



371

O my Divinity! thou dost blend with the earth and fashion for thyself Temples of mighty power.  
O my Divinity! thou livest in the heart-life of all things and dost radiate a Golden Light that shineth forever and doth illumine even the darkest corners of the earth.

O my Divinity! blend thou with me that from the corruptible I may become Incorruptible; that from imperfection I may become Perfection; that from darkness I may go forth in Light. — *Katherine Tingley*

# THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

G. DE PURUCKER, EDITOR

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## THEOSOPHY, THE MOTHER OF RELIGIONS, PHILOSOPHIES, AND SCIENCES

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

LIVING MEN AND DEAD MEN

**F**RRIENDS: I am going to talk to you about 'Living Men and Dead Men.' I have been speaking to you on this subject for two Sundays last past; and I have told you as a first matter of information with regard to the Theosophical teaching on these points, that there are no 'dead men' — that this phrase involves a contradiction in terms as well as in sense. There are living men on earth of course — the human host is composed of living human beings; but 'dead men' are non-existent. No religion, no philosophy, no science anywhere at any time has ever spoken of such entities as 'dead men.' This may seem a strange speech to some of you; but it will not so

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[Stenographic report of the twenty-second 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 July 15, 1928, and broadcast, by remote control, over Station KFSD San Diego—680-440.9]

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

seem if you think a moment. If it be supposed that the human soul, so-called, lives on after the dissolution of the physical body as a man, even then, according to that theory, is it 'dead'?

But we Theosophists do not say so much as this, or so little as this. We deny that this formerly popular belief is a fact. What is the human soul? We say that it is the vehicle of the human spirit, its garment, through which the human spirit works and manifests itself, 'stepping down,' as it were, the spiritual fire and life of the Spiritual Monad, so that these may manifest on our own plane of physical matter. You know that our teaching is that the human being is a composite entity, that is to say, composed of elements or principles, only one of them visible to physical senses on this our physical earth — the human body; and that the others are invisible because they do not belong or live on this our physical plane, they do not work here, they have no home here. They are native to other spheres, other planes of life; they dwell in other "mansions" of the "Heavenly Father," as the Christian New Testament has it. Now, the Theosophist would not use these words or put the case after that fashion; but I quote it here because it illustrates somewhat the idea that I have in mind and because it is familiar to you.

The human soul exists during the life of the body as a garment of the spirit, as I have said; but when death supervenes to the physical body it supervenes not as the cause, introducing thereafter the dissolution of the invisible principles; the physical body dies or dissolves into its component elements because the invisible principles themselves, which are the inner energies — the inner life, collectively speaking, of the man — have already begun to fall apart or disintegrate, and the body naturally follows suit. We are not here speaking of cases of sudden death, or of mortal accidents, or of suicides, for these three classes fall into a group by themselves and do not, as a matter of fact, come under the general operation of natural dissolution belonging to the sub-theme we are discussing today; and I merely mention them here in passing in order not to leave even exceptional cases unmentioned.

The human soul, then, is the human nature — in other words, the man of this earth — existent during life; and its function is the stepping down of the life and fire of the inner spirit — of what we Theosophists call the Monad. But very shortly after death the soul in its turn likewise disintegrates; because that soul is a composite

thing also; it is a garment of the Spiritual Monad and is formed of life-atoms which fundamentally are all energy; but nevertheless the soul is a composite thing from the very fact of being formed of these life-atoms, and therefore is subject to dissolution, to 'death,' so-called, even as during the course of previous time it had had birth or composition. The manner of this birth or composition or gathering together of life-atoms, I spoke of in the lecture last Sunday.

But the Monad, our essential Self, the real part of us, the spiritual fire within us, so to say, is non-composite; it is changeless and deathless during our manvantaric or great evolutionary period, because it is pure energy and of the finest and highest kind. What then is this Monad, this essential Self of us? It is a consciousness-center, a focus of consciousness, a spiritual sun, as it were, at the root of our being, constantly, continuously, incessantly, always, from beginning to ending of our great manvantaric period, pouring forth streams of life and intelligence, which are the offspring or the children, so to say, of consciousness. It is therefore what is popularly called eternal, immortal, and tastes never of death, because it is homogeneous, to use a philosophical term: that is, it is not a compounded thing, not builded up of other component elements. Thus then, the body is mortal, the Monad is immortal, but between them is this intermediate nature popularly called the 'soul' during life on earth; and this intermediate nature, in the vast majority of human beings, is only conditionally immortal, or to put it more plainly, averagely mortal. Therefore there are no such things as 'dead men.'

Now, on last Sunday and on the Sunday before that, I believe, we studied some very interesting aspects of what the Theosophical teachings state regarding the Monad and its workings and its journeyings, following the pathways of the Universe. Its home is in the spiritual side of that Universe. You will remember that it was pointed out on these occasions what the Theosophical teaching is regarding the destiny of the best and noblest and highest of the man that was, when death comes to the body and releases the superior parts of his constitution, for that is indeed what physical dissolution brings to pass — the release of the Monad from its links with the physical spheres when the golden chord of human life is snapped.

Man is a bundle or a sheaf of energies, which we Theosophists with more propriety call the 'principles' or 'elements' of his constitution, and these energies, according to Theosophy, are like-

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

wise substantial; and our ultra-modern science is coming round to this view very quickly nowadays. I mean the view that matter and force are fundamentally one thing. Energy and substance are one, one thing under two aspects: substance or matter being a concretion, a crystallization, an equilibrium, of energies, all balancing all, and each individual energy, as it were, being but one factor in the equation we call 'matter.'

When a man dies, when his principles fall apart, each one from the others, with the exception of the three highest, all that is best and noblest and highest of the man who has just closed his physical incarnation on our planet, Earth, is withdrawn, indrawn, into its Mother the Monad — or its Father, if you prefer the term — in other words, into its own essential Self, from which it had issued forth when it last came into physical incarnation and took up its last physical body in the womb. All the best and noblest of the man that was — not his human 'soul,' but everything that was of a spiritual nature in the man — is indrawn, withdrawn into the Monad. This best part of the man is a pure thing which is undiluted, uncompounded. It is, as it were, a ray which the Monad had sent forth from itself, thus furnishing the entity of the last incarnation. It is now withdrawn into its own native place in order to digest, so to say, to assimilate, the knowledge, the wisdom, the love, all the noblest and finest that have been garnered from the harvest of that past life. All this better part of the man, considered as an aggregate, we Theosophists call his Higher Ego, and this Higher Ego at physical death is withdrawn or indrawn into the Monad when dissolution separates the lower human principles; and there in the Monad this Higher Ego rests in unutterable peace and bliss for many hundreds of human years until it is sent forth again from the Father-Mother Monad, when the next incarnation ensues — in order to gain further experience on this earth, because that particular Higher Ego, that particular man, that particular human being, is, in a psychological sense, a child of Earth. In using this word 'Earth,' of course I do not mean the soil or anything so coarse as that, but I do mean the planet Earth considered as a cosmic entity.

The Monad, as I pointed out, I think, on last Sunday, is a particle of the finest form of energy that the Cosmos contains; in other words it is pure energy, which is equivalent to saying pure consciousness; but therefore, being energy, it is likewise substantial. It also is evol-

ing, growing greater as time passes, and is following its own pathway of evolution through the spheres, carrying its load of individual consciousnesses — each ray holding the various fruitage of each incarnation on earth or on other planets — as rays of itself. Furthermore it is carrying in itself equivalent consciousnesses derived from imbodiments, issuing forth a new Ego appropriate to each of its rays on each and all of the celestial spheres which the Monad encounters on its journey along the pathways of the Cosmos.

Friends, our teachings are sublime; but they are likewise very difficult to understand in their highest reaches, although the principles involved are always extremely simple. This is the reason for the difficulty that any Theosophical speaker has in his effort to set forth a popular explanation of them. In some ways they are so unusual to the thought of the twentieth century that not merely does the Theosophical lecturer have to describe and explain the terms he uses, but also, despite his best endeavors to be as simple and clear and plain as possible, he realizes that outside of the technical difficulties of explanation he has also the scientific and religious training of his hearers to consider, as well as his own shortcomings as a speaker. Therefore, while I do my best to simplify and clarify these sublime teachings of Theosophy, pray remember this, please: in our literature you may find full explanations of any idea or thought that I may utter and which may seem to you on first hearing it to be more or less obscure. My purpose in lecturing to you has a twofold object: first, to give you some idea of the nobler teachings which Theosophy contains; and, second, so to frame these lectures that they may ultimately be printed in book-form, and thus comprise a compendium of Theosophical thought for students, whether in our Society or out of it.

This Monad, during the course of its cosmic journeyings, after leaving our planet, Terra, goes to other planets, following what we call the pathways of the *Planetary Round*. As a matter of fact we have two kinds of Rounds: one outer, and one inner. The inner Rounds concern our planet alone, considered as a septenary entity having its own seven principles of matter, a subject which you may find very clearly set forth in our books. The pathway of the outer Rounds runs through what the ancients called the Seven Sacred Planets, and during the course of each one of these outer Rounds, the Monad sojourns for a time in each one of those planets, even as it does in our planet, Earth. As pointed out to you on last Sunday,

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

these seven planets are Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, Mercury, and two others which for the present I shall leave unnamed. In each of these planets it gains experiences of life and of matter which no other home could give it.

You see, according to Theosophy, the Universe is one vast organism; everything is connected with everything else; all are united by one common life, which is the general cosmic energy. It is impossible for any particular entity, any consciousness-center, in other words, any Monad, to remain in one place always. Such an idea is offensive to our intellectual sense of harmony and proportion, and still more deeply offends our instincts of universality. Life is movement; life is energy; and all things are alive! There is no death, unless, indeed, we restrict that word to mean exactly what the Theosophist considers it to be — a dissolution or separating of component parts. That is all there is to 'death.'

Man, essential man, is an energy, and in its highest monadic form that energy is homogeneous, therefore, it follows, having no component parts. That essential energy is the Monad, and for the foregoing reason it is eternal. It goes from individualized life to individualized life, from sphere to sphere, following the pathway of cosmical evolution along the lines which I pointed out to you on last Sunday. How can any thinking, conscious entity obtain all the experience that the infinite Cosmos could give it by living one short physical life on this earth, on one little spot in endless infinitude? Why, such a life would be as nothing! A mere fraction of what the Cosmos contains in the way of lessons for it to learn, and mysteries for it to solve, and growth for it to achieve, and evolution for it to build! Even our ultra-modern physical scientists tell us of the peregrinations of the atoms and of the so-called electrons and protons, of the atoms that come to us from the sun, and doubtless from the other planets; and also that this earth likewise is continuously sending such forth from itself into space — a modern discovery which very luminously illustrates the *Circulations of the Cosmos* as taught in Theosophy.

Is all this working of Nature haphazard, chance-work? Is there about it all no operative harmony, no sequences, no causal and effectual relations, but all just a 'happening so'? That idea is absurd and I do not believe in it. Such an idea seems to me like the incoherent raving of a lunatic. Things either are coherent or they are incoherent. They are either following the pathway of destiny or they are follow-

## RELIGIONS, PHILOSOPHIES, AND SCIENCES

ing haphazard, helter-skelter chance; and who can believe in the latter? We see it operative nowhere. We see, on the contrary, that all life, that every entity of the Universal Life, is but an individual link of a chain of causation — effects following causes unbreakably and inescapably from eternity to eternity. This is in part what the Theosophist means when he says that the Universe is one vast organism.

A man lives on earth, does certain acts, thinks certain thoughts, has certain feelings, follows certain ideas, commits certain 'sins,' as the word goes, or does certain noble things. In all of this he expends energy. What becomes of that energy? What becomes of him? Everything being connected together, every effect ineluctably following its cause — as the ancient Buddhist scriptures so nobly put it, "as the wheel follows the foot of the ox" — it becomes instantly perceptible to the thinking mind that the bundle or sheaf of forces which was man during life, after death must have — when these forces, when this bundle, is broken up and disjoined, each one such, I say, has — its own pathway to follow, along which pathway it is impelled or driven by the accumulated effectual energies acquired during the previous life. What is more logical than this idea? Each such energy, which is equivalent to saying each particle composing that bundle or sheath of energies, has working in it causes engendered during the former life and impelling the entity in a certain direction. This is the principal idea of the thought which I am trying to explain to you, and it is as simple as can be: the old may understand it; a child may understand it.

Friends, human beings in one way are very egoistic. They are perfectly willing to talk and think about what they call 'immortality' or 'survival' for human beings. But how about all the other entities and things which are popularly called non-human? Why should human beings be the only entities in the infinite Universe that have a possibility of being something more than physical bodies on earth? Why should human beings be the only ones supposed to have a 'soul' surviving the dissolution of the body or physical frame? We humans are not exceptions; in the multitudes of the hosts which infill the Cosmos, we are but one host thereof; and there are many other hosts, both above and superior, and below and inferior, to us in evolutionary advancement. We human beings compose the human host which this planet, Terra, gives human bodies to at this stage of evolution, and the essential Self in each one of us, in each entity, is the immortal Monad,

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

as I have already said; yet every other entity everywhere is, equally with ourselves, the manifestation of a Monad or Essential Self.

Just as our planet, Earth, provides proper bodies for our human host, so every other planet likewise brings forth its own hosts, which the Monad in all cases provides the Selves for, when that Monad in its cosmic journey reaches any such other planet. The entire purpose of life is growth, expansion, development. The garnering of experience, and self-expression of the faculties and powers of the Monad — these two factors compose the process of evolution. All the entities below us: beasts, vegetation, minerals, elementals; and the spiritual entities of many classes higher than we and which now occupy a high spiritual and intellectual and psychic position as compared with us — which high position we as a human host shall occupy in the aeons of the far-distant future, when we shall have evolved to their stature — all are evolving, and each entity in these different hosts is overshadowed by its own particular Monad and grows in progressive advancement as this Monad self-expresses itself through that entity.

A point to remember in this connexion is the following: Everything is connected with everything else; everything works through and for everything else; and this interlocking and interpenetrating series of hosts, which are simply endless in number, make up what the Theosophist calls the 'hierarchies of life.' There is the summit of the hierarchy, there is the lowest point of the hierarchy, and the intermediate planes between these two; and each such hierarchy is inseparably interlocked and interpenetrated by energy and vibration with every other similarly formed hierarchy. Take man's body as an illustration of what the Theosophist calls a microcosm, a little world, of the Great World or Macrocosm. Each in itself is a particular representative of what we mean by a hierarchy. The body is composed, as you know, of many billions of physical cells, each of which is composed of molecules, which in their turn are composed of atoms; and these atoms, as our ultra-modern scientists now say, equally with the Theosophists, in their turn are composite entities, and are composed of what are called negative and positive electrical charges, in other words, of electrons and protons.

I wonder how many men and women who read the modern, the ultra-modern, scientific books, have any idea how immense, how unthinkably great, is the number of these infinitesimal entities. Let



## RELIGIONS, PHILOSOPHIES, AND SCIENCES

me give you some idea of what one human body contains in the way of infinitesimal entities beneath the human entity in evolution, through which man's spirit and soul work, spiritually ensouling them, therefore; and yet remember that each one of these tiny entities, which in their aggregate compose man's body, has its own Monad. Or, more accurately, a Monad ensouls each one of such infinitesimal entities as the latter's own particular Essential Self.

C. B. Bazzoni, Professor of Experimental Physics in the University of Pennsylvania, in his book called *Kernels of the Universe*, pages 29-30, writes as follows:

It may help us to get a more definite idea of the immense number of molecules in a cubic inch of gas [he is speaking of ordinary air] if we suppose that we have them all enlarged to the size of baseballs and that we start 6000 people counting them, lifting them out one by one, each person taking one each second; and let us suppose that these people do not belong to any union and that they do not have to eat or sleep, so that they can keep counting 24 hours a day and 365 days a year, then we shall find that very nearly three hundred million years will pass before the job of counting the molecules from a single cubic inch of air can be completed.

The number of molecules, according to the above estimate, in one cubic inch equals approximately  $6 \times 10^{19}$ , that is, 60,000,000,000,000,000,000 — sixty quintillions of molecules.

So much for the number of molecules in a cubic inch; and molecules are relatively immense bodies as compared with the atoms which go to form the more complex bodies of physical matter. We are, at this stage as it were, but on the first fringe of infinitude. A British physical scientist in an English paper of date February 7th last (1928), Professor W. M. Thornton, in writing of electricity and of the atoms and the protons and the electrons, and all the rest of it, has the following to say:

There were nearly twenty-five billion electrons to the inch.

Let me interrupt a moment: according to the American method of numeration this would be twenty-five trillions.

Protons were still smaller but were 1850 times heavier than electrons.

I again interrupt a moment. I take it for granted, friends, that you all know that a proton is at the nucleus of the atom and existing at its center, forming alone, or in combination with other protons and electrons, the atomic sun, and that the other electrons of the

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

atom are, as it were, the atomic planets circling around this composite atomic center. The protons are all alike, and each one is a charge of positive electricity; and the electrons are all alike, and each one is a charge of negative electricity. Professor Thornton continues:

In order to make the electrons in a drop of water just visible to the naked eye it would be necessary to magnify it to a hundred times the volume of the earth, and yet if all the protons in the earth were laced together so that no hollow cavity existed, they could be packed into a handbag which would then weigh 6000 billion tons

— English numeration; and in American numeration it would be six quadrillion tons. Professor Thornton here is alluding to the fact that an atom, like our solar system, is in point of volume mostly vacancy or space, the protons and electrons of the atom, exactly like the sun and planets of the solar system, occupying a small part of the volume or bulk of the atom. This is the reason why the protons in the earth, although so immensely numerous, are still so incredibly small that if closely packed together they could be carried in a handbag. Professor Thornton continues:

The number of protons and electrons in even a small portion of matter, scarcely visible, were too vast to be grasped by the human mind, and were reckoned in thousands of quadrillions.

Professor Thornton is here using English numeration, and this, expressed in American, would have to be reckoned in octillions, in other words 10 raised to the 27th power,  $10^{27}$ , in other words again: 1 with 27 zeros following it! So many are the electrons and protons in a particle of physical matter so small as scarcely to be visible to the eye! Fancy, then, the countless hosts of infinitesimal protons and electrons that even one human body contains! And if you are of a speculative turn of mind, carry the thought farther and reflect that the human body is very small as compared with the volume of the earth, and how small is the earth as compared with our solar system, and it in its turn as compared with still larger spatial units. The mind reels and falls headlong in imagination in any attempt even to figure mathematically such incomputably large hosts.

Yet each one of these infinitesimals, according to our majestic Theosophical teachings, enshrines the energies and powers of a deathless consciousness-center, a Monad, insofar and inasmuch as the Monad is able to express itself in the sphere and on the plane of matter

## RELIGIONS. PHILOSOPHIES. AND SCIENCES

and energy where such a minute entity lives and moves and has its being. As these entities advance through evolution, through experience, the Monad can self-express itself more fully, and the range of such evolutionary development is limitless.

You see here, then, the origin of human consciousness and of the human intellect. We are far, far, far along the path as compared with these infinitesimal entities of which I have been speaking; and there are other beings far, far, far beyond us, of whom we, as it were, are a part of the physical vehicle through which that greater entity works, being to it pretty much what these atomic infinitesimal entities in the human body are to the human physical being.

Returning to the subject of physical death, you see now from what has preceded why things break up when dissolution ensues — because all corporeal entities are composite in form and have similar component parts and are therefore obviously not unitary entities. The body obviously is not immortal and therefore has no survival. How could it survive? The soul is similar to it in this respect, but is on its own inner plane, and, like the physical body, is also a composite thing built up of life-atoms, existent and living on the plane of the soul. The soul itself, therefore, is neither changeless nor immortal. During life it functions as the vehicle of its superior, the Monad, as a 'stepping-down' agency, to use a modern electrical term, of the otherwise too great and subtil energies of the Monad. It is a 'transformer'—if I use the popular term correctly, as I think I do, though I am not an electrician; it transforms, as it were, Monadic energy into what we may call the soul-energy of the man during his life; and this soul-energy is a human being.

Yes, friends, there is neither death *per se*, nor are there such entities as 'dead men.' The Monad, the Essential Self of us, our inmost focus of consciousness, our spiritual center, is by its nature deathless and changeless; for it is pure energy; it is pure spirit. But it is not the soul; it is not the man: the man, its child, is its product on this earth. Do you see, then, somewhat how these majestic laws of Nature work in these respects? Everything helps everything else everywhere. Everything is related to everything else. As said in the beginning of our study together this afternoon, the Universe is one vast organism, in which everything is intrinsically inseparable from the whole and from every other thing. But because it is an inseparable part of the whole it has everything in it that the Cosmos,

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

the universal whole, has, albeit all the energies and powers existent in the Universe are obviously not yet expressed in an unevolved part of the whole.

What further deduction are we compelled to draw from the preceding? First, this: the pathway of evolution is endless. It never had a beginning and it will never have an end. This is a matter of simple logic; for who knows of a beginning and who knows of any end? —“end and beginning are dreams.” It means that the entities following this path of evolution into the different mansions of the Universe do so along pathways trodden by the feet of those who have gone before. Man, while passing through our planet Terra, is but putting up at an inn, as it were, for a time; he lives here on earth; he gains experience in earth-life that only life on earth can give to him; and at death all the best of him is indrawn or withdrawn into his essential Self, the Monad, and thus he passes on along other pathways of the Cosmos to other planets, other spheres, visible and invisible.

What sublime thoughts Theosophy gives to the sincerely inquiring soul! I have been a student of Theosophy for many years; and sometimes when I read books or articles written by men who tell therein their views regarding what they call ‘survival after death’ or ‘immortality,’ my heart is filled with pity, because hungry hearts and eager intellects are wandering in the maze of speculation and theory. My heart is filled with pity, I say, because knowledge can be had, and Theosophy is it.

Theosophy is no invention. Nobody ‘discovered’ it. We Theosophists abhor that idea because it is false; it is a lie. Great Seers of the past and of the present, they whom we Theosophists call our Teachers, the Elder Brothers of the Race, the Mahâtman — *Mahâtman* is a Sanskrit word meaning ‘Great Self’— in other words highly evolved men, who have withdrawn from the world in order to pursue uninterrupted and unhindered their sublime work, have penetrated into the deepest arcana of spirit and matter and have registered their knowledge for the benefit of their fellows. What these Great Seers have seen, that, in formulated teachings, is Theosophy. Further, Theosophy proves itself. You will never hear a true Theosophist say to you: “So-and-so discovered Theosophy; but you must have faith in order to understand it. Faith is a beautiful and lovely and helpful thing, and you must have faith to believe what Theosophy tells you.”

## RELIGIONS, PHILOSOPHIES, AND SCIENCES

Nay, nay! The Theosophist will tell you the facts in the case. He will tell you, just as I have told you today and often before, that you cannot understand anything without studying it, without looking into it sincerely; and when you do look into it, you will be mentally charmed; you will be delighted by the self-persuasiveness of the chain of reasoning and the logical links which you will find in your study, relating every part to every other part. You will find that you cannot understand one Theosophical doctrine without understanding somewhat of others, because each explains all and all each. You will discover further that there is vastly more to be known than what we have publicly given out, as must necessarily be the case with so profound and all-inclusive a system of religion-philosophy-science as Theosophy is. You will feel like a student whose heart is filled with lofty ideals, one who loves some particular branch of human knowledge, entering into some temple lecture-hall, hearing there for the first time certain noble thoughts expressed and explained, and knowing that beyond what the student there then learns there is an endless realm of knowledge for him to explore. This realm is what you may find in Theosophy. Theosophy is, in short, the formulation of the truths of Nature, as illustrated and explained by the Great Sages of whom I have just spoken.

The Founder of the Theosophical Movement in modern times — H. P. Blavatsky — no more ‘invented’ Theosophy than she — what may I say? — invented the rules of mathematics, than she invented mathematical relations and quantities. She was the Messenger, the Mouthpiece, of Those who sent her. But for all that, and although it is true, let us remember in justice to that great heart and equally great mind, that she herself stood high in the ranks of the lofty. None would have been sent out by the Lodge, none could have been sent out, without having attained some high stage of spiritual and intellectual evolutionary growth and power. She sowed in the world the seeds of her work; she formed the Theosophical Society; and in so doing she went against all religious and philosophical and scientific conventions of the time: sole, single-handed, single-brained, that noble-hearted woman stood, a genius against the world; and she prevailed — something that most men could not have done — that none could have accomplished except one who was at least her equal.

Today you will find Theosophical doctrines talked of everywhere, written about and discussed everywhere, made the subject

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

of plots of plays and of romances, even put upon the screen in the cinematographic theaters. Today Reincarnation is a common word, and everyone knows something of Karman — the law of Cause and Effect or, more accurately, the Doctrine of Consequences; everyone has heard somewhat of the Great Sages of whom I have spoken; and many millions know at least somewhat of others of our Theosophical doctrines. Yes, H. P. Blavatsky came and went and wrought a wonder in the world — the world of human thinking and of human feeling, and this all Messengers from the Lodge, as we Theosophists put it, achieve. At times the world needs a spiritual awakening; this occurs when currents from the spirit, as it were, are running low; and then the Messenger comes forth from this Lodge and strikes the keynote of the New Age. I am happy, Friends, to be able to render this tribute to one whom I so deeply revere.

You will remember what Carlyle had to say about noble characters. I will read to you, in conclusion of our study this afternoon, a quotation from him. In his *History of Frederick the Great*, he says:

For there was need once more of a Divine Revelation to the torpid, frivolous children of men, if they were not to sink altogether into the ape condition.

— I interrupt a moment, Friends. Please remember that Mr. Carlyle wrote this work of his at a time when Darwin had already issued his first book, *Concerning the Origin of Species*, and despite himself it is evident that Carlyle's great mind believed to some extent that men are the evolved progeny of the ape. I do not quote his words here in order to give you that impression, for Theosophy teaches Darwinism in no form whatsoever; that theory is an old-fashioned scientific theory that the Theosophist does not accept. I continue the quotation:

And in that whirlwind of the Universe [the French Revolution] — lights obliterated, and the torn wrecks of Earth and Hell hurled aloft into the Empyrean; black whirlwind, which made even apes serious, and drove most of them mad,— there was, to men, a voice audible: a voice from the heart of things once more, as if to say: "Lying is not permitted in this Universe. The wages of lying, you behold, are death. Lying means damnation in this Universe; and Beelzebub, never so elaborately decked in crowns and mitres, is *NOT* God!" This was a revelation truly to be named of the Eternal, in our poor Eighteenth Century; and has greatly altered the complexion of said Century to the Historian ever since.

Thus far Carlyle; and I will say, in taking leave of you this

## THE H. P. BLAVATSKY CENTENNIAL

afternoon, Friends, that the historian of the future will have much to say about that great-hearted Messenger, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, who did what no one in the annals of history has ever succeeded in doing in equal time. Hail to her, the noblest woman of her age!

## THE H. P. BLAVATSKY CENTENNIAL

KENNETH MORRIS, D. LITT.

An Address delivered on the occasion of the H. P. Blavatsky Centennial held on August 11th in Wales

**T**HERE are two most fitting ways in which we can celebrate the Centennial of the birth of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky. One of them is by doing what we are doing this evening: by joining forces, by working together; by asserting thus before the world that Theosophists do believe in Brotherhood; that the Brotherhood they believe in is not a mere theory or an ideal to be attained in some distant age when enough men, each traveling his own and lonely path, shall have arrived at a height of self-discipline that will enable them to enter the portals of their own divine selves and so attain knowledge of their unity with all life; but a reality here and now; a thing to work for and sacrifice for *here and now*.

For remember, there are two Streams of Evolution: what may be called the Cosmic Stream, and what may be called the Buddhist Stream. Along the former the great host of souls, humanity, flows along infinitely slowly towards perfection, passing on the way by millions of ages of experience; by disasters and cataclysms and heart-breakings, and the ruin and death of thousands of souls. Along its course the ill commissions and omissions of countless million individuals, through countless million days and years, gather and gather and pile up as terrible Karman; until, periodically, the stream must flow through ravines and whirlpools of horror and agony; nations and populations must be blotted out, starved, massacred, tormented; heroes must be crucified, burned, buried alive, before the waters can flow on smoothly and slowly through quiet centuries again. And out of all this quiet or frightful experience, the host of souls gains a little, is enriched and deepened a little, comes a little — alas, how infinitely little! nearer to the godhood which is the goal of Time.

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

On this stream, periodically, tremendous avenging beings are thrown up: the Caesars, Attilas, Jenghizes and Timurs of history, to wipe out with their cruelties the slowly-accumulated cruelties of the run of men through centuries passed; and to create by their cruelties new sufferings for themselves and for humanity in centuries to come. On this stream rise the statesmen who potter and tinker with things, and are impotent to bring peace in our time; the nations that play for selfishness, and thwart the efforts of nations for good. Regarding the flow of this cosmic stream one would say, What room is there for hope, and wherein does humanity improve? Noble civilizations grow up through ages, and then, when beauty is about to be attained, when peace is near its establishment — comes the blind Fury with the abhorred shears, and slits the glittering life: come the world-shaking barbarians murdering wholesale, and smash it all; and painfully, in some other quarter of the globe, the whole business begins again. What room is there for hope? Millions of ages must pass before mankind is barely decent, one would say.

And then there is the other, the Buddhic Stream of Evolution. From the heights the Lords of Light, the Dhyân-Chohans, call to the elect of mankind, Come ye forth and be ye separate — from the Cosmic Stream! Ascend! Struggle upwards! Know no peace nor rest! Here are the heights to which you may climb! Here is the path, steep and thorny perchance to the personal self in each of you, which however leads to the very Heart of the Universe, to the only place where Peace is truly to be found! Ascend! Rise, struggle, be brave! Be not content with anything less than the Whole, than Godhood! Peace, comfort, quiet years, complacency for the personality: forsake these for the sake of humanity, and in the struggle you shall find real peace; in the effort, quietude; in the courage, complacency for the God within you! And by rising on this Buddhic Stream: by foregoing self — raising the self by the Self — *Âtmânam âtmanâ pasya* — you shall quicken the flow of the Cosmic Stream; it is the only way by which that flow may be quickened.

And on the Buddhic Stream rise those who call humanity to the heights: the Buddhas, the Christs, the Avatâras, the Blavatskys of time.

But on the other side are the dread forces presiding over dissolution. You can recognise their voice, which says, Take things easily! See, here is comfort, here is solace! Here is religion for an ano-



dyne, with its pomp and gorgeous ceremony, its ritual and incense. Here is home with its comfort and quietude; what can be better? Here is God, the great personal God who loves all his children, and will make things easy and happy for them in the end. Do not trouble about life and death; do not perturb your minds with thinking; trust in God, and his priests, and his church, and religion. Flow along with the Cosmic Stream that winds so gently and easily through the green, still meadows; there are so many flowers along the banks: meadowsweet and roses and honeysuckle! If there are ravines; if there are gorges and rapids and whirlpools, they shall not be for you; the all-merciful, all-loving personal Almighty will guard you from them, will give peace in your time if you pray to him! Be at peace; be at ease; take things easily; fight only, as it is natural to do, for yourself; strive only to get money, fame, and position for yourself!

But all this peace of the Cosmic Stream is made up of innumerable warfares, jarrings, limitations; and the nests of personal happiness we build for ourselves are torn and scattered by death; and the cry rings still from the heights, Come ye forth and be ye separate! Live and work for mankind! Bring light to the world! Teach Theosophy!

Curious, is it not, that all spiritual truth is expressible only in paradox? So here, be ye separate means, Be ye united. Separate from the Cosmic Stream, which is all separateness, that ye may be united in the Buddhic Stream, which is Brotherhood. For the Path to the Heart of the Universe, which is for each man his very self, says: I am the Way, the Truth and the Life — and it can only be traveled by oneself — is also the Path the gate to which is Brotherhood.

Hard is the road of the Pratyeka-Buddha, who “wanders alone like the rhinoceros”! Because it is a matter of exchanging the personal self, which is separate and limited and blind, for the Impersonal, the God-self, which dwells in the universe as a king in his own realm, as a star in the heavens, united by boundless love with the other stars its compeers. Gravitation — the law that keeps the heavenly bodies moving and singing in their courses — what is that? In human terms, it is Love: it is knowledge of the divinity of your compeers, be they stars or men; it is seeing things as they are, divine, and not being blinded by the veils of illusion and personality which

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

obscure the shining divinity at heart of them. So, if a man would be his God-self instead of his personal self, he must at the outset imitate his God-self, conform himself to its laws and methods, and let the light of the great Macrocosmic Love shine out from the sun within his heart: he must know the reality of Brotherhood, and practise it.

So the first demand of the Dhyân-Chohans, the Lords of the Buddhic Stream, the Buddhas, the Avatâras, those whose Messengers and Agents have been with us, whose Messenger and Agent Helena Petrovna Blavatsky was, is that we should unite; that we should practise Brotherhood; recognise the divinity in our compeers (or we can't recognise it within ourselves). And so it is perfectly obvious that in doing what we are trying to do tonight, in uniting together to celebrate this centennial of the birth of the Gods' Messenger, we are doing the will of the Lords of Light.

Let it be real, my brothers, let it be real! Let us get a vision out of it, of things that are to come! Let us expect the benediction of our Lords on the work we are trying to do: which is precisely, by spreading the Light of Theosophy, to lift civilization to grander heights than it has known, to avert disaster from the race.

For, as said above, there are two fitting ways in which the Centennial of H. P. Blavatsky may be celebrated; and the second of them is, by spreading Theosophy. Let none say, The time is not ripe for it; for the time is ripe, and rotten ripe. There is such a thing as leaving things until too late.

For consider: there are certain pernicious ideas inbred into the blood and bones of our modern western humanity; certain knowledge, as necessary to the healthy normal man as sunlight, as air to breathe and food to eat, which the West has been deprived of for nineteen centuries; and this positive poison, and this lack, have almost twisted us from our humanity; have made us pile up a Karman that is bound, in falling, to destroy us, unless we do something to remedy things. For nineteen hundred years western man has been taught that he is not responsible for his thoughts and actions. He has been taught that there is a power without, outside of, himself, which can save him from the consequences of his behavior. He has been bred up in Personal-Godism; which is the most dangerous, the most insidious, of mental poisons. Whatever he does — so he has been taught — there is this Personal Omnipotence that can, if flat-

## THE H. P. BLAVATSKY CENTENNIAL

tered and placated, rob the cause of its effect; as if the two were not part and parcel of the same thing: as if you could rob the color red of its redness, a square of its squareness, or two plus two of its quality of being four. The ultimate direction of his life, he has been made to believe, is not within himself and in his control; but in the hands of someone, a personality like himself, whose dwelling is far beyond the sky.

You can see how the idea arose. The Roman civilization, in its youth and lustful prime, having lost sight of the Truths of Life, had sinned to the top of its bent. It was, in its decline, like an old *roué* who has wasted his substance, the substance of his being, his life and not his wealth, on riotous living; and finds himself now a prey to loathsome disease, without will or courage or wholesomeness of any kind. Racked by his pains, he turns where he can for hope . . . and is told that there is a way out for him; that without exercise of his will he may have all the past wiped out, suffer no longer, go to a luxurious, selfish heaven when he dies; and all by believing in something — by crying in his misery to the extra-cosmic Personality, Lord, I believe! It was a mighty comfortable doctrine for that wasted old *roué*, Roman civilization, who needed comfort sorely, and had sinned, as they call it — wallowed in the mire of his lusts till he could no longer find the least ray of comfort, help or hope within himself; and so, when he was fortunately dead and buried, and in due time a young and lusty civilization had risen in his stead, this latter found himself the inheritor of the beliefs the old *roué* had found so comforting; and found himself from the first hopelessly handicapped by the poison of them running in his spiritual veins. So he has been turning his effort and his energies outward; into building for himself fortunes, empires, homes, and what not; he has been leaving all the inward work that a man must do if he is to be spiritually normal and healthy, to an imaginary personal God, an imaginary personal Jesus, or an imaginary personal Holy Ghost, to do for him. And they can't do it; for they don't exist. And so every life in Christendom since the year One has left behind it a load of unfinished business which has been piling up and piling up and piling; now and again an avalanche has come rumbling down from that super-Himâlaya of piled-up Karman: a Thirty Years' War; a French Revolution; a Great War; a Bolshevik Revolution; but there the great mountain still is; these things have been but foretastes; the fall of it all is impending.

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

I mix my metaphors atrociously; but still hope to give you the picture. For all these centuries of poison, this soul-killing anodyne and deadly nepenthe of dogma, an antidote, a pure current from the Dhyân-Chohans, has to be put into the veins of the world. And that antidote, that pure current, is Theosophy; and we are called upon to do it. By whom are we called? By H. P. Blavatsky, primarily; by the two Masters who sent her to found the Theosophical Society; by the Lodge behind them; by hierarchy on hierarchy up to the Silent Watcher, up to the Gods, the Spiritual Powers who direct the Universe. Think of it a moment. They, those mighty ones, have neither feet nor hands, eyes nor speech here, but through us. Whoever joins The Theosophical Society enlists in their army, to do their work; takes the fate of the planet into his hands. If that fate is not to be temporary ruin — it is only we who can prevent it.

The time is not ripe, say you: the world is not ready for Theosophy? Ye Gods, what a thing to say! The world will never be ready until we make it ready. Think you that you or I would be ready for Theosophy, unless the devotion to Theosophy of our predecessors had made us so? Had so cleared the inner air, had sown such seeds of beauty and wisdom in the inner soil, that the gods within us were so far awakened to activity thereby? What is a Theosophical meeting for; what is the purpose of it? What do we do by holding such meetings? Why, it is to *make* the world ready for Theosophy. It is to liberate a force which will go out and appeal, all unseen, to the souls of men, which are always, remember, Theosophists already in a much higher sense than you and I, as personalities, can say we are Theosophists. Not ready for Theosophy! Why, there is no criminal, no prostitute in the slums of Cardiff here, but is the cross on which a Christ is crucified, the Caucasus on which a light-giver Prometheus is chained and vulture-torn! Not one of them, not one such Christ or Prometheus, but is waiting there expectant for the liberator, the thought to come to him which shall begin to set him free. And where is it to come from?

From us, my brothers; from this lodge-room and from our lodge-room in Fitzalan Road. I dream of what a Theosophical Meeting should and could be. There are, say, fifty members in the lodge that holds it. There are present, fifty members and some inquirers; there are always present fifty members until such time as the fifty-first has joined; then there are fifty-one. And not one of them, by

any imaginable chance, is so much as a second late in taking his seat. And not one of them ever comes with the idea, It's a good lecturer tonight: I am going to enjoy myself; not one of them with any idea but, I am going there tonight to do my bit in spreading the influence of Theosophy, to do my bit towards saving humanity. I am going with my will set and vibrant toward that end; the meeting is going to hum from first to last; I am going to make such an atmosphere there, that if a Master of Wisdom, with spiritual vision overlooking the world, should note our lodge-room tonight, he may say, It is a place where I can go for a moment, or send my thought for a moment, to bless the humanity of that locality withal.

Now if our two societies had but three or four lodges each whose members felt and behaved like that, I will tell you what would happen in this Wales of ours — not to look too far afield. A new class of Ego would come into incarnation here. Very soon something new would appear in education; and the common council schools, and the secondary schools, and the university, would be turning out, not one or two, not here and there, but plentifully, men of intellectual, moral and spiritual genius. Slums would disappear in our cities; prisons would disappear; capital punishment would be an old bad dream of the past. We should not have industrial troubles, but men would know that their labor was divine; that laboring, they were carrying on the work of evolution; that whatever material they touched, or they worked upon, they were putting the imprint of their human divinity on it, raising it in the standard of life.

Why are things ugly? why do we have ugly cities and districts, why do men permit such things? Because the inner air is all clouded up with the effluvia of our selfish and ugly thinking, so that we don't perceive the difference between hideousness and beauty. But if our eight Theosophical lodges were working in the way indicated above, that inner air would be cleaned and cleared; as a roomful of smoke may be cleaned and cleared by a draught of air blowing through it. The fog of the world would be cleared by the winds blowing from such Theosophical meetings: winds of love for humanity; and by love I mean, again, recognition of the inward reality of men, the ability to see the god within when you look into any human eyes. Because the thought in such Theosophical meetings would be Theosophical. It would not be playing with life, titivating the mind with a lot of curious and interesting nonsense; it would not be spin-

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

ning intellectual theories, weaving cobwebs in the mind; it would be concentrated on the aims and ends of Theosophy; it would be doing the Master's work, thinking thoughts that come from Them. There would be nobody in such lodges who would think, I do not matter; nobody who could find any pleasure in the world so great as the pleasure of attending the Theosophical meetings and doing the Master's work.

Incidentally, they would be rewarded. The meetings would shine like suns to illumine the week for them; they would go out and about their business daily, with a new mien and bearing; a light from their lodge and its meetings would shine from them so that the world would see it in their faces, and begin to wonder. They would carry the lodge with them wherever they went; to their offices or their work or their factories; the lodge at Park Place or Fitzalan Road — yes, but also, and more so, the Lodge at Śambhala, and the airs of the lofty Himālayas. They would never be alone, never lonely, because the Inner God would be their companion always.

And they would grow and grow in spiritual stature, individually and collectively. There would be perfect harmony in each lodge, and between all the lodges, and between both the societies; and why? Because there would be no possible clash of opinions or desires. Because in coming to the lodge-meetings each member would say, I am going up to the plane of the Soul now, where there are no opinions at all, but only the clear light of knowledge; my opinions inhere in my brain-mind, which is a relatively unimportant part of me; and I will leave it behind when I enter the lodge-room. Does the sun in heaven have opinions? Have the stars in their courses? No; giving out light, they have no time for them; and their light is knowledge, is love. I go to the lodge as a sun or a star might; which does not need to talk and argue in order to shine, to give out light, and wisdom, and love. Yet I will not be behind hand either with speech, if there is need of speech as means of giving out these things.

And how long do you think, if we each had three or four lodges of this type, we should have only three or four? I say, not a month; hardly a week. No member would go anywhere in the course of his daily duties but he would sow seeds of a new lodge where he went; he would make a Theosophist of anyone he talked to, and that without effort. Soon there would be no village in all these hills and valleys, but would have its lodge; and the lodge of greater membership than

## THE H. P. BLAVATSKY CENTENNIAL

any of the churches or chapels. And presently the hideous buildings would come down; and the lodge-houses we should build in every village and hamlet would be utterly beautiful: of an architecture to fit the surrounding mountains, and to look as if they had grown there, and were made by the architect of the mountains and trees: by Nature and the hierarchies that create.

And — there was a time when Wales handed a light she had to Ireland; and Ireland took it and increased it a hundredfold and did what she could to light Scotland, England, and even continental Europe with it. And there was a time when India handed a much greater light to China; and China took it and increased it marvelously, and lit her own home with it, and gave forth fruit a hundredfold, and lit Corea with it, and lit Japan with it, and lit Annam, Tonquin, Cochin China and the regions thereabout; and that is a very big world to light; and it was lighted by the marvelous genius that light from India kindled in China. And now H. P. Blavatsky has handed us a light: that same light that Bodhidharma brought from India to China. . . . And Wales has lain fallow these six centuries: that is to say, is just in the condition when seed sown brings forth staggering harvests. . . .

And now look back in history, will you, and think of the age of Louis Quatorze in France; of Elizabeth in England; of Lorenzo the Magnificent in Florence; of Augustus in Rome; of Pericles in Athens; and I tell you in all solemnity — because I can see it with my mind's eye — that had we lodges such as I have been speaking of, were we altogether faithful in paying back to H. P. Blavatsky and to the Masters who sent her the debt we owe them: I tell you we could bring in such an age in Wales as would make any of those golden ages look pale by comparison; because our Golden Age would be Theosophical; it would have the sun-glow of Theosophy pouring and pulsating through it; it would not be intellectually great alone, nor artistically great alone; but it would be also, what none of those were fully, spiritually great as well.

And it would not stop at Wales; it would illumine all the western world. Work for it, I say; keep it in mind; be ambitious on those lines! Theosophy quickens all the higher faculties of man; and when the Great Lodge interferes in the affairs of men, as it does when it sends one of its Messengers into the world, why, it is to turn the course of civilizations upward, to make beauty here upon this bank and shoal of time: to make the kingdom come, on earth as it is in heaven.

## MATHEMATICS AND THE UNIVERSE

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

ὁ θεὸς ἀεὶ γεωμετερεῖ. "God always geometrizes." — *Plato according to Plutarch*

**P**YTHAGOREAN and Platonic philosophy recognised mathematics as a key to the structure of the Universe. The ancient teachings, of which these philosophies and present-day Theosophy are alike representatives, show the Universe to be uniform throughout, and not separated into living beings and dead matter. Now it is perfectly obvious to students of natural science that mathematics underlies the structure of the physical universe which they study. The logical conclusion is that mathematics also underlies the Universe in all its other aspects.

Yet, in attempting to interpret the Universe by a mathematical key, it is evident that many people do not get any deeper into mathematics than the rules of simple arithmetic. The disadvantage of this is, that when they find these simple rules do not apply, they are apt to fancy they have found an inconsistency, for which the teacher may have to shoulder the blame. But all that is really needed is a somewhat deeper study of mathematics, or at least a somewhat fuller appreciation of it. We may make this point clearer by an illustration. Suppose there are seven divisions, each of them subdivided into seven smaller divisions. By simple arithmetic the total number of these subdivisions should be forty-nine. But the teacher declares that it is not forty-nine — it is some other number — whereupon there is puzzlement and perhaps the imputation of inconsistency. Yet, for an explanation, we need look no farther than elementary geometry. A geometrical cube has six faces, and each of these six faces has four corners. Very well: four times six is twenty-four; the cube ought to have twenty four corners, but unfortunately has only eight. Who is to blame for this?

Or, for another illustration, take those hapless seven principles of man. Many people, in trying to picture to themselves this grouping, get no farther than something like seven dimes lying on a table. Or perhaps one should say seven counters of seven different colors, red, blue, green, etc. Some book arranges these counters in one order, another in another; and there is puzzlement as to which is the right



## MATHEMATICS AND THE UNIVERSE

order; whether the red should come before the blue, or the blue before the red, and so on. But Nature provides us with plenty of instances of much more elaborate groupings of seven. Thus, a triangle has one surface, three edges, and three points — seven in all. The geometrical solids and the star polygons furnish complex arrangements of points, lines, etc., capable of being catalogued in a variety of ways. Music shows us that any given note on the piano may be a tonic, a dominant, or any other of these degrees; and there is no inconsistency here. The question whether the number of principles is seven or five or four etc., presents no difficulty to the mathematician, who knows that its significance is not a matter of life and death and that a single cut-and-dried answer is neither necessary nor desirable. Thus an octahedron might be described as a group of eight or a group of six or a group of twelve, according to whether the faces, the points, or the edges were being considered. In trying to understand the seven principles of man, and their order and mutual relationships, we must be prepared to entertain a more elaborate picture than that of a simple collection of seven colored counters.

Nothing can be more certain than that higher mathematical principles enter into the calculation of cycles of time; indeed H. P. Blavatsky says that such periods are calculated by methods unknown at present even to modern mathematics. But modern mathematics will be enough for the present argument. It is neither certain, nor at all likely, that a given number of small cycles will yield a larger cycle: such is never the case with the cycles known to astronomy. To what purport then, do we complain, when we fail to make the numbers come out even by our rudimentary multiplications and additions?

To students of mathematics we would commend a study of the possible applications of incommensurable quantities, the numerous kinds of series, such as the geometrical series whose common factor is 1.618 . . . , and the other series of the same kind; the geometrical solids; and an indefinite number of other things in mathematics. There is a rich field for study here; only we warn that the student may find himself ridden by a mental old-man-of-the-sea analogous to crossword puzzles; also that he will neither find anyone else who cares a rap for his calculations, nor be able to make head or tail out of anyone else's calculations. *Crede experto.*

Neglect of these considerations renders us liable to two opposite

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

errors. The one has already been mentioned, as a needless bewilderment and tendency to impute blame for alleged inconsistency. The other error is a tendency to rush to the opposite extreme of thinking that everything is hopelessly incomprehensible and inconsistent. The fact is that things are neither inconsistent nor incomprehensible. The structure of the Universe is a supreme harmony — but not necessarily according to our puny notions. Let us put the blame in the right place and not measure our teachers by the scale of our own undeveloped understanding.

It is very natural to wish to have things cut-and-dried in a simple formula or notebook or catechism. For many reasons and purposes it is useful or necessary. But, whatever arrangements we may make on the physical plane, let us keep our minds fluid. We shall unduly limit ourselves and put barriers in our way, if we refuse to accept anything but what can be expressed in a clear-cut and formal manner; though here again one must avoid relapsing into vagueness. It reduces itself to a question of recognising the several parts and functions of the mind, and assigning to each of them its proper place. And here our mathematical analogy will help again: for a mathematician is accustomed to deal with symbols that denote inconceivable or transcendent ideas. Even the student of elementary algebra learns to carry an *unknown* quantity through a long series of operations, by means of its symbol; and his entire purpose would be frustrated, should he insist on knowing the value of this symbol at the start, instead of waiting until the solution arrives in due season.

In listening to expositions of the various phases of cosmic evolution, and to the queries proposed to the teacher by his students on those occasions, one feels more and more convinced that the difficulties felt by both teacher and student are of the kind which might perplex a tyro in mathematics and his instructor. In other words, the difficulty is to express one's knowledge in terms of the pupil's present capacity of comprehension. The way out of the difficulty is for the student to accept a good deal — not exactly on faith (that term might be misleading) — but in a provisional way and in anticipation of fuller comprehension to come; much as a student of mathematics adopts a temporary symbol, or perhaps a 'convenient fiction,' for provisional purposes, and confident that knowledge will subsequently replace the temporary counter which stands for it.

One sometimes hears mathematics spoken of disparagingly as

though it were a symbol for rigidity and a counterpart to freedom of the mind. But those who think thus cannot have a very good idea of what mathematics is. If there is such a contrast, it exists equally within mathematics itself and outside of mathematics; not between mathematics on the one hand and something else on the other hand. The contrast between rigidity and formalism exists everywhere; and no doubt the disparaging critics are thinking of the elementary rules of arithmetic, dealing with integers, or of the rigid constructions of Euclidean geometry. But geometry is not limited to the consideration of crystals — though even a crystal is by no means a simple thing to study. It deals with curves; and, to be brief, it treats of matters which, so far from confining the intellect, transcend our powers of conception. To apply a mathematical key to the structure of the Universe is not to restrict our conception of the Universe, but to define it in terms so lofty and grand that we can form no mental picture.

This article then is a plea both to liberate our understanding and to admit a more generous idea of mathematics. There is nothing too high for us to understand; and on the other hand we cannot expect, nor should we wish, to have things reduced to a set formula. And remember, we need not necessarily wait 4,320,000 years to be enlightened, for it is quite possible we may achieve it in that number of seconds. Likewise it is always possible to ascend a staircase one step at a time, so that you need not despair if you cannot go up in one flying leap.

A word might be said in this connexion on the subject of music. Some may cavil at our ordinary schemes of harmony, counterpoint, and rhythm, because they seem hackneyed; but, even if we accept the justice of their complaint, we need not necessarily indorse their particular cure. These harmonies and rhythms are based on the simple numbers, hence on Nature's most fundamental laws. Thus they initiate us into some of the profoundest secrets of the universe. This is enough to explain the rapture which a simple cadence produces in the being of a sensitive hearer. Now, if we are to go beyond these conventional forms, and touch still deeper mysteries, we must surely proceed by an elaboration of the same principle; that is, our new music must still be founded on the fundamental principles of the Universe. Only now the mathematics underlying it will be of a more intricate kind. This is not the same thing as mere

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

experiment or license; not the same as a mere striving to get away from the old without having anything definite to replace it. One feels that, whatever innovation is made, there should be some principle behind it; and also that the fact of there being such a principle need not imply restriction. One feels that, if the innovation is made in response to an intuitive urge or artistic feeling, it will be found on analysis to have such a principle behind it.

Mathematics behind music is an idea that may offend some minds; but only for the reason already given: namely, that an inadequate conception of mathematics has been entertained. We repeat that mathematics should never mean something rigid and soulless. How much lies in a mere word! For the word 'mathematics' put 'harmony,' and your critics will become your enthusiastic supporters. Let us say then that harmony underlies music, old or new, and what objection can be made? Number and numbers underlie the Universe, say the teachers.

## OLD PHILOSOPHERS AND MODERN CRITICS

HELENA PETROVNA BLAVATSKY

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[Continued from p. 314, October, 1931]

**T**HIS doctrine of the Universal Mind diffused through all things underlies all ancient Philosophies. The tenets of Bodhism, or Wisdom, which can never be better comprehended than when studying the Pythagorean Philosophy — its faithful reflexion — are derived from this source, as are the exoteric Hindû religion and early Christianity. The purifying process of reincarnations — metempsychoses — however grossly anthropomorphized at a later period, must only be regarded as a supplementary doctrine, disfigured by theological sophistry, with the object of getting a firmer hold upon believers through a popular superstition. Neither Gautama Buddha nor Pythagoras, nor yet Plato, intended to teach this purely metaphysical allegory *literally*. None of them addressed himself to the profane, but only to their own followers and disciples, who knew too much of the symbological element used even during public instruction to fail to understand the meaning of their respective Mas-

ters. Thus they were aware that the words metempsychosis and transmigration meant simply reincarnation from one human body to another, when this teaching concerned a *human being*; and that every allusion of this or another sage, like Pythagoras, to having been in a previous birth a beast, or of transmigrating after death into an animal, was allegorical and related to the spiritual states of the human soul. It is not in the dead letter of the mystic sacred literature that scholars may hope to find the true solution of its metaphysical subtleties. The latter weary the power of thought by the inconceivable profundity of their ratiocination; and the student is never farther from truth than when he believes himself nearest its discovery. The mastery of every doctrine of the perplexing Buddhist and Brâhmânical systems can be attained only by proceeding strictly according to the Pythagorean and Platonic method; from universals down to particulars. The key to them lies in the refined and mystical tenets of the spiritual influx of divine life. "Whoever is unacquainted with my law," says Buddha, "and dies in that state, must return to the earth till he becomes a perfect Samanean. To achieve this object, he must destroy within himself the trinity of Mâyâ. He must extinguish his passions, unite and identify himself with the law [the teaching of the Secret Doctrine], and comprehend the religion of annihilation," *i. e.*, the laws of Matter, and those of Karma and Reincarnation.

Plato acknowledges man to be the toy of the element of necessity — which is Karma under another name — in appearing in this world of matter. Man is influenced by external causes, and these causes are *daimonia*, like that of Socrates. Happy is the man physically pure, for if his external soul (astral body, the image of the body) is pure, it will strengthen the second soul (the lower Manas), or the soul which is termed by him the higher mortal soul, which, though liable to err from its own motives, will always side with reason against the animal proclivities of the body. In other words, the ray of our Higher Ego, the lower Manas, has its higher light, the reason or rational powers of the Nous, to help it in the struggle with Kâmic desires. The lusts of man arise in consequence of his perishable material body, so do other diseases, says Plato; but though he regards crimes as involuntary sometimes, for they result, like bodily diseases, from external causes, Plato clearly makes a wide distinction between these causes. The karmic fatalism which he concedes

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

to humanity does not preclude the possibility of avoiding them, for though pain, fear, anger, and other feelings are given to men by necessity,

If they conquered these they would live righteously, and if they were conquered by them, unrighteously.\*

The dual man — *i. e.*, one from whom the divine immortal Spirit has departed, leaving but the animal form and the sidereal, Plato's higher *mortal* soul — is left merely to his instincts, for he has been conquered by all the evils entailed on matter,† hence, he becomes a docile tool in the hands of the Invisibles — beings of a sublimated matter, hovering in our atmosphere, and ever ready to inspire those who are deservedly deserted by their immortal counsellor, the Divine Spirit, called by Plato 'genius.'‡ According to this great Philosopher and Initiate, one

Who lived well during his appointed time would return to the habitation of his star, and there have a blessed and suitable existence. But if he failed in attaining this in the second generation he would pass into a woman [become helpless and weak as a woman], and should he not cease from evil in that condition he would be changed into some brute, which resembled him in his evil ways, and would not cease from his toils and transformations [*i. e.*, rebirths or transmigrations], until he followed the original principle of sameness and likeness within him, and overcame, by the help of reason, the latter secretions of turbulent and irrational elements [elementary daemons] composed of fire and air, and water and earth, and returned to the form of his first and better nature.§

These are the teachings of the Secret Doctrine, of the Occult Philosophy. The possibility of man losing, through depravity, his Higher Ego was taught in antiquity, and is still taught in the centres of Eastern Occultism. And the above shows quite plainly that Plato believed in Reincarnation and in Karma just as we do, though his utterances in respect to the subject were in a mythical form.

There was not a Philosopher of any notoriety who did not hold to this doctrine of metempsychosis, as taught by the Brâhmans, Buddhists, and later by the Pythagoreans, in its Esoteric sense, whether he expressed it more or less intelligibly. Origen and Clemens Alex-

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\**Timæus*. See Prof. Jowett's work.

†This is the teaching of Esoteric Philosophy and this tenet was faintly outlined in *Isis Unveiled*. With Plato the triple man alone is perfect. *i. e.*, one whose Body, Soul, and Spirit are in close affinity.

‡And by Theosophists the Higher Ego or Buddhi-Manas.

§Plato's *Timæus*.

## OLD PHILOSOPHERS AND MODERN CRITICS

andrinus, Synesius and Chalcidius, all believed in it; and the Gnostics, who are unhesitatingly proclaimed by history as a body of the most refined, learned, and enlightened men,\* were all believers in metempsychosis. Socrates entertained opinions identical with those of Pythagoras; and, as the penalty of his divine Philosophy, was put to a violent death. The rabble has been the same in all ages. These men taught that men have two souls, of separate and quite different natures: the one perishable — the Astral Soul, or the inner, fluidic body — which must not be confused with the Astral *Body* or 'double'; the other incorruptible and immortal — the Augoeides, or portion of the Divine Spirit — Âtmâ-Buddhi; that the mortal or Astral Soul perishes at each gradual change at the threshold of every new sphere, becoming with every transmigration more purified. The Astral Man, intangible and invisible as he may be to our mortal earthly senses, is still constituted of matter, though sublimated.

Now, if the latter means anything at all, it means that the above teaching about the 'two souls' is exactly that of the Esoteric, and of many exoteric, Theosophists. The two souls are the dual Manas: the lower, personal 'Astral Soul,' and the Higher Ego. The former — a Ray of the latter falling into Matter, that is to say animating man and making of him a thinking, rational being on this plane — having assimilated its most spiritual elements in the divine essence of the reincarnating Ego, perishes in its personal, material form at each gradual change, as Kâma-rûpa, at the threshold of every new sphere, or Devachan, followed by a new reincarnation. It perishes, because it fades out in time, all but its intangible, evanescent photograph on the astral waves, burnt out by the fierce light which ever changes but never dies; while the incorruptible and the immortal 'Spiritual Soul,' that which we call Buddhi-Manas and the individual SELF, becomes more purified with every new incarnation. Laden with all IT could save from the personal Soul, it carries it into Devachan, to reward it with ages of peace and bliss. This is no *new* teaching, no 'fresh development,' as some of our opponents have tried to prove; and even in *Isis Unveiled*, the earliest, hence the most cautious of all the modern works on Theosophy, the fact is distinctly stated (Vol. I, p. 432 and elsewhere). The Secret Doctrine does not concede immortality to all men alike. It declares with Porphyry that only

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\*See Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*.

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

Through the highest purity and chastity we shall approach nearer to [our] God, and receive, in the contemplation of Him, the true knowledge and insight.

If the human soul has neglected during its lifetime to receive its illumination from its Divine Spirit, our personal God, then it becomes difficult for the gross and sensual man to survive his physical death for a great length of time. No more than the misshapen monster can live long after its physical birth, can the soul, once that it has become *too* material, exist after its birth into the spiritual world. The viability of the astral form is so feeble, that the particles cannot cohere firmly when once it is slipped out of the unyielding capsule of the external body. Its particles, gradually obeying the disorganizing attraction of universal space, finally fly asunder beyond the possibility of reaggregation. Upon the occurrence of such a catastrophe, the personal individual ceases to exist; his glorious Augoeides, the immortal Self, has left him for Devachan, whither the Kâma-rûpa cannot follow. During the intermediary period between bodily death and the disintegration of the astral form, the latter, bound by magnetic attraction to its ghastly corpse, prowls about, and sucks vitality from susceptible victims. The man having shut out of himself every ray of the divine light, is lost in darkness, and, therefore, clings to the earth and the earthy.

No Astral Soul, even that of a pure, good and virtuous man, is immortal in the strictest sense; "from elements it was formed — to elements it must return." Only, while the soul of the wicked vanishes, and is absorbed without redemption — *i. e.*, the dead man has impressed nothing of himself on the Spirit-Ego — that of every other person, even moderately pure, simply changes its ethereal particles for still more ethereal ones. While there remains in it a spark of the Divine, the personal Ego cannot die *entirely*, as his most spiritual thoughts and aspirations, his 'good deeds,' the efflorescence of his 'I-am-ship,' so to speak, is now at one with his immortal Parent. Says Proclus:

After death the soul [the spirit] continueth to linger in the aerial body [astral form], till it is entirely purified from all angry and voluptuous passions . . . then doth it put off by a second dying the aerial body as it did the earthly one. Whereupon, the ancients say that there is a celestial body always joined with the soul, which is immortal, luminous, and star-like.

Between Pantheism and Fetishism, we have been repeatedly told, there is but an insignificant step. Plato was a Monotheist, it is as-



served. In one sense, he was that, most assuredly; but his Monotheism never led him to the worship of one *personal* God, but to that of a Universal Principle and to the fundamental idea that the absolutely immutable or unchangeable Existence alone, really *is*, all the finite existences and change being only appearance, *i. e.*, Mâyâ.\* His *Being* was noumenal, not phenomenal. If Heraclitus postulates a World-Consciousness, or Universal Mind; and Parmenides an unchangeable *Being*, in the identity of the universal and individual thought; and the Pythagoreans, along with Philolaus, discover true Knowledge (which is *Wisdom* or Deity) in our consciousness of the unchangeable relations between number and measure — an idea disfigured later by the Sophists — it is Plato who expresses this idea the most intelligibly. While the vague definition of some philosophers about the *Ever-Becoming* is but too apt to lead one inclined to argumentation into hopeless Materialism, the divine *Being* of some others suggests as unphilosophical an anthropomorphism. Instead of separating the two, Plato shows us the logical necessity of accepting both, viewed from an Esoteric aspect. That which he calls the 'Unchangeable Existence' or 'Being' is named *Be-ness* in Esoteric Philosophy. It is SAT, which becomes at stated periods the cause of the *Becoming*, which latter cannot, therefore, be regarded as *existing*, but only as something ever tending—in its cyclic progress toward the One Absolute Existence — to exist, in the 'Good,' and at one with Absoluteness. The 'Divine Causality' cannot be a personal, therefore finite and conditioned, Godhead, any more with Plato than with the Vedântins, as he treats his subject teleologically, and in his search for final causes often goes *beyond* the Universal Mind, even when viewed as a noumenon. Modern commentators have attempted on different occasions to prove fallacious the Neo-Platonic claim of a secret meaning underlying Plato's teachings. They deny the presence of "any definite trace of a secret doctrine" in his *Dialogs*;

Not even the passages brought forward out of the insidious Platonic letters (VII, p. 341 *e*, II, p. 314 *c*) containing any evidence.†

As, however, no one would deny that Plato had been initiated into the MYSTERIES, there is an end to the other denials. There are hundreds of expressions and hints in the *Dialogs* which no modern translator or commentator — save one, Thomas Taylor — has ever

\**Sophistes*, p. 249.

†*Vide* Hermann, I, pp. 544, 744, note 755.

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

correctly understood. The presence, moreover, of the Pythagorean number-doctrine and the sacred numerals in Plato's lectures settles the question conclusively.

He who has studied Pythagoras and his speculations on the Monad, which, after having emanated the Duad, retires into silence and darkness, and thus creates the Triad, can realize whence came the Philosophy of the great Samian Sage, and after him that of Socrates and Plato.

Speusippus seems to have taught that the psychical or thumetic soul was immortal as well as the spirit or rational soul, and every Theosophist will understand his reasons for it. Unless a personality is entirely annihilated, which is extremely rare, the 'thumetic soul,' our lower Manas, is in one sense and portion of itself *immortal* — *i. e.*, the portion that follows the Ego into Devachan. He also — like Philolaus and Aristotle, in his disquisitions upon the soul — makes of Ether an element; so that there were five principal elements to correspond with the five regular figures in Geometry. This became also a doctrine of the Alexandrian school.\* Indeed, there was much in the doctrines of the Philaletheans which did not appear in the works of the older Platonists, but was doubtless taught in substance by the Philosopher himself, though, with his usual reticence, he did not commit it to writing, as being too arcane for promiscuous publication. Speusippus and Xenocrates after him, held, like their great Master, that the Anima Mundi or World-Soul, was not the Deity, but a manifestation. Those Philosophers never conceived of the One as an animate Nature.† The original One did not *exist*, as we understand the term. Not till he had united with the many — emanated existence (the Monad and Duad) — was a Being produced. The τιμιον, honored — the something manifested — dwells in the center as in the circumference, but it is only the reflexion of the Deity, the World-Soul.‡ In this doctrine we find all the spirit of Esoteric *Bodhism* or Secret Wisdom.

Though some have considered Speusippus as inferior to Aristotle, the world is nevertheless indebted to him for defining and expounding many things that Plato had left obscure in his doctrine of the Sensible and Ideal. His maxim was "The Immaterial is known by means of scientific thought, the Material by scientific perception."§

\**Theo. Arith.*, p. 62; On *Pythag. Numbers*.

‡See Stobaeus' *Ecl.*, I, 862.

†Plato: *Parmenid.*, 141 E.

§Sextus: *Math.*, vii, 145.

Xenocrates expounded many of the unwritten theories and teachings of his master. He, too, held the Pythagorean doctrine, with its system of numerals and mathematics, in the highest estimation. Recognising but three degrees of knowledge — *Thought*, *Perception*, and *Envisagement* (or knowledge by *Intuition*), he made Thought busy itself with all that which is beyond the heavens; Perception with things in the heavens; Intuition with the heavens themselves. The source of these three qualities is found in the Hindû *Mânava Dharma Sâstra*, speaking of the formation (creation, in vulgar parlance) of man. Brahmâ — who is Mahat, or the Universal Soul — draws from its own essence the Spirit, *the immortal breath which perisheth not in the human being*, while to the (lower) soul of that being, Brahmâ gives the Ahankâra, consciousness of the Ego. Then is added to it “the intellect formed of the *three qualities*.”

These three qualities are Intelligence, Conscience and Will; answering to the Thought, Perception and Envisagement (Intuition) of Xenocrates, who seems to have been less reticent than Plato and Speusippus in his exposition of soul. After his master's death Xenocrates traveled with Aristotle, and then became ambassador to Philip of Macedonia. But twenty-five years later he is found taking charge of the Old Academy, and becoming its President as successor to Speusippus, who had occupied the post for over a quarter of a century, and devoting his life to the most abstruse philosophical subjects. He is thought more dogmatic than Plato, and therefore must have been more dangerous to the schools which opposed him. His three degrees of knowledge, or three divisions of Philosophy, the separation and connexion of the three modes of cognition and comprehension, are more definitely worked out than by Speusippus. With him, Science is referred to “that essence which is the object of pure thought, and is not included in the phenomenal world”— which is in direct opposition to the Aristotelian-Baconian ideas; sensuous perception is referred to that which passes into the world of phenomena; and conception, to that essence “which is at once the object of sensuous perception and, mathematically, of pure reason — the essence of heaven and the stars.” All his admiration notwithstanding, Aristotle never did justice to the Philosophy of his friend and co-disciple. This is evident from his works. Whenever he is referring to the three modes of apprehension as explained by Xenocrates, he abstains from any mention of the method by which the latter proves

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

that scientific perception partakes of truth. The reason for this becomes apparent when we find the following in a biography of Xenocrates:

It is probable that what was peculiar to the Aristotelian logic did not remain unnoticed by him [Xenocrates]; for it can hardly be doubted that the division of the existent into the absolutely existent and the relatively existent, attributed to Xenocrates, was opposed to the Aristotelian table of categories.

This shows that Aristotle was no better than certain of our modern Scientists, who suppress facts and truth in order that these may not clash with their own private hobbies and 'working hypotheses.'

The relation of numbers to Ideas was developed by Xenocrates further than by Speusippus, and he surpassed Plato in his definition of the doctrine of Invisible Magnitudes. Reducing them to their ideal primary elements, he demonstrated that every figure and form originated out of the smallest indivisible line. That Xenocrates held the same theories as Plato in relation to the human soul (supposed to be a number) is evident, though Aristotle contradicts this, like every other teaching of this philosopher.\* This is conclusive evidence that many of Plato's doctrines were delivered orally, even were it shown that Xenocrates and not Plato was the first to originate the theory of indivisible magnitudes. He derives the Soul from the first Duad, and calls it a self-moving number.† Theophrastus remarks that he entered into and elaborated this Soul-theory more than any other Platonist. For he regarded intuition and *innate* ideas, *δόξα*, in a higher sense than any, and made mathematics mediate between knowledge and sensuous perception.‡ Hence he built upon this Soul-theory the cosmological doctrine, and proved the necessary existence in every part of universal Space of a successive and progressive series of animated and thinking though spiritual beings.§ The Human Soul with him is a compound of the most spiritual properties of the Monad and the Duad, possessing the highest principles of both. Thus he calls *Unity* and *Duality* (*Monas* and *Duas*) Deities, showing the former as a male Existence, ruling in Heaven as 'Father Spirit' and an uneven number; and the latter, as a female Existence, Mother Soul, the Mother of the Gods (*Aditi?*), for she is the Soul of the Universe.|| But if like Plato and Prodicus, he re-

\**Metaph.*, 407, a. 3.

†*Aristot.*, *De Interp.*, p. 297.

‡Appendix to *Timaeus*.

§*Stob.*, *Ecl.*, i, 62.

||*Stob.*, *Ibid.*

fers to the Elements as to Divine Powers, and calls them Gods, neither himself nor others connected any anthropomorphic idea with the appellation. Kirsche remarks that he called them Gods only that these elementary powers should not be confounded with the daemons of the nether world\* (the Elementary Spirits). As the Soul of the World permeates the whole Cosmos, even beasts must have in them something divine.† This, also, is the doctrine of Buddhists and Hermetists, and Manu endows with a living soul even the plants and the tiniest blade of grass — an absolutely Esoteric doctrine.

The daemons, according to this theory, are intermediate beings between the divine perfection and human sinfulness,‡ and he divides them into classes, each subdivided into many others. But he states expressly that the individual or personal soul is the leading guardian daemon of every man, and that no daemon has more power over us than our own. Thus the Daimonion of Socrates is the God or Divine Entity which inspired him all his life. It depends on man either to open or close his perceptions to the Divine voice. Like Speusippus he ascribed immortality to the  $\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\eta}$ , psychical body, or irrational soul. But some Hermetic philosophers have taught that the soul has a separate continued existence only so long as in its passage through the spheres any material or earthly particles remain incorporated in it; and that when absolutely purified, the latter are annihilated, and the quintessence of the soul alone becomes blended with its divine Spirit, the Rational, and the two are thenceforth one.

It is difficult to fail to see in the above teachings a direct echo of the far older Indian doctrines, now imbodyed in the so-called 'Theosophical' teachings, concerning the dual Manas. The World-Soul, that which is called by the Esoteric Yogâchâryas 'Father-Mother,§ Xenocrates referred to as a male-female Principle, the male element of which, the Father, he designated as the last Zeus, the last divine activity, just as the students of the Secret Doctrine designate it the third and last Logos, Brahmâ or Mahat. To this World-Soul is entrusted dominion over all that which is subject to change and motion. The divine essence, he said, infused its own Fire, or Soul, into the Sun and Moon and all the Planets, in a pure form, in the shape of Olympic Gods. As a sub-lunary power the World-Soul dwells in

\*Kirsche: *Forsch.*, p. 322, etc.

†Clem.: *Stro. Alex.* v, 590.

‡Plutarch: *De Isid.*, ch. xxv, p. 360.

§See *The Secret Doctrine*, Stanzas, Vol. I.

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

the Elements, producing Daimonical (spiritual) powers and beings, who are a connecting link between Gods and men, being related to them "as the isosceles triangle is to the equilateral and the scalene."\*

Zeller states that Xenocrates forbade the eating of animal food, not because he saw in beasts something akin to man, as he ascribed to them a dim consciousness of God, but

For the opposite reason, lest the irrationality of animal souls might thereby obtain a certain influence over us.†

But we believe that it was rather because, like Pythagoras, he had had the Hindû Sages for his Masters and models. Cicero depicts Xenocrates as utterly despising everything except the highest virtue,‡ and describes the stainlessness and severe austerity of his character.

To free ourselves from the subjection of sensuous existence, to conquer the Titanic elements in our terrestrial nature through the Divine, is our problem.§

Zeller makes him say:

Purity, even in the secret longings of our heart, is the greatest duty, and only Philosophy and Initiation into the Mysteries help toward the attainment of this object.||

This must be so, since we find men like Cicero and Panaetius, and before them, Aristotle and Theophrastus his disciple, expressed the highest regard for Xenocrates. His writings — treatises on Science, on Metaphysics, Cosmology and Philosophy — must have been legion. He wrote on Physics and the Gods; on the Existent, the One and the Indefinite; on Affections and Memory; on Happiness and Virtue; four books on Royalty, and numberless treatises on the State; on the Power of Law; on Geometry, Arithmetic, and finally on Astrology. Dozens of renowned classical writers mention and quote from him.

Crantor, another philosopher associated with the earliest days of Plato's Academy, conceived the human soul as formed out of the primary substance of all things, the Monad or the *One*, and the Duad or the *Two*. Plutarch speaks at length of this Philosopher, who, like his Master, believed in souls being distributed in earthly bodies as an exile and punishment.

\*Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*, i, 13. Stob., or Plut., *De Orac. Defect.*, p. 416 c.

†*Plato und die Alte Akademie*.

‡*Tusc.*, v, 18, 51.

§*Ibid.*Cf. p. 559.

||*Plato und die Alte Akademie*.

## OLD PHILOSOPHERS AND MODERN CRITICS

Heracleides, though some critics do not believe him to have strictly adhered to Plato's primal philosophy,\* taught the same ethics. Zeller presents him to us as imparting, like Hicetas and Ecphantus, the Pythagorean doctrine of the diurnal rotation of the earth and the immobility of the fixed stars, but adds that he was ignorant of the annual revolution of the earth around the sun, and of the heliocentric system.† But we have good evidence that the latter system was taught in the Mysteries, and that Socrates died for 'atheism,' *i. e.*, for divulging this sacred knowledge. Heracleides adopted fully the Pythagorean and Platonic views of the human soul, its faculties and its capabilities. He describes it as a luminous, highly ethereal essence. He affirms that souls inhabit the Milky Way before descending into 'generation' or sublunary existence. His daemons, or spirits, are airy and vaporous bodies.

In the *Epinomis* is fully stated the doctrine of the Pythagorean numbers in relation to created things. As a true Platonist, its author maintains that wisdom can only be attained by a thorough inquiry into the occult nature of the creation; it alone assures us an existence of bliss after death. The immortality of the soul is greatly speculated upon in this treatise; but its author adds that we can attain to this knowledge only through a complete comprehension of numbers; for the man unable to distinguish the straight line from the curved will never have wisdom enough to secure a mathematical demonstration of the invisible, *i. e.*, we must assure ourselves of the objective existence of our soul before we learn that we are in possession of a divine and immortal Spirit. Iamblichus says the same thing; adding, moreover, that it is a secret belonging to the highest Initiation. The Divine Power, he says, always felt indignant with those "who rendered manifest the composition of the *icostagonus*," *viz.*, who delivered the method of inscribing in a sphere the dodecahedron.

The idea that 'numbers' possessing the greatest virtue produce always what is good and never what is evil, refers to justice, equanimity of temper, and everything that is harmonious. When the author speaks of every star as an individual soul, he only means what the Hindû Initiates and the Hermetists taught before and after him, *viz.*, that every star is an independent planet, which, like our earth, has a soul of its own, every atom of Matter being impregnated with

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\*Ed. Zeller: *Philos. der Griechen*.

†Plato und die Alte Akademie.

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

the divine influx of the Soul of the World. It breathes and lives; it feels and suffers as well as enjoys life in its way. What naturalist is prepared to dispute it on good evidence? Therefore, we must consider the celestial bodies as the images of Gods; as partaking of the divine powers in their substance; and though they are not immortal in their soul-entity, their agency in the economy of the universe is entitled to divine honors, such as we pay to minor Gods. The idea is plain, and one must be malevolent indeed to misrepresent it. If the author of *Epinomis* places these fiery Gods higher than the animals, plants, and even mankind, all of which, as earthly creatures, are assigned by him a lower place, who can prove him wholly wrong? One must needs go deep indeed into the profundity of the abstract metaphysics of the old Philosophies, who would understand that their various imbodiments of their conceptions are, after all, based upon an identical apprehension of the nature of the First Cause, its attributes and method.

When the author of *Epinomis*, along with so many other Philosophers, locates between the highest and the lowest Gods three classes of Daimons, and peoples the Universe with hosts of sublimated Beings, he is more rational than the modern Materialist. The latter, making between the two extremes — the unknown and the invisible, hence, according to his logic the *non-existent*, and the objective and the sensuous — one vast hiatus of being and the playground of blind forces, may seek to explain his attitude on the grounds of 'scientific Agnosticism'; yet he will never succeed in proving that the latter is consistent with logic, or even with simple common sense.

## REINCARNATION:

### The Theory of Many Lives Strung on the Thread of Destiny

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

**T**HAT the idea of Reincarnation was strange in the West before H. P. Blavatsky brought back the old teachings, can only be explained by the fact that it was deliberately suppressed in the early centuries of our era.

There is probably little question now in the minds of liberally



## REINCARNATION

educated people that the real teachings of Jesus are given in a very fragmentary and imperfect manner in the New Testament. The very way in which they have been compiled; the arbitrary decisions, centuries after Jesus' death, on the part of certain Church Fathers, as to what was and what was not apocryphal, would suggest this.

In regard to this belief in Reincarnation, which has been called "the lost chord in Christianity" because without it life is so meaningless, it is now well known to those who have examined the evidence, that it was taught among the early Christians. And this is but natural, for at that time the continuity between them and the older civilizations, where knowledge of the Ancient Wisdom existed, had not been broken, and it was among these latter that the belief was universal. An artificial mental wall was later created by the Christian Church when it had gained the power to close the minds of its subjects to a knowledge of the past. But before that time, up to about the sixth century, the doctrine was more or less known and held, though gradually fading, until in succeeding centuries it was utterly forgotten in the West.

Some of the greatest of the early Church Fathers, notably Origen and Clement of Alexandria of the second and third centuries, did what they could at the opening of a dark cycle. But the ecclesiastical institution which the Church became, and which was, of course, a characteristic of the dark cycle, was too strong for them. At the General Council of Constantinople in 540 A. D., Origen was formally anathematized, and his teaching of Pre-existence condemned and forbidden. Strangled as were the minds of the masses by this time, the act of the Council accomplished its purpose and for nearly fifteen hundred years there has been no rational explanation of life common to the people. But truth, though suppressed, cannot be extinguished.

Why so little is suggested in the New Testament, in regard to a belief so necessary to human development, is a mystery yet unsolved for the many, but one which must, it would seem, ere long be cleared up. The belief is indeed implied in two or three instances, and not contradicted. When speculations on the part of Herod and others as to who Jesus had been in a former period, came to his ears, he listened and asked, "Whom say the people that I am?" (*Luke*, ix, 18) And in a case of congenital blindness, the disciples of Jesus ask him, "Who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" (*John*, ix, 2) Yet the fact remains that though it might be inferred

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

as accepted in the New Testament to those looking for it, yet it is not distinctly taught, and not so expressed that those ignorant of it would find it in the pages of the Gospels.

All this is of vital interest only to those who are afraid to believe anything not declared in the Christian Bible. The majority today, however, are not in this class, and students of the subject realize that all the truth could not be contained in a volume which has been compiled in such a questionable manner.

As said, this vagueness on the subject of Reincarnation or this ignoring of it in the Christian Bible, is a mystery yet to be cleared up to the eyes of the multitude. But today is a day of revelations, and in this time of wonderful discoveries, of the unearthing of old records, of the sifting of human motives, it can literally be said that none can tell what a day may bring forth. We may learn that a body has been *interested* in keeping humanity in ignorance, in retarding progress, and therefore in suppressing any and all beliefs which enable men to shake off their binding fetters and feel their natural freedom.

Theosophy explains that the whole of the Gospel-story is told in mystical language — is, in fact, a mystery-tale, which can only be interpreted by those who hold the key. In *Questions We All Ask*, No. 15, page 226, Dr. G. de Purucker says:

The Christian Scriptures, that is, the Christian New Testament, taken all together, are an esoteric manual: a secret manual of instruction and of edification for the earliest Christians, for the earliest adherents of the primitive Christian Church; and these secrets tell in allegorical, in mythological (if you look into the old Greek sense of the word) form what any great Seer or Sage, any World-Savior, . . . underwent in the schools of mystical training.

But in any case, without awaiting these revelations, it is the privilege and duty of all to search for truth fearlessly. And the doctrines of Reincarnation and Karman are certainly worth the serious and earnest consideration of all. A small body of Christians have rejected them, that is, small in comparison to humanity at large, but uncounted millions in other lands have known them for ages. This alone should render them worthy of interest and investigation. For how did they come to be a part of the belief of a large majority of mankind?

But chiefly is this theory of life interesting on the ground of its own merits. What other, can explain so many facts? There are

## REINCARNATION

higher reasons for accepting it, certainly, but considered simply from an intellectual standpoint, science bases its conclusions on just the kind of reasoning that might be applied to this theory. It is the key which fits when applied to all the problems of life. So true is this, that it seems odd to one who believes it that a bare statement of it should not be sufficient to convince all thinkers. But the human mind seems so constituted that an unfamiliar truth must await its day before the masses can feel at home with it. And so it must be with this, until suddenly the light will break over the subject, and all will say, "How simple and natural, and inevitable! How could we have failed to see this before!" Those who happen to be standing where they can catch the reflexion which heralds the brighter light, are eager to hasten the day of its breaking, because it so clarifies and dignifies life, and would so lift the whole race.

With it would come a deeper realization of the law of cause and effect. This law we see constantly in operation, and only a little reflection must reveal, even to the ordinary mind, that it must be universal. Cause and effect must be mathematically related, with unerring precision throughout Nature. Any other hypothesis is unthinkable. The Christian theologies, by cutting everything off so sharply after one life-period on earth, and connecting it with all that may come after only by expectation of reward or fear of punishment, have done all possible to draw attention away from this law, the realization of which is essential to man's development. It is lost sight of because one lifetime is obviously not long enough for all the effects to be seen. Many, often no doubt most of those expressed, are the result of causes initiated in a former life; and the idea of numerous earth-lives bound together as one whole being absent, the circumstances and conditions under which people find themselves seem arbitrary and unreasonable. But the moment that all firmly grasp the idea that they themselves, and not some outside power, have shaped their lives, there will arise a new sense of responsibility, and this, when acted upon, will bring a new sense of power.

It is difficult to consider the effect of one part of the perfect and comprehensive philosophy of the Secret Doctrine separately from the others. For they all belong together, to make a perfect whole. Yet it would seem that even this one belief, if universal, would alter the structure of our whole civilization. Many results would fol-

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

low it. For instance, all this bitter cursing of one's fate would cease. It would by degrees be felt to be not only futile, but to be just the method which must keep up the present hated condition. It would be seen to be energy wasted. When people are left in desperate straits — in an untried country perhaps — or when they find themselves on a sinking vessel, they do not commonly sit there and whine or curse; but they rush for life-boats, and turn all their activities into making the best of a bad situation. And if, added to the misfortunes, they see clearly that they themselves have brought them about, there will be no temptation to blame others or complain that some God is unjust. A wholesome, healthy resolution to do better and recover the lost ground will be aroused. Nature's lessons will, in other words, have a fair opportunity to be learned. Men, in realizing that none but themselves can loosen the chains they have forged, will cease to rely upon providence for a turn of fortune, which, even if it comes, can only be temporary, unless they themselves have brought it about in the right way.

By degrees, suicide would disappear. The discouraged would see in this no help or respite, but understanding that all the threads must be sometime picked up, and that a rude breaking of the law can only increase enormously their difficulties, they would by degrees work with the law, trust it, and take courage. Many of the discouraged and disheartened would be grateful for other opportunities to retrieve their errors. And as the consciousness of the power of the soul, the unity of all life, and the final triumph of right is gradually born, the clouds would lift, and all would breathe the tonic air of spiritual freedom.

If, on falling asleep at night, one believed that he would never have to meet the acts and thoughts of the day passed, and if one could imagine brain-memory not extending back to the previous day, but only that sort of memory which exists as the possession of powers acquired, it is easy to perceive what a chaotic, unmeaning farce our lives would be, and how, by degrees, all moral sense would be lost, and all sense of responsibility. Yet this is just the situation, on a larger scale, of life under disbelief in more than one earth-life. From the standpoint of eternity, a life *is* but as one day. It is but a chapter in the Book of Life.

To wipe out the belief in some sort of future life is impossible, except in rare instances, but the Church has succeeded for the most

## REINCARNATION

part in wiping out a belief in an eternity behind. Yet a brooding on this idea will without doubt reveal to all that the one implies the other. And, of course, this at once explains the infinite stages of growth of the human species.

One difficulty in the entrance of Reincarnation as a common belief, seems often not to be in a lack of belief in future existence, but in future life here on earth. And yet, when the law of cause and effect is considered, how could it be elsewhere? A cause, started in matter, must reach its effect in matter. Suppose, for instance, that a man sets in motion causes which lead to a weak, diseased body, and then dies before these causes have had time to become effects, and be adjusted again so as to restore harmony in nature. How and when and where are these causes to end, if not in a body, and in a body belonging to the one who put it out of order? This is order and sequence and justice, as one would expect it. Of course, one may imagine that the body may be on some other planet, but it would have to be a planet on which the conditions were parallel to those of earth, and as all the causes and effects of men are closely interwoven and must be worked out together, it would mean the supplying of a new planet just like the earth, on which souls whose destinies are united, could migrate together — which makes a complicated system out of a simple one, and in the economy of nature, is impossible. The teaching of the Wisdom-Religion is, that souls return to *earth* until they have overcome, or learned all the lessons it can teach, though they take periods of rest between the acts of the soul's drama.

In the case of a breaking of the moral law, the adjustment can be made only through a body, for the offense occurred in this way. The soul, untrammelled by a body, would have had clearer vision and would not have committed it. The problem for the soul is to conquer matter sufficiently to work through it perfectly, and to imagine that one can restore a moral balance which was disturbed on earth, by retiring to a field where the disturbance does not exist, is an absurdity.

The New Testament does say, "One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." (*Matthew, v, 18*) But it does not tell how this is done. Theosophy does, and shows that true dignity consists in being willing to face the consequences of one's acts, and in correcting one's errors.

# RESEARCHES INTO NATURE

Lucius Annaeus Seneca

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

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

## BOOK VI — XXXI

(1) *Yet why did the movement last through several days?* For Campania did not cease from continuous quaking, more gently indeed, yet with immense damage, for it continued shaking what was already shaken; and to overthrow what things were still standing weakly it was not (*needful that those so standing*) be heavily jarred but be gently shaken. Manifestly, all the spirit had not yet departed, but — the larger portion of it having gone — still hovered around. Among the proofs by which it is shown that these things happen by spirit, it is not needful for thee to hesitate to place this also (*which follows*).

(2) When the greatest tremor has taken place, where it has raged against cities and districts, another equal to it cannot supervene; but after the greatest (*shock*) gentle shocks follow, because the more severe has made already an outlet for the struggling winds. Besides, the remaining portions of the spirit that is left cannot do the same, nor is there need for them to struggle, for they have now found a way out, and follow whither the first and greatest energy escaped.

(3) *The following also*, heard from a most learned and serious-minded man, *I judge to be worthy of record*: when it by chance occurred, he happened to be bathing: he affirms that he saw *when in the bath the tessellas (small cups of stone), with which the ground was paved, separated from one another and united together anew*; and the water received into the fissures when the pavement spread apart; and when it was forced together, bubbling out and squeezed out. I have heard the same man telling that he saw *materials quiver more gently and compactly than the nature of the hard body allowed*.

## XXXII

(1) *These things, O Lucilius, best of men! as far as concerns the causes themselves. Now (with regard to) those which pertain to the*

RESEARCHES INTO NATURE

*fortifying of minds*, which it is more important in our (*opinion*) to render steadfast than learned: the one does not become (*so*) without the other, for strength accrues to the mind from nowhere else than from good employments, than from the contemplation of Nature.

(2) And whom has not emergency itself aroused and fortified against all? For why is it that I (*should tremble at*) a man or a wild beast? Why is it that I should tremble at an arrow or a lance? Greater perils await me: we are assailed by thunderbolts and soils and by great parts of Nature.

(3) Death is to be challenged, therefore, by a great mind, whether it come upon us with a vast and overwhelming rush, or with the daily and common passing. It matters nothing how menacing may be its approach, nor how great that may be which it brings upon us: that which it seeks from us is the least (*of things*). By this thing (*death*) old age will be removed from us, by it the aching of the ear; by it the abundance of the corrupted humors in us; by it the food insufficiently obedient to the stomach; by it the foot which has been slightly bruised!

(4) The vital soul (*anima*) of man, is a paltry thing, but a mighty thing is scorn of the vital soul; he who has scorned it, untroubled will see the agitated seas, though all the winds have roused them up. Though the tide in some perturbation of the world turn the entire ocean upon the land, untroubled he will watch the grim and frightful face of the sky shot with thunderbolts. Though the sky be broken open and combine its fires for the destruction of all things, for his own among the first, untroubled will he view the yawning earth, its bonds of union broken, though the kingdoms of the infernal regions be laid bare; he will stand intrepid over the abyss, and perhaps, because he is doomed to fall, will he plunge downwards.

(5) What is it to me how great the things may be by which I perish? Perishing itself is no great thing. In the same way, if we desire to be happy, if (*we desire*) to abide not in the fear of men nor of gods nor of circumstance; if we disdain fortune promising things utterly vain and threatening trivial things; if we desire to live tranquilly and to maintain with the gods themselves an argument concerning felicity, the vital soul (*anima*) must be held unencumbered. Whether stratagems or diseases assail it, whether the swords of foes, or the crashing of falling isles, or the ruin of the very earth, or the irresistible power of fires, or cities and fields involved in one com-

mon destruction — he who desires it (*the vital soul thus disengaged*) let him take (*it*).

(6) What else must I do than to cheer the dying, and send him forth with good omens: "Pass in strength; pass happily!" Be thou not at all irresolute: yield! There is no question of the thing, but of the time: thou dost what at some time must be done. Entreat thou not nor fear, nor recoil as if thou wert about to go forth to some ill: the nature of things, which brought thee forth, awaits thee, as does a better and a safer place.

(7) There the earth is never in tremor, nor do the winds rush upon each other with mighty clamor of the clouds; nor do conflagrations devastate countries and cities; nor is there fear of ship-wrecks ingulfing entire fleets, nor armies arrayed under opposing standards, nor a common madness for the reciprocal destruction of many thousands, nor pestilence and the flaming funeral pyres indiscriminately common to falling peoples. It (*death*) is a light thing: that we should fear (*it*) is a serious thing: it is preferable that it fall upon (*us*) once for all than that it always hang over (*us*).

(8) But should I fear to perish since the earth may perish before me; since those things are shaken which themselves do shake, and which come (*upon us*) to our hurt, yet to their own (*as well*)? The sea took Helice and Buris in their entirety: should I then fear for one small body? Ships sail over two towns — but two which we knew, which memory preserved, and literature has brought to our attention. How many others have been submerged in other places? How many people has either the earth or the sea taken in beneath itself? Should I protest against my own end, when I know that I am not to be without an end? Yes, verily, when I know that all things have an end, should I fear the last sigh?

(9) As much therefore as thou canst, Lucilius, encourage thy own self against the fear of death: this it is which makes us mean-spirited; this it is which disquiets and corrupts the very life which it spares; this it is which magnifies (*the danger of*) all those things — quakings of the earth and thunderbolts. All these things thou wilt endure with constancy if thou wilt reflect that there is no difference (*of importance*) between a short time and a long.

(10) There are hours which we have wasted: consider them to be days, consider (*them*) months, consider (*them*) years: we have wasted them, yet beyond question they were to pass away. What



## RESEARCHES INTO NATURE

matters it, prithee, whether I attain them? Time flows by, and abandons those most covetous of it; nor is the future mine, nor that which was: I hang upon a point of flying time, and to have been moderate is a thing of great worth.

(11) Laelius Sapiens neatly (*answered*) one who was saying: *I have sixty years. These which thou hast not, he says, thou callest sixty?* Do we not, in fact, understand the nature of limitless life and the fortune of a time nearer our own from the fact that we number the years that have passed?

(12) Let us fix this in the mind, let us continually tell ourselves: One must die. When, what, (*will be*) thy (*death*)? Death is Nature's law; death is mortals' tribute and duty, and the healing of all ills: whoever fears, has desired it! Laying aside all else, Lucilius, muse over this one thing, lest thou dread the (*mere*) name of death; make it familiar to thee by much reflexion, so that, if it so require, thou mayest go forth even to meet it.

### BOOK VII — I

(1) No one is so slow and stupid and so earthly in bent that he is not quickened to divine concerns, and does not arise with his whole faculties, when some marvelous thing, especially if new, has flashed forth from the sky. As long as what is customary runs its course, familiarity hides the magnitude of things, for we are so composed that matters of daily occurrence, even though they are worthy of astonishment, pass us by. On the other hand, even of the smallest things, if unusual appearances occur, they become a fascinating spectacle.

(2) Hence, this multitude of stars by which the beauty of an immense body is adorned, assembles not the people; but when something has been changed from what is customary, the faces of all men are turned to the sky. The sun has no watcher unless it be eclipsed; no one observes the moon, unless it be eclipsed; then cities cry out, then each one is in trepidation for himself from an empty superstition.

(3) How much greater are the following things: That the sun has just as many paces, if I may so say, as it has days, and closes the year by its circuit; that it is turned about from the solstice [in order to shorten the days; that, from the solstice] it decreases its altitude and gives length to the nights; that it hides the stars; that, although

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

it is so much greater than the earth, it does not burn it but sustains its heat by mingling in due proportion intensification and lessening (thereof); that it never causes full moon nor hides her unless she be opposite to himself!

(4) Yet we take no notice of these things as long as their regular courses are preserved; but if something is disordered, and has sprung forth out of the ordinary, we look, we question, we point it out: to such a degree is it natural to admire more what is new than (*what is*) great.

(5) The same thing happens with regard to comets. If a rare fire of unusual figure has appeared, no one does not desire to know what it may be, and, forgetful of other things, inquires about the stranger, ignorant whether he should admire or fear; nor are some men lacking who arouse terror, who announce that the significations of it (*the comet*) are serious. Hence they inform themselves, desiring to learn whether it be a portent or a heavenly body.

(6) But, by Hercules! *One can investigate nothing either more august, nor learn anything more useful, than what concerns the nature of the stars and of the heavenly bodies*, whether (*they be*) contracted flame, which our vision and the very light flowing from them and the heat descending thence assert, or whether they are not flaming spheres but certain solid and earthy bodies which, falling through fiery tracts, draw thence splendor and heat, shining not from their own (*power*);

(7) of which opinion there have been many great men, who have believed the heavenly orbs (*to be*) concreted out of hard (*material*) and feeding upon fire not their own. "For by itself," they say, "the flame would melt away unless it had something which it could hold and by which it would be held; the world had certainly already dissipated it by its (*the world's*) own whirling were it (*the flame merely*) globated and not placed within a stable body."

## II

(1) *In investigating these things, it will be useful to inquire whether comets be of the same nature as the higher (orbs)*, for they are seen to have certain things in common with the latter — risings and settings — also the same appearance, although (*this*) is scattered and spreads much wider forth; and they are equally fiery and shining.

## RESEARCHES INTO NATURE

(2) Hence, if all the heavenly orbs are earthy, to these also will there be the same condition; but if they are nothing other than pure fire, and tarry for six months at a time, and if the revolution and the velocity of the world detach them (*the comets*) not, they also (*the superior orbs*) are able to abide in tenuous matter and not be scattered by the constant circular movement of the sky.

(3) *It also pertains to this matter to examine thoroughly the following, so that we may know whether the world revolves while the earth remains motionless, or whether the earth is turned around while the world remains motionless*; for there have been those who have said that it is ourselves whom — (*though we are*) ignorant of the fact — the nature of things carries (*around*), and that the risings and settings occur not by the motion of the sky but that we ourselves (*our globe*) arise and set: a thing worthy of our reflexion in order that we may know in what condition of things we are, whether we are allotted a very slow abode or an exceedingly rapid one; whether the god (*move*) all things around us, or whether we ourselves (*our globe*) move.

### III

(1) It is necessary to have records of former risings of the comets, but on account of their rarity, their course cannot yet be understood, nor can it be discovered whether they keep regular cycles and whether a definite order (*law*) brings them forth each to its day.

(2) This watching of the celestial bodies is something new, and has been only recently introduced into Greece. Democritus too — the most subtil of all the ancients — says that he suspects that there are many stars which move, but he has set down neither their number nor their names, the courses of even five of the heavenly bodies (*planets*) not yet being understood. Eudoxus was the first to carry into Greece from Egypt (*knowledge of*) these motions, yet he says nothing about comets; hence it seems that not even among the Egyptians — among whom there has been very great attention paid to the sky — has this part (*of knowledge*) been worked out. Afterwards Conon — a painstaking man and himself an investigator — collected, indeed, the eclipses of the sun preserved by the Egyptians, but has made no mention of comets, and he would not have passed this over if he had learned of anything that had been discovered among them.

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

### IV

(1) Two men, certainly, who say that they have studied among the Chaldaeans — Epigenes, and Apollonius of Myndus,\* most learned in natural philosophy — are at variance between themselves: the latter, in fact, says that comets are placed in the number of wandering stars by the Chaldaeans and that their courses are understood (*by the Chaldaeans*). Epigenes, on the other hand, says that the Chaldaeans have nothing recorded about comets, but that *they are regarded as being inkindled by a certain whirlwind of aroused and circularly twisted air*.

(2) *First, then, if it please thee, let us set forth and refute his opinions.* It is his persuasion that the star of Saturn has the largest amount of energy for all movements of the bodies on high: “this (*Saturn*), when it bears down upon the neighborhood (proxima signa) of Mars, or crosses over [into] the neighborhood of the moon, or enters the sun’s rays, being by nature windy and cold, contracts and conglobates the air in many places; then, if it take to itself the sun’s rays, it thunders and lightens; if it have Mars consenting, it hurls thunderbolts.”

(3) “Moreover,” he says, “thunderbolts have one kind of matter, lightnings another kind; the evaporation of waters and of all humid matter sets in motion splendors in the sky — menacing only, without a blow: but that hotter and drier exhalation of the earth forces out the thunderbolts. Meteors (trabes) and fire-balls (faces) — which are in no wise different one from the other except in magnitude — are produced in the following manner:

(4) When some globe of air has inclosed within itself humid and terrene matters, that we call a vortex (*whirlwind*), and wheresoever it is carried, it exhibits an appearance of extended fire, which lasts as long as that combination of the fire continues, (*the combination*) carrying within itself much of the humid and of the terrene.”

### V

(1) To begin with the nearest lies, it is false that fire-balls and meteors are forced out from the whirlwind, for the whirlwind is formed and carried in the neighborhood of the earth, and on that account tears out trees even by the roots, and wheresoever it have fallen upon

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\*A city in Caria.

## RESEARCHES INTO NATURE

the soil it denudes it, sometimes whirling away groves and buildings, generally being lower than the clouds, and in any case never higher; and, on the other hand, it is the loftier part of the sky which exhibits the meteors: thus they have never stood against (*under*) the clouds.

(2) Moreover, the whirlwind being much more rapid than all clouds, it is seized and whirled into a globe; besides these facts, it ceases quickly, breaking itself apart from its own fury; but meteors (trabes) do not rush across nor fly by like fire-balls (faces), but linger and shine brightly in the same part of the sky.

(3) Charmander, also, in the book which he wrote about comets, says that there was seen by Anaxagoras a grand and unusual light in the sky of the magnitude of a very large meteor (trabis); and Callisthenes relates that it shone for many days before the sea had overwhelmed Helice and Buris.

(4) Aristotle says that it was not a meteor (trabis), but a comet; besides, by reason of its surpassing heat, no scattering of fire appeared, but with the lapse of time, when it was already less brilliant, it took on again its cometary appearance. In which fire there were many things worthy (*of mention*) which should be noticed, yet nothing more so than that when it had flamed in the sky, the sea immediately thereafter came upon Buris and Helice.

(5) Did, then, Aristotle believe that not this one only but that all meteors (trabes) are comets — they having this difference, that in the former (*meteors*) the fire is continuous, and scattered (*interrupted*) in the others? Meteors (trabes), however, have an equal flame, not interrupted nor waning in any manner, condensed even in the most distant portions, such as Callisthenes relates (*the flame*) was in that one which I have just mentioned.

## VI

(1) "*There are two kinds of comets,*" says Epigenes. "One kind throws out heat at every point, nor do these change their place; the other kind put forth in one part only a flying fire like the hair of the head, and pass by the stars (of which kind two have been seen in our age). The former ones are hairy everywhere and without movement and are generally small, and are kindled from the same causes as the meteors (trabes) and fire-balls (faces) are, (*arising*) out of a tempest of turbid air whirling around with itself many dry and moist particles exhaled from the earth;

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

(2) for spirit is able, streaming forth through narrow openings, to inflame the superincumbent air which is filled with aliments appropriate to fire. Then, lest from some cause it (*the air*) flow back again and be abated, to drive it forth out of the inflamed part; then, a second time on the next day, and on the following (*days*), to arise and to inkindle the same spot: for we see winds return for many days, according to fixed law; rains also, and other kinds of storms, return according to rule."

(3) *That I may briefly, however, express his meaning, he thinks that these comets are produced by the same method by which fires thrown forth from a whirlwind are produced.* There is this difference, that they [the whirlwinds] are forced downwards to the earth, from the upper regions: and the latter (*comets*) force their way from the earth to the upper regions.

## VII

(1) *Many things are alleged against these (theories).* First, if the wind were related causally, a comet would never appear without wind; but it appears even when the air is exceedingly still. Next, if it were produced by the wind, it would fall with the wind; and if it began with the wind, it would increase with the wind, and would be the hotter in proportion as the latter is the more violent. To these (*reflexions*) this also should be added, that the wind drives about many parts of the air; the comet, however, appears in a single place; also that the wind does not attain such a highth that comets are seen above the range where the winds are allowed to blow.

(2) *He next passes on to those which, he says, have a closer likeness to stars, which move forwards and pass by the constellations. These, he says, are produced from the same causes as are those (just spoken of), which he says are lower; the only difference being this, that the exhalations of the earth, carrying along many dry particles, seek the higher parts and are driven to the upper parts of the sky by the storm-wind (aquilone — north wind).*

(3) If the north wind (aquilo — *storm-wind*) did drive them (*the comets*) they would always be blown to the south, whither this wind flows: but their courses are various: some to the east, some to the west, all in an oblique direction, which (*sort of*) course wind would not give. Finally, if the impulse of the north wind raised them aloft, comets would not arise with other winds: but in fact they so arise.

## RESEARCHES INTO NATURE

### VIII

(1) Let us now refute this explanation of his (for both are made use of). Whatever of a humid and of a dry nature the earth has exhaled, when it (*the exhalation*) unites into a single body, spirit by the very discord of the bodies whirls it into a vortex (*whirlwind*); then that energy of the whirling wind kindles whatever it holds within itself by the motion and raises it on high, and the shining of the resultant fire remains as long a time as its aliments suffice: when these last are exhausted, the fire subsides.

(2) He who says this, does not observe of what nature the course of whirlwinds is and of what nature that of comets: of the former, it is vehement and violent, and is swifter than the winds themselves; but of comets (*the course*) is smooth, and reveals neither by daylight nor by night the space traversed. Next, the movement of whirlwinds is irregular and in various directions, and, if I may use the words of Sallustius, *full of eddies*; but that of comets is orderly, and follows a fixed path.

(3) Who among us would admit that the moon and the five heavenly orbs (*the planets*) are hurried along by the wind, or are revolved by a whirlwind? No one, I fancy. Why? Because their courses are not disturbed and are without irregularity; we allot the same to comets: they follow their courses neither confusedly nor wildly, as one would believe them to be, if driven by turbulent and irregular causes.

(4) Finally, even if those vortices (*whirlwinds*) do contain terrene and moist (*particles*) and could force them up to a lofty elevation from the lower parts, nevertheless they are not carried above the moon: their entire range extends to the clouds. But we see the comets commingling with the orbs of the sky (*stellis*) and gliding along through the higher parts. Therefore, it is not likely that the whirlwind lasts as long a time (*as the comets*), and, in proportion as it is larger, it is the more quickly broken up.

### IX

(1) Let him, then, choose which he will: either a slight energy is not able to reach to such magnitude; or, being great and vehement, it breaks itself to pieces the more quickly. Moreover, those lower comets, on account of this — as they think — do not rise very high, because they hold more of the earthy matter [and] their weight holds

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

them down: and, besides, it is necessary that there be a larger quantity of matter in these comets of longer duration than in the higher ones, for they would not be so long visible unless they were sustained by larger nourishment.

(2) I was saying but a moment ago that the vortex (*whirlwind*) cannot last long, nor become visible above the moon or so high as the place of the stars. Beyond question, it is the struggling of several winds among themselves which produces the whirlwind: this (*struggle*) cannot long last, for when spirit, unfixed and unsettled, has become involved (*in the struggle*) at the last the energies of all give way to the one.

(3) No great storm lasts long: hurricanes, in proportion as they are the more violent, last the less time; winds, when they have reached their highth, cease from all violence: necessarily, they tend towards this end by their very impetuosity. Hence, no one has seen a whirlwind lasting an entire day; not even for an hour: its velocity is wonderful, and wonderful is its brevity. Besides, it twists most violently and most quickly near the earth: the higher it is the weaker it is and the looser, and on this account it is scattered.

(4) Add this, also, that even if it could push right on to the highest parts, where the path of the heavenly orbs is, it would be dissolved without fail by that very movement which draws along the universe; for what is swifter than that revolution of the world? By it, the energies of all the winds united into one would be dissipated, as also the solid and mighty framework of the earth, and much more so a small portion of twisted air.

## X

(1) Moreover, fire which has been inclosed in a whirlwind cannot last in the upper regions, unless the whirlwind itself persist. What, furthermore, is so incredible as a very long tarrying in a whirlwind? Unquestionably, motion is overcome by a contrary motion; and that region has its own revolution which grips the sky

*And hurries along the lofty orbs and whirls (them) with rapid turning.*  
(Ovid, *Metam.*, ii, 71)

And that it may give them some delay — a thing that cannot happen in any manner! — what is to be said about those comets which have appeared every six months?

(2) Next, there must be two motions in the same place, the one



## OCCULTISM AND EASTERN YOGA IN THE NEW ERA

that is divine and constant, pursuing its own work without intermission; the other, new and recent, and carried in a whirlwind: necessarily, therefore, the one is a hindrance to the other; but certainly that orbit of the moon, and the movement of the other bodies moving above the moon, are unchangeable, nor are they ever uncertain, nor do they pause, nor do they give us any suspicion whatsoever of a delay befalling them. One can give no credence (*to the notion*) that the whirlwind — the most violent and disordered kind of storm — can reach the central ranks of the heavenly orbs, and thus find place among things that are ordered and serene.

(3) Let us believe that fire is kindled by a whirlwind in circular motion, and that this (*fire*), driven upwards, offers us the notion and the appearance of a lengthened orb: I think that it must be the same kind of thing as that which produces the fire. But the shape of a whirlwind is round: for it is turned in the same track and is twisted after the manner of a column whirling upon itself. Hence the fire also which is inclosed (*in it*) must be similar to it: for, in fact, it is long in form and scattered, and least like what is compacted into a sphere.

*(To be continued)*

## OCCULTISM AND EASTERN YOGA IN THE NEW ERA

C. J. RYAN, M. A.

**T**HEOSOPHISTS of the new era have to face a change in the attitude of the public that the older generation did not contact. This is the new point of view in regard to what may comprehensively be called 'the occult.' Students will need to study the situation, as it contains some unsatisfactory features.

For a long time believers in the occult have been looked down upon as being credulous and lacking in judgment. 'Supernatural' or 'miraculous' phenomena, if endorsed by the church, were of course respectable, but other kinds of occult or psychic claims were absolutely *tabu*.

Theosophists, however, have always rejected the 'supernatural' or 'miraculous,' but accepted the possibility of various kinds of occult phenomena governed by natural, though hidden, laws. H. P. Blavatsky knew some of these laws and she defied the public opin-

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

ion of the nineteenth century by illustrating her teachings with an occasional demonstration of her knowledge of and control over forces unknown in the Western world.

Her reward for courageously showing that human beings possess powers unknown to themselves was obloquy and constant misrepresentation. But today, only forty years after her death, she is beginning to be vindicated, for large numbers of earnest and intelligent persons in every country are giving serious attention to various branches of occultism. Modern science itself has helped to this end, though unwittingly, by asking the world to listen respectfully to such weird ideas as 'a Finite yet Unbounded Universe'; 'Curved Space'; the Quantum Theory, etc., all containing apparent paradoxes as strange as any that occult phenomena present.

Today, mediumistic and other psychic phenomena are being studied with scientific care; university professors of good standing are analysing the foundations of astrology; everyone is reading descriptions of occult experiences in many lands, especially in the Orient where the Ancient Wisdom has not quite disappeared from sight. Hypnotism has become orthodox, after a hard battle; telepathy is denied only by those who have not studied the evidence; at a great medical congress recently held in Canada an address was respectfully received which treated sympathetically of mediumistic phenomena. It is hardly necessary to mention the general increase in interest in Spiritualism which has grown from the anxiety of so many sorrowing relatives of war-victims.

The mystery of the fire-walking ceremony in the East and in the Pacific islands has been carefully investigated by competent observers, with no resulting explanation as to the method by which the devotees prevent themselves being terribly or fatally burned.

The divining rod for locating hidden springs is constantly being employed with success, yet no one has offered any reasonable explanation other than that its action is produced by some unknown, and therefore 'occult,' power in the 'dowser' or operator himself.

Perhaps more attention has been attracted to certain forms of occultism which demonstrate the conscious possession of unsuspected powers, by the writings of travelers like Mrs. Rosita Forbes, Mme. David-Néel; Mr. Seabrook and Lord Curzon; Egyptologists such as Mr. Weigall and Professor Mardus; Oriental students like L. Adams Beck or D. G. Mukerji, and many others.

## OCCULTISM AND EASTERN YOGA IN THE NEW ERA

Mrs. Forbes and Mr. Seabrook have personally contacted African and other conscious workers of phenomena of high and low grade. Mr. Weigall's accounts of his contact with alleged Egyptian magic are very significant, as he was able to compare them with the ancient records of similar phenomena in the papyri. The controversy aroused by the extraordinary number of fatalities among archaeologists and others connected with the opening of Tutankhamen's Tomb has drawn attention to the darker possibilities of ancient Egyptian science.

Mme. David-Néel is a learned French student of Buddhism, and in pursuit of knowledge among the Tibetan lamas she came across many occult phenomena. She even claims some elementary knowledge of occult methods, including the occult method of preserving the bodily heat when exposed to the severest cold.

The magazine *Asia* lately published an article by a responsible writer describing Oriental jugglery, in which he tells of the mango and other well-known sleight-of-hand tricks performed in India. But he also recounts his experience with an unusually gifted performer who was able to throw a magical glamor over a crowd and make them see objects and actions that were not really present. He declares that this is the real magic which is quite unknown in the West, and his observations are worth noting because they are first-hand, and not repetitions of what someone else heard from an unknown third party who cannot be reached. H. P. B. speaks of the power of throwing a glamor of this kind as a far higher one than the simple form of 'suggestion' lately discovered in the West.

All this, and much more, has been educational and has tended to break down some of our Occidental conceit arising chiefly from our great progress in mechanical invention. It will also make it easier for Theosophy, with its teaching of the great possibilities of the human soul, to be listened to, especially when the question of H. P. Blavatsky's occult powers comes up. It will not be so difficult for intelligent persons to comprehend that men of greater wisdom and knowledge than our Academicians may exist in the East — really high spiritual Teachers who also have command over unknown physical laws.

But there is another side to this spread of the knowledge of the occult. It gives a new opportunity for imposture and sordid money-making graft. Already books are published, lectures being delivered,

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

classes held — for suitable remuneration — professing to reveal marvelous secrets of occultism. The gullible are entertained with impossible adventures among the 'Adepts,' usually in India, but also in South or Central America in romantic surroundings. They all bear the mark of cheap fiction, and give an utterly false and misleading impression of the real Teachers and their unsensational, hard and unremitting work for the benefit of mankind. The occult life is not an entertainment for leisure hours; it *is* the Great Adventure, the only one that is worth a true man's attention, but it means the abandonment of much that the personality holds dear; from the worldly standpoint it is a life of sacrifice and toil.

From all the authentic information we have received it is evident that the Great Teachers lead very simple lives from the material standpoint, and they economize their energies by directing them only to those places where they will do the best work. To imagine that they spend their time entertaining travelers with occult phenomena, as we read in much of the trashy nonsense mentioned above, is so ridiculous that no serious inquirer into Theosophy would be likely to believe it. Theosophy, whose highest exponents are the real Masters, is very practical and its methods are based on ages of experience. The production of occult phenomena by an Adept of the White Lodge can be done only under strict necessity and for very serious reasons. At times H. P. Blavatsky, and even one of the Masters, were prohibited from using their occult powers, as can be read in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*. Students of Theosophy should be quick to recognize the falsity of the fake stories of mysterious Adepts, and ready to expose them, for they are the poisoned weapons of the enemies of Truth.

Returning to the genuine information about Eastern and other occultism, now beginning to be taken more seriously by intelligent people than for perhaps a couple of centuries, certain of the books or articles contain suggestions that may easily mislead the unwary. In fact, even some members of the Theosophical Society in the past have suffered severely from their foolish temerity in dabbling with superficially attractive forms of so-called occultism, in spite of the earnest warnings of those who knew the dangers.

Some of the newer books of travel or reminiscence, otherwise admirable in tone and rich in interest, discuss more or less openly psycho-physiological methods of the Eastern *Hatha-Yoga*, such as

control of the breathing, the adoption of peculiar postures of the limbs, and other abnormal exercises. All these are claimed to be preparatory to mental control, and necessary before spiritual development can proceed. Before very great progress is made the yogî sometimes is 'rewarded' by a flash of clairvoyance or a suggestion of strange powers almost in his grasp.

The materialist who denies such possibilities is simply ignorant of the laws of man's inner structure; he has shut his eyes to everything but the superficial. We need not imitate him, but in accepting the reality of *Hatha-Yoga* and its like we do not admit that it is a desirable method for those who earnestly wish to enter the Path of true spiritual development.

There is far more behind the stories of *Hatha Yogîs* and their phenomena than is known to the writers of the alluring books — both good and evil, according to conditions. But as the subject is becoming popular in literature, it is well to repeat the Theosophical attitude without mincing matters.

This attitude is found in the works of H. P. Blavatsky, and has been reiterated by her successors. *Hatha-Yoga* is not for the Western man who wishes to keep sane, healthy, and to enter the *spiritual* Path under the wholesome conditions suitable to his bodily constitution, his environment, his natural duties, and the incarnation into which he came.

The true course for us is to begin our occult education by spiritual cultivation, by learning something about our weaknesses and the way to transcend them. H. P. B. says:

. . . he who would profit by the wisdom of the universal mind, has to reach it through *the whole of Humanity* without distinction of race, complexion, religion, or social status. It is *altruism*, not *ego-ism* even in its most legal and noble conception, that can lead the unit to merge its little self in the Universal Selves. It is to *these* needs and to this work that the true disciple of true Occultism has to devote himself if he would obtain *theo-sophy*, divine Wisdom and Knowledge . . . *true Occultism or Theosophy* is the "Great Renunciation of SELF."  
— 'Occultism and the Occult Arts' (*Lucifer*)

The true occultism, the "kingdom of heaven," lies before us ready to be "taken by violence": when the battle is won the victor cannot be dislodged. But the battlefield is not the physical or astral bodies; it is the strongly entrenched passional and personal nature, which as soon as it is driven out of one position occupies another.

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

How many among even worthy persons have gained complete self-control; pure unselfish love for humanity, for friends and enemies alike, as Christ taught his chelas? Even the best of us are startled at times by a flash of self-revelation: "Can I have done that? Is it possible that I have not conquered that subtil temptation so carefully hidden away?" Until the snake of personality is finally killed, the doors of the inner world may not be opened with safety — safety not only to oneself but to others. Another quotation from H. P. B. in the same article reads:

. . . the golden gate of Wisdom may get transformed into the wide gate and the broad way "that leadeth unto destruction," and therefore "many be they that enter in thereby." This is the Gate of the Occult arts, practised for selfish motives and in the absence of the restraining and beneficent influence of *ĀTMĀ-VIDYĀ*. We are in the Kali Yuga [Dark Age] and its fatal influence is a thousand-fold more powerful in the West than it is in the East; hence the easy preys made by the Powers of the Age of Darkness in this cyclic struggle, and the many delusions under which the world is now laboring. One of these is the relative facility with which men fancy they can get at the 'Gate' and cross the threshold of Occultism without any great sacrifice.

The Teacher points out that it is desire for *personal power* and *personal gratification* that inspires the unwise to tread where the far more advanced and fitted venture to approach with hesitation, and only when they have disburdened themselves of their personal desires.

In a recent book, which is already sufficiently advertised without mentioning its name here, the author tells how he was attracted to the Eastern *Hatha-Yoga* by its promise of a far more real and intense life than the superficial though adventurous career he had enjoyed and whose wine he had drunk with rapture. Whether by oversight or otherwise no stress is laid upon a high spiritual and altruistic motive for challenging the unknown, and the impression left upon the present writer, at least, is that this was a case in which the 'personal' baggage referred to by H. P. B. was not abandoned, and that the welfare of humanity was not the sole motive for the attempt to force the way into the occult world. As East is meeting West more and more this kind of thing will increase, and Theosophists will be challenged by their sense of duty and brotherhood to present the true meaning of 'occultism' and the only safe and sane and wholesome way for Western students to make real progress in spiritual life.

Many of the older students of Theosophy can look back and see

## OCCULTISM AND EASTERN YOGA IN THE NEW ERA

promising workers for the Movement who wrecked that delicate instrument, the body, and even the mind, by unwise experimentation on lines of *Hatha-Yoga*. Some died of tuberculosis; others ended their days in asylums. They were warned, but they knew better than their Teachers! In *The Path*, William Quan Judge published the results of careful medical research on the effects of 'breath control' upon Westerners who rashly tried it, and many other warnings were given by H. P. Blavatsky, Katherine Tingley, and other qualified persons. Some bitterly regretted their obstinacy, when too late.

It is possible — we need not deny it — that certain bodily exercises, supervised by careful teachers, may have a place *in the East* among those whose racial heredity, early training, thought-atmosphere, and other conditions of life are quite different from ours; but it is a very small place even for them. The fundamental principle of true occultism or spiritual development is the same all over the world; it is our first and hardest job to begin the struggle against the lower egotistical nature which is so enormously strong in the normal man of our stage of evolution — it is the real devil, the only devil we are likely to meet. Personality is only to be eradicated by its opposite: impersonal love, self-forgetfulness, as our Theosophical Teachers always repeat, in harmony with the teachings of all the Wise along the ages.

Answering questions W. Q. Judge wrote:

I strongly advise you to give up all yoga practices, which in almost all cases have disastrous results unless guided by a competent teacher. . . . What then is the panacea finally, the royal talisman? It is DUTY, Selflessness. Duty persistently followed is the highest yoga. . . . If you can do no more than duty it will bring you to the goal. And, my dear friends, I can swear it, the Masters are watching us all, and that without fail when we come to the right point and really deserve They manifest to us. At all times I know They help and try to aid us as far as we will let Them.

Why the Masters are anxious (to use a word of our own) that as many as possible may reach the state of power and love They are in. . . . He ought to assure himself that his motive in knowing and being is that he may help all creatures. . . . It is that boundless charity of love that led Buddha to say: "Let the sins of this dark age fall on me that the world may be saved," and not a desire for escape or for knowledge. It is expressed in the words: "THE FIRST STEP IN TRUE MAGIC IS DEVOTION TO THE INTERESTS OF OTHERS."

The Ancient Wisdom pronounced the aphorism 'Discipline precedes philosophy.' Is this discipline what some of the curiosity-

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

hunting globe-trotters think — *hatha-yoga* practices for bodily control? Discipline of the body is good, so far as it provides a healthy vehicle for a healthy mind to work in, according to the conditions of that incarnation. Sanitation, wholesome food, exercise, and temperance in all things are necessary conditions for progress. But the indispensable factor to achieve the union with the inner god, as our Leader never loses an opportunity of telling the world, is by self-forgetfulness, love for all that is, and by serious, watchful self-study. The Light is everywhere; when we succeed in opening the prison-doors of our personality — or the Golden Gates that open into Freedom, if you prefer — it will enter.

Then it will be safe to pass through the “Hall of Learning” spoken of by H. P. B. in *The Voice of the Silence*, in which every flower has its snake coiled round the stem. But not till the candidate is well and truly prepared.

## JULIAN THE APOSTLE A Fourth-Century History

P. A. MALPAS, M. A.

### ON THE MARCH

**I**F you draw a great triangle with Antioch pointing north at the northeast corner of the Mediterranean, the base some distance to the west of Alexandria on the African coast, and its other end at the mouths of the Euphrates and Tigris at the head of the Persian Gulf, you may say in a rough sort of way that the Euphrates occupies the whole of the right hand side of the triangle. And much more than that, for the great river has its beginning in the Armenian Mountains far to the north and towards the Black Sea. But we are not concerned with this magnificent watercourse until it passes within a hundred miles or so of Antioch to the east of that great city — the third or fourth city in the Western world. The tremendous deserts to the south are avoided by cutting straight across to the east until you come to the river, passing through Beroea (Aleppo) and Hierapolis. When you have come to Hierapolis you may say that you have reached the river, because it is already in the fertile belt which stretches all the way down from the Mesopotamian border to the Persian



## JULIAN THE APOSTLE

Gulf. Mesopotamia is simply the Greek word for 'between the rivers' (Euphrates and Tigris), and as soon as you are over the Euphrates you are in Mesopotamia, since the Tigris runs north in a rough parallel to the more western river.

The Romans had long ago obtained power over the countries between Mesopotamia and Antioch and also had Armenia in their interests. They were also joined by some of the great warriors of the North and West, the terrible Goths.

Julian's army of 83,000 took five days to reach Hierapolis, about twenty miles west of the Euphrates. The country far to the east was still Roman, but the whole trouble was that it was constantly being attacked by the Persians under the great Sapor, and the Romans were able to send only punitive forces, which did little more than reassert the Roman suzerainty. There were Roman cities which held off the Persians when they could, though sometimes they were taken and destroyed and the Roman garrison led away into captivity.

Julian's plan was to stop all this by aiming at the heart of Persia, far to the south, where were Ctesiphon and Seleucia and Babylon. If he could punish these cities then he need never fear that the Persians would again raid the Roman sphere of influence; they would be afraid. Whether Julian knew it was in the plan, or thought it was, to push on to India, history will never know; only the secret records of the oracles and the gods can decide the point.

Julian was a true soldier, just as he was an expert at everything he undertook, both because he had the gods behind him and willingly followed their indications, and because he had the Initiate's power of concentration on the work in hand. Where another would have gone straight east somewhere towards Nineveh and in a direct line for India — just as Alexander did — he only pretended to go. As soon as it seemed plain to the Persians that he had left the Euphrates behind and was making straight for the Tigris, he suddenly turned at a sharp angle to the southward and picked up his flotilla of provisions and supplies at the point where he again came to the Euphrates.

He had left Antioch on March 5th, 363. By March 27th he had rejoined his flotilla on the Euphrates. But the eastward movement was not entirely abandoned. A strong detachment under Sebastian, formerly Duke or Governor of Egypt, and of Procopius, a relative of Julian and his probable heir, were sent on to Nisibis and ordered to hold the irregulars in check. Then, having more or less reduced

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

that part of the country to order and put it under the care of his ally, Arsaces the King of Armenia, they were to march south and join him for the important part of the campaign.

At Callinicum where he rejoined his flotilla, Julian celebrated the feast of Demeter-Ceres the Mother of the Gods, the patroness of the Eleusinian Mysteries. Going down the Euphrates the Romans reached Circensium, say half way to Babylon, after about 350 miles of marching from Antioch. This was almost the last garrison in Roman territory and the real campaign was about to begin.

Constantius had played at this war for several years, never attaining any real success; and Julian found out one of the reasons. While still in Roman territory he saw long trains of camels tied head to tail as is the custom to tie them to this day.

“What are they carrying?” he asked.

“Wine!” he was told. “The best wine of every country and all the means for making its use as pleasant as possible. There’s nothing like doing the thing in style!”

“Isn’t there?” asked the Emperor. “They seem to have forgotten that this is war, not a picnic. The only wine a soldier should drink is that which he loots from the enemy and wins by his sword. Send it all back! I myself am a soldier and I will have just the same diet as the rest!”

There was no answer to such an argument, and the wine was restored to its cellars. All luxury was cut off. But the baggage-animals were not stinted. It was early spring and the grass grew lush by the riverside; the animals reveled in its freshness.

The first engagement was a good omen for the Romans. They came to an island where the Chaboras joins the Euphrates and here there was a fort to be taken.

When the garrison saw the surrounding hills covered with armed men they opened the gates and gave themselves up, going to live in Roman territory. This first capture provided so much in the way of good things that the Roman army lived as well as in a town for several days.

The next fort was an island so built around with a wall that there was not even foothold outside the wall. Julian did not stop to waste time over it, but pushed on, remarking that he would come back and take it when he was ready. Arrived in the land of the Assyrians, the Romans had all the provisions they required. It was a rich

## JULIAN THE APOSTLE

country, full of palms and abundant crops and vines. The small towns found everywhere were unable to put up any resistance.

Julian could not prevent the army from drinking the wine they looted, but they did not drink to excess. They remembered that one man who became drunk was promptly executed. The Assyrians watched them from the surrounding hills helpless to withstand them.

The Euphrates was much like the Nile. The spring showers in the Armenian hills melted the snows of winter and the river swelled enormously. Dykes and canals were led everywhere over the surrounding land and the crops rivaled those of the Egyptian river.

Seeing that the Romans must keep to the river, the Assyrians opened all the dykes and flooded the country. The water was a serious obstacle even on the flat, but the innumerable dykes and canals made sudden dips which meant marching breast high or as high as the chin, and at times the water covered the heads of the advancing soldiers. Those who could swim were in their element. Like a lot of school-boys they raced each other to see who could go farthest in the shortest time. But those who could not swim had to make the best of it, bridging the canals and trying to keep to the raised paths under water, often falling off and having to be hauled out; officers were rescued by their servants, servants by their officers. They made fun of the whole thing; they could do nothing else, for even the Emperor himself shared their difficulties and, as was his way, laughed at every trouble. Another — say Constantius — would not have hesitated to make the men stand in the water and hold boards on their heads so that he could cross dryshod.

But Julian was not like that. There was a job to be done and he did it in the shortest and most direct way. His gorgeous purple robe — the insignia of his Imperial office, he could not lay down. So with it on he just plunged through mud and slime and water, showing the purple robe all stained. How could any of the army make difficulties of the passage with such an example to follow? Very few men were lost in the floods which the Assyrians made.

But Julian no longer troubled about small castles and forts. They were not so many miles now from the heart of the country, where the rivers approach one another very closely before finally joining, a little below Babylon. On the Euphrates was the city of Pyrisapor, named after the reigning King, Sapor. East of this city, a few miles away on the Tigris, were the cities of Ctesiphon and Seleucia; once these

were taken, Persia would be almost at the mercy of the Romans.

Pyrisapor had been built with one wall within another, one town inside another. On the assault the defenders retreated to the inner town, as being more strongly fortified. Many of the Romans were killed by arrows from the walls, but persevering, the rest raised mounds level with the top of the inner wall and took the place. Terms were agreed upon: that the townsfolk should not be given back to the Persians even when peace was made. They had fought as well as they could, but even so, the Persians would have treated them as they treated all who surrendered — they would have flayed them alive. And they didn't want to be flayed alive. They preferred to join the Romans.

Julian was rough-and-ready and democratic, but he was a disciplinarian for all that. The cavalry appointed to protect the advance had been very troublesome. Three times they had threatened mutiny (they didn't call it 'striking' in those days,) if they did not get a bonus in preference to the rest of the army. And on top of that they 'lost' their captain instead of following him into the thick of the fray. It was cowardice.

Julian was unarmed and he had only three of his guards with him. But he went into the midst of these turbulent cavalry and picked out ten men whom he ordered to dismount instantly. Then he delivered them over to the executioners as a punishment for their desertion of their officer.

The country was rich and there was plenty of food. They discovered many women and children hidden in cellars and caves and underground-passages. The captives in fact, numbered more than the Roman army; yet there was abundance of food for all.

More floods remained to be encountered. Some advised moving out into the desert and marching on dry land. Julian would have none of it. It might be difficult to go through the floods, but the whole army might face death from thirst if they went out into the desert. They would go on as they had done before.

Julian was a bookworm, but a practical one. He dug out of his baggage a copy of Plutarch and showed the advisers how Crassus had led his men to certain ruin doing exactly the same thing. They had no more to say. And as if he had been under the guidance of the gods, the palm-trees soon became plentiful and there was abundance of wood for making bridges. The soldier-boys treated the

## JULIAN THE APOSTLE

whole thing as a game. While some were going over the planks, others dived into the flood and raced them swimming. The floods had proved a failure as defense.

There was a fortress that seemed impregnable. It was on a precipitous island, and the walls were built as part of the cliffs, of burnt brick cemented with asphalt, very strong. There was a small space by the riverside where grew tall and thick reeds, covering the entrance to a passage which led up into the rock. From this the Persians sallied out and one day nearly caught the Emperor; he only escaped after a hand-to-hand fight. So sure were the Persians that they were safe that they jeered at the Romans from the walls and insulted them in every way.

The Romans made a little bridge from the bank to the island. Then under cover of their coracles, made of hide, they attacked the cliff by mining. The arrows and stones showered on them from the walls and could not penetrate the upturned boats under which they were working. Even fire would not touch them. The Persians knew that their castle was being mined but they did not believe it possible for the Romans to succeed. They dined and drank and made merry in their lofty nest. But the Romans had no wine; they burrowed and worked unceasingly. The mine was as wide and as tall as a man. The first Roman that emerged from the hole came out at midnight in the middle of a tower; he was unobserved by the garrison. One followed after another, and silencing a woman they found sleeping with a little child, they soon occupied the doors of the towers. Then they signalled their companions below to shout.

The Roman victory was complete. The garrison were killed as they jumped out of bed and ran about the place wondering what had happened. Many of them threw themselves over the wall and were killed that way; others were thrown over by the Romans; the rising sun looked upon a scene of horror. It was all against the Emperor's orders, but the soldiers remembered those of their companions who had been killed with arrows and in other ways and it was impossible to restrain them. The Unconquered Sun, the Emperor's patron, had not been intended to look upon such a sight at his rising.

Finally the castle was destroyed to the last brick. It was a lesson to the Persians. They now believed that the Romans were invincible, while the Romans *knew* they were.

The Emperor Julian, always doing great things and thinking

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

them trifles, this time really thought that he had done something worth while.

"There! That will give Syrian Libanius, the famous Sophist of Antioch, something to make a speech about," was what he said. He was right. His own annals have perished, and it is Libanius who has told us the story.

After this even the baggage-porters went out and captured Persian towns; the inhabitants were so afraid of the Romans. The plan was to punish the Persians so severely that they should no longer dare to attack the Roman-occupied territory every year as they had been doing under the inefficient Constantius. Therefore every town was plundered, and all that could not be used or carried away was thrown into the river or burnt.

A magnificent palace belonging to the Persian King was burnt and all in it destroyed; buildings, gardens, trees, shrubs, flowers, tapestries, all were demolished. Attached was a magnificent park full of game; wild boars were kept there for the chase. The Romans had exciting days catching and roasting them.

Forty-five miles from Babylon the Roman army came to the neighborhood of Seleucia and Ctesiphon on the Tigris, the twin cities. These were the goal of their ambition. There was a great difficulty. The junction of the rivers was some way to the south. The Romans were on the Euphrates. If they crossed to the cities by land they would have to abandon their flotilla. If they went down the river they could not easily get back up the Tigris-branch against the stream.

Julian was always ready for every situation. Again his books served him well.

A couple of prisoners were caught, an old man and a youth. They were questioned about a canal that had once united the Euphrates and Tigris between the place where they were and the cities of Seleucia and Ctesiphon. The young man told all he knew, not knowing the object of this archaeological inquiry. The old man suspected, but answered fully because he saw no way of avoiding it. He realized at once that Julian knew perfectly well what he was talking about, but he did not know that Julian had found it in his beloved books.

"Yes, there was a canal there in ancient times," the old man said. "But now it is filled up, and the part near the river here is sown with corn where the dam was made across it."

## JULIAN THE APOSTLE

“At the nod of the Commander-in-chief,” says the chronicler, “the obstruction was removed.” The Euphrates ran into the canal and its own bed was drained dry. The flotilla went down the canal with the army marching alongside. The waters of the Euphrates so swelled the volume of the Tigris that the inhabitants of the cities were alarmed, thinking their walls would be overwhelmed.

The Persian army was forced to face the Romans. The Romans could not have retreated had they wanted to; all was desolation behind them, and they were in the corner where the canal joins the Tigris. The best of the Persians were facing them; they had “shining shields, and neighing horses, with bent bows, and the huge bodies of elephants to which it is the same thing to walk through stalks of corn as it is to go through the midst of legions in battle-array.” Another Persian army was in the background behind another river and the situation looked serious for the Romans.

What did Julian do?

He just made a race-course and turned the place into a sort of Newmarket. Prizes were given for the winners and the betting was fast and furious.

The Persians did not know what to make of it. Here were the Romans celebrating the victory they had not yet won, just as if they were sure to beat the enemy, though the latter was far stronger and better placed. It gave the Persians a creepy feeling to see the calm confidence of this Roman. Nothing seemed to daunt or stop him.

Meanwhile the guards in the boats were disembarked under the pretext of examining the rowlocks and oars. In reality the plan was to have the boats ready for the soldiers to embark instantly and cross the Tigris into the undevastated land beyond. But Julian was cautious. If he told his plans only at the last minute, it was obvious that spies could do him little harm in giving the enemy notice of his movements.

After the feast to the officers, Julian took them aside and told them the plan. The general who had most of the army under him objected to it. The height of the opposite river-bank, and the multitude of the enemy, made the thing seem altogether too hazardous. Julian dismissed him and told another to carry on with the scheme.

“You will be successful,” he said. “But not without a wound; you will be wounded in the back of the hand and it will need little doctoring.”

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

Who and what was this wonderful leader of theirs to prophesy in that way? Just 1050 years or so later Joan of Arc was to do exactly the same thing. Were they both merely guessing? Were their predictions mere coincidences, or were the 'gods' behind both of them?

The fighting men were already in the boats; Julian stood looking steadfastly up into heaven for *THE SIGN*; as soon as he perceived it he gave the signal to the tribunes and they passed the word with all possible secrecy to the rest. They sailed, they landed, and were received with a shower of arrows and stones.

The river bank was enough to make the greatest general next to Julian afraid in the daytime; now it was night. In time of peace, with no opposition, men encumbered with arms would not have attempted the ascent of the bank. Now there were the enemy in face of them; they were loaded with armor; and yet they mounted the bank. How they did it, the gods alone knew; they themselves could not explain it.

The Romans cut their way through the enemy and attacked their camp, where the sleeping Persians were slain. They were helpless before the onrush of the Romans. Six thousand Persians were killed.

But the children of the gods must ever suffer for the shortcomings of men and their desires. Ctesiphon — Persia — was in the hands of the Romans that night. If the latter had only gone to the gates and burst their way into the city. . . . But the men stayed to rob the dead of their gold and silver and horses. By dawn the opportunity had passed. Who knows what the future of the whole world would have been if those men had despised their personal desires and had done what their leader told them? But the soldiers *knew better*. Hence the trouble. It is always so. Still, looked at from the temporary point of view, the Roman success was so great that it hardly occurred to them to think that they could have done better.

The King, Sapor, sent to Julian to beg for a truce that would end the war then and there, on condition that Sapor should become the friend and ally of Julian and Rome. One of the nobles in the Persian mission sought out Hormisdas, the King's brother, who was with the Romans, and, clasping his knees in supplication, begged him to take part in the petition to the Emperor.

Hormisdas gladly did so, thinking he was the bearer of excellent tidings. With a happy smile he told Julian what he had been asked.



## JULIAN THE APOSTLE

To his surprise Julian ordered him to keep silence and to send his Persian visitor away without saying a word to anyone except that the interview was simply on account of the relationship between Sapor and Hormisdas.

Julian was not prepared to end the war and he was fearful lest the word 'peace' should leak out among the soldiers and so blunt their energy and courage. Then Julian went to the walls of Ctesiphon and taunted the Persians with behaving like women within the walls instead of coming out to fight.

The Persians replied that Julian must seek out the king, who was elsewhere on campaign, and show himself to the latter. Julian was willing enough; he wanted to see and pass through Arbela, where Alexander had broken the power of Darius. "Julian wanted to be celebrated in song as much as Alexander had been!" So the report ran. Any tale is good enough for gossips; and Julian was not telling anyone what his full plans were. In a general way it was known that he wanted to go right through Persia and a little beyond, just as Alexander had done. And then. . . Ah, well. . . India is very big.

But the faithless Armenian King Arsaces failed him, and his own twenty-thousand men detached for work with Arsaces in the north failed to arrive in time. This army had had some of its men shot at by the Persians while bathing in the Tigris, so they stopped to fight these guerrillas instead of pursuing the big plan and obeying orders. Besides, their generals were always quarreling and delaying, exactly as Constantius had taught them, and this inaction bred cowardice in the rank and file.

A loss of twenty thousand men of his own eighty thousand, besides the defection of the Armenian army, was a serious matter. Julian was in a grave dilemma.

But his courage was unabated. He would go on to India. *He burnt his boats.* In the first place, it would have taken half the army to tow them up against the powerful currents of the Tigris. Then many men would have reported 'sick' and would have had to go in the boats. But with all the boats burnt, the men dared not go sick, whether as malingerers or not. Fifteen boats had at first been saved for bridge-making, but even these were destroyed after it was seen how difficult it would be to take them; half the time the strong currents would take the boat and the soldiers in it into the hands of the Persians. Actually this burning of boats was to the gain of the

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

Romans and the loss of the Persians. The army marched along the Tigris, keeping the river on the left; the country was even more fertile and rich than the other bank, the western side, so that they took more captives and had no shortage of provisions for all.

Julian's plan for marching eastward from Ctesiphon had to be given up. The officers under him, like those of Alexander nearly seven centuries before, were very reluctant to go; they wished to retreat. The army could not retrace its steps because of the desolation behind them. Even if they could have done so the boats were burnt; if they had not been burnt they would have made the upstream voyage a tremendous drag on the Romans.

Going north along the bank of the Tigris, or at least in the cultivated area, there was a chance of retrieving the fatal failure of Procopius and the Armenians to join the main army in the south. Even if they could find Procopius in the neighborhood of the Roman territory to the north, there was still a chance to go East from Nisibis and Arbela, as Alexander had done.

There were difficulties by the way. The main host of the Persian army under Sapor suddenly gave sign of its presence one day in a distant cloud of dust on the horizon. From that moment there were engagements and skirmishes all the time. The Persians were like Cossacks, famous for their horsemanship. It was said in half jest that they could not walk, having lived and slept all their lives on horseback. Their most effective method of attack was like that of the Parthians — that of dashing up to the enemy and then retreating, but shooting arrows behind them as they went. They were experts at this mode of warfare.

Sapor offered a huge reward for any man who should kill Julian, and the Persians were all the time on the alert.

Julian was everywhere where most needed, encouraging, helping, planning. One day there was a cry that the rearguard was attacked by the Persians. Snatching a shield, but otherwise unarmed, he galloped to help the defense. Then there was a counter-cry that the van was being attacked also. Hurrying back, Julian showed himself everywhere, rallying his men, leading them, preventing panic.

The Persians gave way and Julian was the first to pursue them and to endeavor to unite the broken Roman line. In the heat of the action the combatants raised a cloud of dust and a sharp spear was thrown; it cut Julian's arm and pierced his side. Julian fell and was

## JULIAN THE APOSTLE

put on a shield. There was no camp: the enemy had been too troublesome, and the Romans were on the march. But a tent was quickly pitched and here the beloved of the old gods lingered on until midnight, when he died.

His was the death of an Initiate, of one who has glimpsed the life of the gods. Calm and self-possessed, he made all preparations. Only once did his fortitude break down. Asking after the welfare of the Master of the Offices, his friend Anatolius, the excellent Sallust replied that he was among the blest — that he was dead. Julian wept,— not for himself but for his friend.

Julian was dead, but the old Maximus survived him after, as they say, seeing him die.

The Roman *débâcle* was complete. Jovian, a plain but popular soldier, was made Emperor. Julian would not name a successor because he foresaw that it would spell trouble from the wretched politicals. Julian had gone to help his men with but one attendant. In the cloud of dust the opportunity had arisen and it was a treacherous 'Christian' hand that killed him. The proof was plain, if for no other reason than that no Persian claimed the huge reward for killing the wearer of the purple. There were those who suspected and, indeed, knew who had done the deed; but they preferred to remain silent, as did Julian himself, if he knew.

The Road to India was closed with Julian; not to be opened for fourteen or fifteen centuries, when perhaps Julian himself, who (they said) had been Alexander, would perhaps prepare and open the way or do his part, in yet another body, in opening it. Who knows? These servants of the gods do their work from life to life, now resplendent in history, now obscure. They know little of the fruits of their work, perhaps, but they are ever servants of the Great Law and its executors.

There was nothing for it but for the Romans to go back to Antioch as soon as they could with a whole skin — they took little else. Jovian gave up cities and provinces to the Persians and the wonder was that Sapor stopped where he did in his demands. He must have been astonished at his own moderation. The treaty once made, both sides observed it rigidly. The Romans reached Antioch with the body of Julian, where the first messenger bearing the terrible news was nearly killed. It was as though he had announced the destruction of a god. Other messengers in other places *were* killed!

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

The Roman army arrived in rags. A few saved a boot or so, carrying it over their shoulders. The man who had half a broken spear was in luck; the man who saved a bit of a sword was a hero.

It is a story of glorious possibilities and shining opportunities. But the cloud of spiritual and material darkness was settling slowly down over the West, and the gods were forced to abandon their ancient shrines.

Much, very much, of the symbolism and machinery of the glorious King Helios, Mithras the Unconquered Sun, and of the *Magna et Bona Dea*, the Mother of the gods, was imbodied in the eclectic religions of Europe and in other cults. Initiates of the Mysteries had sacrificed themselves in order to carry with them some shreds of the old religions as seed for the future renaissance, the reibodiment of the worship of the gods, disguising them as parts of a new cult; the emasculated Mysteries finally died out in Europe and darkness settled over the West. The Unconquered Sun was near his setting.

But Julian's efforts were not wasted. He would reincarnate as a champion of toleration and pure worship again and again, in other cults, in other lands, and also in the same lands, without a doubt.

There was to be one more and final effort to keep the Light burning in the Temples of the Old Gods, and only one, before the curtain fell, not to rise again for fourteen centuries. It was the effort and sacrifice of the glorious martyr of Alexandria, Hypatia, fifty years later.

*(To be continued)*

## THE BLUE ROSE

A MEMORY OF A PERSIAN LEGEND

REATA V. H. PEDERSEN

**H**E HAD conquered her people, had the King of Persia, and many of the women of her family were his slaves and her noble father and her uncle were held in the castle dungeons — yet Morgia the Arabian loved Tyrus, her Lord.

Now, in Persia there is a day of feasting. It is the day at the year's beginning and it is a time of entertainment. On this day the King and the Princes make merry with their courts, and from among the conquered there are invited those of high rank to witness the

## THE BLUE ROSE

many wonders and to partake of food with the King; they have their freedom for one day only and their prisons know them not until the sun has set and the stars have jeweled the blue heavens.

To the court from the states of neighboring rulers there come those who have wonders to perform. There are some who come with horses, having neither life nor breath but with the power to rise into the air. And some bring magic flutes, to the tune of which even the saddest at the court cannot but dance. And once a Hindû appeared and he plucked a rose from the air before the astonished eyes of the King and his court.

It was the King's habit to order the one upon whom his glance might rest to duplicate or surpass, if he could, the magic shown by the visitor; and should that one be able to do this, all was well, but should he fail, then death was in store for him. And the humor of the King was such that his eye was brought to bear upon one from among the ranks of the conquered and never upon his courtiers unless, perchance, *he* had given reason for jealousy.

Morgia, the Arabian, served in humble capacity the King whom she loved, and her duties bringing her to his chamber when an official of the court chanced to be there, she heard the name of her father, as one who was to be bidden to the feasting.

That night Morgia slept little, for although she knew her father to be clever she also knew that the years he had spent in the dungeon might well have taken toll of his wit, as it had of his eye-sight. "Surely he will fail if he be called upon to duplicate the magic of a visitor, and failing, will meet death, and my chance to work upon the heart of the King that my father be given his freedom and reunited with our family, be gone forever. Oh, that I might please the great Tyrus, this day of the festival, so please him that he will grant that which I ask!" Such was the prayer of Morgia.

But that which she feared came to pass and when a Hindû plucked *not one* but *many* roses from the air — enough that the folds of a great silk shawl of Cashmere could not contain them — it was the father of Morgia who was called upon by the King.

Bowed and blind and slow of foot, the rags of his dungeon still upon him, the conquered noble of Arabia stood before Tyrus the King of Persia.

"Great King," he cried. "What do I know of roses, who have been held in a dungeon these many years! I had forgotten the sun

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

and I remember not the pure breath of a garden. How then shall I pluck roses from the air? I can show you the ghost of a man and a rat from his dungeon — but naught else.”

The King's voice held anger. “Roses — *roses*, I said. Obey — or die!”

Before the voice of the King had ceased there came the swift patter of small white feet, the sound of ankle bells, and Morgia the Arabian sped to the side of her father. She lifted her voice to the King: “Dear Lord, give permission that I take the place of my father; allow that I attempt to surpass or at least duplicate the feat of the Hindû.”

And Tyrus the King was pleased to grant her request for he had looked upon Morgia with favor because of her devotion to him and because hers was a love that but asked to serve and had hitherto demanded naught from him. So not only did he hear her with favor, but he then and there decided that should she succeed in the attempt, her father should be given his freedom and Morgia and her family be allowed to accompany him back to their own land.

But the heart of Morgia was saddened by the last words of the King for she wanted not to leave him and her heart was hurt that he could so willingly let her go. Yet her love for her father demanded a duty of her and without more thought of her own sorrow, but with all her heart in her voice, she spoke to the King in these words:

“Dear Lord, Morgia has no magic but that your kingly nature can bestow. The rose that she would hold before your eyes is the Rose of Heaven and it is the beauty of a kind and kingly deed. This day, that is one of feasting and rejoicing — make it live in the memory of many as that day when a great heart lived greatly. Free those you have conquered, reunite families, open to the sunlight your dungeon doors. Do that, my Beloved and Lord, which satisfies the heart of the woman who loves you; act greatly — live nobly — let no heart but be glad that you are Lord. Be merciful and tender — even to those who offend. Strive to see that these hearts are held within the hollow of your hand. Crush them not!”

And in the voice of Morgia was her belief in the greatness of the King, of Tyrus — her Lord.

The great King of Persia, the conqueror of strong men, was himself conquered by the faith in his greatness which was in the heart of Morgia, and he called her to him and gave her his word that the

LI PO ADDRESSES YUAN TAN-CH'IU

dungeons would be opened and that his deeds would thereafter be ever kingly; and as he spoke, behold! the air was filled with roses of a hue never before seen — nor since, except in Persia where blows that fairest flower — the Rose of Heaven and it is — *blue*.

Li Po Addresses Yuan Tan-Ch'iu of East Mountain

KENNETH MORRIS, D. LITT.

YOU dwell on Tung Shan worshipping  
Pure mountain-beauty year on year;  
And sleep, o' nights of bloom-breath'd Spring,  
Mist-quilted, mountain-pillowed, here;  
These mountain forests far and near;  
These mountain flowers; this mountain dew:  
Where are there comrades half so dear?  
Yuan Tan-ch'iu, how I envy you!

The mountain breeze, come wandering  
Through pine-woods, whispers in your ear  
Mysterious tidings; the storms sing  
What news your inward god would hear.  
How should one hate or grieve or fear  
Who has this Tung Shan for his true  
And private friend? O Mountaineer  
Yuan Tan-ch'iu, how I envy you!

No waterfalls, spray-rainbowed, fling  
Their beauty down these chasms sheer,  
But through your soul go passaging,  
And with strange sweetness, cold and clear,  
Purge clean your mind of every drear  
And human thought till, made anew,  
You are Mountain-Sage and Mountain-Seer —  
Yuan Tan-ch'iu, how I envy you!

To be our Lord the Mountain's peer,  
And know his dreamings through and through —  
What joy, though all the world should jeer!  
Yuan Tan-ch'iu, how I envy you!

## NEBULAE: COSMIC SEEDS OF FUTURE WORLDS

ROSE WINKLER, M. D.

When a planet dies, its informing principles are transferred to a *laya* or sleeping center, with potential but latent energy in it, which is thus awakened into life and begins to form itself into a new sidereal body.—*The Secret Doctrine*, I, 147

**W**OULD you know the origin of worlds or sidereal bodies? Then in thought send your consciousness back to the halcyon springtime days of the Universe, and visualize the Monadic Essence, in the form of radiant god-sparks or divine Intelligences, supervising the evolving shining temples which jeweled the arched reaches of Space. May one not glimpse with mental eye the hosts of newborn entities or cosmic seeds amidst planets and suns in the making throughout frontierless Space? These glimmering nebulae were strewn like masses of milk-white substance which veiled the dawn-blue face of the celestial dome. How came they into existence? Were they created?

No, they were not created! The Monad, the inner sun-god or divine intelligence at the core of every atom, wakened their sleeping energies and substances to a new series of reimpodiments. These inherent principles had been transferred from dying world-chains to inform the *laya* or sleeping center which, wakening into activity, brought forth future worlds on their aeon-long journey of progressive development.

And what is a *laya*-center? It is that point where substance, having been transferred from a preceding ethereal sphere, becomes homogeneous, inactive, and undifferentiated. The *laya*-centers are the 'singular points' of Sir James Jeans. Theosophists call these 'singular points' not only *laya*-centers, but dissolving centers, where matter dissolves into spirit, and ether from higher realms crystallizes into the physical substance of our universe. As the overbrooding, enlivening divinity or intelligence, under the irresistible impulse of unerring Law is seeking reimpodiment, its powers, forces, and faculties stimulate the hitherto dormant potentialities in the *laya*-center. These, when wakened, attract differentiated elements around this center, promoting the advancement of a future solar system on a



## NEBULAE: COSMIC SEEDS OF FUTURE WORLDS

higher spiral of evolutionary unfoldment as it proceeds on its age-long pilgrimage. It is this Center of Being, the Monad or inner god, whose self-motivating power behind evolution makes the occurrence of strange 'events,' lending characteristic attributes to the nebulae, as it unwraps and unfolds through innumerable stages of experience and growth.

Was not the destiny of the countless nebulae thrillingly dramatic? Like cosmic germs of worlds to be, they were strewn throughout the boundless spaces of Cosmic Space, to unfold gradually as a comet which itself becomes through aeons of time an inhabited planet! And is not the romance of each glittering nebula awe-inspiring as it is drawn spiritually, psychically, and magnetically, to the same more or less celestial area, corresponding to the shining places held by it in a previous vaulted dome? There, as evolving sidereal bodies, they illumined the vast spaces with their flame-like splendor!

We are taught that each planetary chain is but the reïmbodiment of a preceding one, and *that*, of one still earlier -- not from another 'dimension,' thus leading the vision back to the time when each emanated as a god-spark from the Cosmic Central Fire of Life and Light.

How similar is the destiny of a human soul, itself an evolving god-spark, karmically attracted to parents and nation as its most appropriate environment, where it can best promote the harmonious adjustment of its broken laws. Likewise, the architectural plan, having its origin in the Divine Thought in the Divine Mind, has been unfolding during the long past aeonic periods.

No, there is no 'creation' of matter. Theosophists believe in the involution of spirit as parallel to the evolution of matter in an unending series of evolutionary developments. Both are aspects of the one Reality and proceed back to the divine source from which they emanated -- self-impelling god-sparks evolving out of matter to full-blown godhood, plus the cumulative knowledge and wisdom gained through their innumerable reïmbodiments.

Consider the life-germ of an acorn as it unfolds from within, enveloping itself in ever denser layers of matter to expand and liberate itself from its limiting envelope! Responding to the hidden incentive or urge of its sacred center -- the supervising divine Intelligence -- it develops into a sapling and then into the full-grown, majestic oak. So also do worlds, universes, and all celestial bodies

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

evolve the principles transferred from other suns or planets enshrined in the cosmic seeds, scattered throughout the boundless fields of infinitude. Consider man beginning life as a spiritual entity, animating with his awakening powers a nucleated cell, the root and basis of his body and inner constitution which evolved forth from nucleus or germ-plasm and its building material, protoplasm. So do heavenly bodies also unfold out of the cosmic germ-plasm comprising their cosmic seeds or nebulae. The activating god or re embodying intelligence guides and governs the course, and helps the nebula to shape upon the inner model the type and formation of its starry home, as it evolves from within outward.

Of these nebulae there are doubtless tens of thousands, and possibly hundreds of thousands of them, and some are actually star-clusters, the great distance of which makes them appear to our vision, unaided or aided by the telescope, as faint patches of milky light.—*Questions We All Ask*, Series I, No. 3, p. 44

Our Leader, Dr. G. de Purucker, in Series I, Nos. 3 and 5, has given out age-old teachings of the Ancient Wisdom which furnish inspiration and material for much thought. He elucidates the two classes of dark nebulae, one class of which is ethereal, diaphanous, and whose newly awakened activities, owing to the potencies and powers of the self-impelling Monad seeking self-expression, mark the beginnings of worlds and universes to be. For the other class, the dark nebulae of dormant primordial matter, the process of world-building has not yet begun. As every manifesting thing springs forth from either a life-atom, a seed, or an egg, so do comets, planets, suns, stars, worlds, universes and galaxies evolve from either large or smaller nebulae. And as the Milky Way is today supposed by Science to bound our Universe, we Theosophists teach that it is our particular Home-Universe. We are its children, interblended and inseparable from it, comprised of the same entities, powers, and substances as play through and constitute the structure of the Cosmos of which man is an integral and inseparable part.

The aggregate energies and substances of all the kingdoms pour through the laya-centers, the 'singular points' of Sir James Jeans, their life-stream freighted with the essences of the rocks, vegetation, animals, and humans to be. What occurs to all the evolving nebulae, more or less, is demonstrated by what has happened to our planet *Terra*. It was at one time one of these smaller diaphanous nebulae passing through its long preparatory sleep in the womb of Space,

## NEBULAE: COSMIC SEEDS OF FUTURE WORLDS

and with its new birth or new-life-beginning, its powers and potentialities encased in cosmic substance evolved into a comet.

A laya-center is lighted and awakened into life by the fires of another 'pilgrim,' after which the new 'center' rushes into space and becomes a comet. It is only after losing its velocity, and hence its fiery tail, that the 'Fiery Dragon' settles down into quiet and steady life as a regular respectable citizen of the sidereal family.—*The Secret Doctrine*, I, 203

A comet, like a human soul, passing through aeons of experience, in order to survive, must eventually, often under most adverse conditions, find its true place in the boundless spaces of the Cosmos. One significant day in the history of the comet's eventful existence, its laya-center was wakened into life by the fires of a 'Pilgrim' or another sidereal body, and driven by the irresistible urge of its inner god, the Monad, and following the psycho-magnetic currents drawing it unerringly onward, it whirled through the abysmal depths of Space attracted to the Sun, to which its experiences in long-past cycles had linked it. Henceforth, it was impelled to renew on a higher spiral its evolutionary advancement. Approaching still nearer to that sun in either an elliptic or parabolic course, it finally settles down as a planet of that solar system and becomes an inhabited globe. During its rotation through Space, including its course around the sun, the comet became more differentiated under the energizing action of more developed matter. Its orbit, also, gradually and through the ages grows smaller and smaller and more regular, until it becomes a planetary orbit. The following excerpt makes clear the import of the velocity of the comet's course around the sun.

Those which move slower and are propelled into an elliptic course are doomed to annihilation sooner or later. Others moving in parabolic curves generally escape destruction, owing to their velocity.—*Ib.*, I, 204

As Analogy is the law of Nature, we learn from correspondences that Space is the home of countless other universes, and that as the solar system has its inner spiritual life, so also has man. Analogy leads us to apprehend that law, order, and intelligence, symmetry, beauty, harmony, and unity prevail in the majestic and rhythmic operations and movements of the sidereal bodies. It is only self-conscious man who breaks these laws, exact retribution for which is summed up in an interminable period of more or less suffering and pain. In the spiritualizing contemplation of not only the sublime

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

mysteries of the universe, but of the inner god or spiritual sun in man, we may draw fresh inspiration from the following words:

For, with every effort of will toward purification and unity with that 'Self-god,' one of the lower rays breaks and the spiritual entity of man is drawn higher and ever higher to the ray that supersedes the first, until, from ray to ray, the inner man is drawn into the one and highest beam of the Parent-SUN.

— *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 638-9

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

**QUESTION:** What is the cause of the world's unrest? Has the Theosophical philosophy any answer to a question that is now being asked and unsatisfactorily answered on all sides?

*R. Machell:* The unrest of the age is accepted as fact, but the cause is not a matter on which men can agree, nor is the remedy for it one that is easily recognised or willingly accepted. The cause is rooted in the cyclic law of evolution, of which the world at large knows nothing, and the remedy requires the acceptance of a new conception of the legitimate aims of human endeavor.

The world is proud of its disease as some people are proud of their corpulence. The rapid march of the malady is called 'progress' and the nightmare that the diseased condition induces is called, not commerce, but that obsession, that distortion of commerce, called 'commercialism.'

We must distinguish between these two ideas just as we must distinguish between nourishing the body and gluttony, between drink that is useful to health and drunkenness that destroys health and happiness. Commerce in itself is the service of human needs — it is public service — but commercialism is the art of making commerce subservient to personal profit. And this vampire has got such a hold on that from which it takes its name that many are unable to distinguish the one from the other. The success of a man in business is too often measured by his wealth, which in reality is a side-issue that has outgrown its usefulness. In the same way 'politics' has come to be accepted by many as a legitimate form of public service, even when substituting the interest of the individual politician for the interest of the state. These conditions are symptoms of the diseased condition of the body politic from which troubles are born.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

In looking at the picture of the world's unrest we must distinguish between the urge of evolution and the disease of disintegration. We must learn to see the gulf that separates natural life and barbarism. We must not mistake the qualities that enable men to gratify their greed of wealth or the cravings of ambition for the qualities that make a good citizen or a great statesman. We must learn that emotional philanthropy is a vice sprung from a desire for self-indulgence of a refined kind. We have to understand that if "all is not gold that glitters" neither is poverty a proof of virtue. We must open the Book of Life and read the pages of human character before we can begin to deal with the subject at all. And if we would master the problem we must assuredly master the forces that are at work in the world of which we are a part; we must understand them, and we must recognise the greater Laws of Nature that govern the sequence of cause and effect, so that we may not waste energy in trying to prevent effects but may rather start new causes or prevent the repetition of the former mistakes from which present evils now flow.

And how may this be done? How can we get these causes and these forces where we can deal with them?

"Man know thyself!"

That is the key to the whole problem, for we are all bound up with the world; the unrest around us is also in our own natures, and the power to control the forces that seethe in our bodies and minds lies within our inmost selves or Self. Self-discipline is the path of self-knowledge, and self-knowledge is inseparable from self-control; until this is attained we are not competent to deal with the problem in a practical manner. But every effort that we make in this direction not only brings us nearer to an understanding of the true nature of the great question of our times, the social problem, but also is a blow aimed at the evil itself. For we are a part of the whole problem and the forces that disturb our own mental balance are identical with the forces that are seething in the body of humanity and which threaten constantly to break into public insanity. For insanity is just this, the inability to control the forces of the lower nature. We hear a great deal about self-government, freedom, and all that, but if we wish to see the truth we must not be carried away with words; we must look closely to see what it is that desires to be self-governing. Are my hands and feet going to be independent of my authority? Is my stomach to be allowed to satisfy its cravings at the cost of the

## THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH

general health of the whole body? Is that self-government? Is that sanity?

No. We must learn that though we may be honest and useful servants of the cause of human emancipation, we cannot be leaders and teachers of men until we have mastered the problems we propose to deal with, and we can only master them where they come within our grasp, that is, in ourselves.

Now the world is full of paradox and contradiction, and it is a fact that many men of genius are, or let us say, have been, men of un-governed lives. They had moments of inspiration when the light of genius illumined their minds and enabled them to give out noble or beautiful expressions of eternal truth. But the moment passes and the lower man, taking credit for the work of genius, proceeds to foist upon his admirers the trash that his uninspired brain turns out under the influence of some of his lower passions. Then, too, the lower mind, inflated with pride by reason of the occasional illumination undertakes to explain to the world the operation of genius, and so the world is again misled and confused. This is why so-called men of genius are generally recognised as dangerous leaders, and the people have come to doubt if there are any real leaders possible. The tree is known by its fruit and the teacher is known by the school.

Those who teach that mastery over the forces that rule mankind can be attained by self-indulgence, or can be exercised by one who is not master of those forces *in his own nature*, are self-deceived. They may not state the case crudely at it is here set down, but they teach that these small personal matters are of no consequence to anybody but the one concerned; and this gospel is so acceptable to the lower nature that few can resist its seduction unless they have learned to distinguish between the higher and the lower nature *in themselves*.

Then they point to the urgency of the trouble as an excuse for flinging at once into active 'reform-work,' and speak contemptuously of those who say that self-discipline and education are the necessary preliminaries to reform, calling them dreamers or insinuating that they are selfishly cultivating themselves instead of generously plunging into the deep waters of social disorder (without being able to swim)!

Those who are studying human nature by self-discipline will not be swept off their feet by the coming storms but will learn in the school of experience how to eradicate the root of that evil from which the causes of unrest spring.