.' Man, as we have said, has also much in him that is instinctual, and many of his acts are carried out in this way. In man the lower kingdoms are summed up. But at the same time man has the

self-conscious purposive mind, which enables him to contemplate and reason about many of the things he does.

These remarks are intended to be merely a rough outline and introductory; but the subject can be made much clearer by a further study of the Theosophical teachings, especially those concerned with the numerous classes of 'monads' or living spirit-souls which are the intelligent operative forces in all organisms, whether human, animal, plant, mineral, or what not. The Universe is in short an assemblage of living conscious souls or beings. Science has until recently studied merely some of the effects produced by the operation of these living souls; but of late science itself has been conducting us towards a readier understanding of the universal sentience of nature. For, in sounding the depths of the physical universe, science can nowhere discover a perpetual and indestructible physical matter, but finds that all is energy, fire, electricity. It is even being suggested in some scientific quarters that these minute particles of energy may be endowed with free will; for it has been found that, while the average behavior of such particles in the mass can be calculated, according to the principles of probability, there is no way of finding out what a particular particle at a particular time may do. Thus, unable to see anything which actuates the particle, we are left to choose between the alternatives that it is directed by chance or that it is following the direction of some intelligence. But the

THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

former alternative is no explanation.

This question of the sentience of Nature is of far more than mere speculative interest, since it cannot fail profoundly to alter our way of regarding many things. Many problems which have perplexed philosophy, religion, and science, have proved insoluble because they were founded on erroneous presuppositions: they were founded on the belief that the material universe is separate from the Power and Intelligence supposed to direct it. Thus we have entertained the notion of a passive universe, with a Deity outside of it; and have perplexed ourselves with trying to conceive the relation between the Deity and his universe. We have had to invent a second Deity, called 'Nature,' whose attributes are very vague; and science has created a large number of secondary gods under such names as 'affinity' and 'attraction' and 'fortuity,' in order to explain the manifestations of life in that which had been presupposed to be dead.

But now, instead of saying that a

tree is dead matter actuated by a mysterious vital principle, or by equally mysterious chemical and physical forces, we may regard the tree as a living being, one of the hosts of souls, living out its cycle in the universal drama of evolution; a younger brother of our family, so to speak. And it is definitely a part of the Theosophical teachings that those monads which now are passing through that stage of evolution known as the animal state, will, in a remote future cycle, find themselves passing through the human stage; even as those which now are in the human stage have, at times in the far past, passed through all the lower and precedent stages.

The Theosophical teachings are a master-key which co-ordinates all kinds of knowledge; and, so much has the world progressed since Theosophy was first promulgated in this age, that many teachings which then seemed unwelcome and incredible are now found to be the only possible interpretation of problems.

Theosophical University Meteorological Station

Point Loma, California

Summary for the month of March, 1930

TEMPERATURE		SUNSHINE	
Mean highest	65.87		
Mean lowest	52.26	Number hours actual	251.00
Mean	59.17	Number hours possible	372.00
Highest	79.00	Percentage of possible	67.63
Lowest	45.00	Average hours per day	6.95
Greatest daily range	24.00		
Least daily range	5.00	WIND	
		Movement in miles	3592.00
		Average hourly velocity	4.83
		Maximum 5-min. velocity	25.00
PRECIPITATION			
Inches for month	3.81		
Total from July 1, 1929	9.19		