

THE DIVINE COWHERD.

# THE THEOSOPHIST

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## ON THE WATCH-TOWER

IT is interesting to read that some excavations in Wisconsin have unearthed some skeletons which "indicate that a hitherto unknown race of men inhabited Wisconsin ages ago". The skulls are described as most peculiar; from directly over the eye-sockets the heads slope straight back, and the jaw-bones are long and pointed. This almost sounds as though the excavators had found some of our egg-headed Lemurians. Another investigation which is being carried on is also of interest to Theosophists; it is an expedition to examine the Easter Island statues, referred to in *The Secret Doctrine*. The largest of these is sixty-eight feet long down to the hips, where it ends, and has a nose of eleven feet. The newspaper paragraph says:

It is believed by some that Easter Island is the last pinnacle of a submerged continent, which occupied the greater part of the South Pacific, and possibly joined Asia with America. . . . If Easter Island is the remains of a submerged continent we can understand why the work of making the

images suddenly stopped, and how the entire population may have been drowned or starved.

How steadily H. P. Blavatsky is being justified, as she predicted she would be, by the discoveries of modern science. Yet she was slandered to death—the reward given by the world to its best.

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Slander is a very terrible thing, so easy to spread, so impossible to stop. A few cruel words are uttered in a moment of anger; they are repeated in an exaggerated form; they are eagerly whispered from one to another, until they swell into 'rumours'. Then they are gravely put forward as serious 'charges'. If any friend of the unhappy victim protests, he is calmly told that he is blind and obstinate, and that there is always the remedy of a suit for libel, by which he may publish to the world the exaggerated charge based on the original gossip. I saw a day or two ago in a London paper that a lady had obtained £1,300 damages from a man who had merely repeated to a friend a 'rumour,' based on the statement of her husband that her child was not his. She went into the box and denied the truth of her husband's statement, and the slanderer pleaded that he had only spoken to a private friend. The English law deals severely with such slander, and rightly so, for untold misery is caused by it. Yet there are some of us who, secure in our innocence, think it nobler to "suffer and be strong," and to follow the example of the Christ, who remained silent before His accusers. H. P. B.'s proud heart broke under the strain, and her priceless life was shortened by

the malice of a few, and the cruel carelessness of the many, repeating the charges made by the few. Yet in her case when the charges were first publicly made, a Committee of the leading men in the Society was gathered together, carefully investigated the charges, and declared her to be innocent. The verdict made no difference, and to this day she is abused as a fraud, showing how useless is such a procedure as a defence against cruel tongues. The more loving the nature, the more it suffers, until it learns to look with pure compassion on its traducers, and to trust all issues serenely to the unerring Law. The false witness and the murder brought about by it have not prevented the Christ from reigning over Christendom.

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I was interested the other day to read the following: "They [the Essenes] may have included Jesus ben Panther, a nephew of Queen Salome, who after studying Egyptian Theurgy, and preaching to the people, was proclaimed for forty days, and then stoned to death, and hung on a tree at Lyda, about the year 100 B. C." This recalls the statement made in the *Acts* about Jesus, "whom ye slew and hanged on a tree"—not "whom the Romans crucified".

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The Order of the Star in the East grows apace, and very many non-Theosophists are swelling its ranks. At a conference of the delegates of the Order, lately held in Sydney, Australia, a sum of £110 was raised for printing and propaganda work, a sign of fairly strong enthusiasm. It is

recruited chiefly from the younger generation, from those who came into the world from about twenty to thirty years ago, evidently to do this very work of preparation for the coming Teacher, and to encircle Him when He comes. May it prosper!



A good helper writes "from H.P.B.'s mountains," the Caucasus, that "the first star has gone to Persia," and that "three Siberian star-bearers" are soon going to the Asiatic frontier. Alcyone's book, *At the Feet of the Master*, in its Russian translation, continues to sell rapidly. She sends me the following passage from Emerson:

I look for the hour when that Supreme Beauty, which ravished the Souls of these Eastern men and through their lips spoke oracles to all times shall speak in the West also. . . . I look for the new Teacher, who shall see the world the mirror of the Soul.



All will be glad to hear that brave Anna Kamensky, the General Secretary for Russia has been acquitted. She wrote to me: "To-morrow my trial will take place. If it ends well, I shall go to Kaluga. . . If the verdict is not favourable, I shall have to work a year in seclusion, but I hope that our movement will go on quite well all the same. In any case I know that what happens is the best." While Theosophy is served with such calm courage, we need not fear for its spreading.



I venture to call the attention of my readers to the articles entitled 'Investigations into the Super-physical' in the present and the September issues. They seem to me to express thoughts that are

important for the consideration of members at the present time, and I hope that the second may lead to a saner and more balanced view on subtler forms of vision than seems to be taken by some. With the increase in the number of our members who follow our third Object, a clear understanding as to the *rationale* of super-physical research is desirable.

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Death is striking down many of our best helpers. The Hon. Mr. Krishnaswami Iyer left us in the winter; now Sethji Dharamsay Morarji Goculdas has suddenly passed away. Another noble soul has passed to the Peace in Dr. Arthur Richardson, the first Principal of the Central Hindu College, purest and gentlest of men. His last years have been one long-drawn physical agony, borne with heroic and cheerful fortitude, and all who love him rejoice that he is set free. He leaves a memory of selfless service, of strong intellect vowed to the pursuit of knowledge, of unwearied devotion to the noblest of causes. This world is the poorer, the other world the richer, for his passing, and the inspiration of his memory remains.

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Count Hermann Keyserling writes from Shanghai, where our good friend Mr. Spurgeon Medhurst has given him much help in his endeavour to understand the Chinese point of view. The Count gave an interesting lecture at the International Institute, on the philosophy of the East and West. Count Hermann remarked that the West only began to understand the East when it caught a glimpse of

the Reality; then, and then only, there dawned upon it some comprehension "of the Ancient Wisdom of the East".

The Indians have thought the deepest thoughts mankind has ever known. Whatever the reason for this may be, the Indians have reached a point of self-realisation in the sphere of thought, which no other nation has yet been able to approach. But this is true exclusively for the sphere of thought. Their self-realisation has had but little effect on their lives, or on their political order. They did not indeed care about actual existence at all, and the highest type they have produced is the Yogi, the saint who renounces the world.

There is truth in this, but surely not the whole truth. Were not Ramachandra, Bhishma, Arjuna, men of action to the full, though Knowers of the Reality? King Janaka was such another, and in later days India contained great Kingdoms and powerful States. When spirituality was highest, and the Reality most fully realised, India produced also great Kings and great statesmen. It is as she lost her vision of the Reality that her children degenerated.

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Count Hermann Keyserling urged on his Chinese audience the same truth that I have so often urged on Indian audiences, a truth which, as he said, "is shared by all the deepest thinkers of the West," that to westernise the East is to destroy it, and that if—in this case—China supplanted its own culture by the western one, it would not progress.

No one can live a life foreign from his own. Every one of our western accomplishments is the outcome of a long history, and means very much more therefore than it appears to mean. If now another nation adopts this western culture, just as it is, it will get it, not as a living but as a dead body. To be of any value at all it must be attached to its own root. In China this means that all reforms, all improvements, must be made in the spirit of its own wonderful civilisation, and not after the pattern of a western one. It is quite possible

to obtain our practical results from another basis or spirit. If modern China fails to understand this, if it breaks off from the ancient root, its apparent progress will mean nothing less than disintegration. The great culture of the past will be lost, and there will be no other culture to replace it. So I can only end this lecture with the heartfelt wish that the new era, howsoever much it may look like an era of westernisation, will mean a revival of the old, the classical spirit. It is because this spirit has been lost, that reforms are now necessary. But if the old spirit is born anew, with a wider horizon, with a more comprehensive knowledge, with a broader outlook—then indeed will China become once again one of the great civilisations of the world.

These are wise words, and are as applicable to India as to China. To revive the old ideals and to adapt them to new forms is the way of wisdom.

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Mr. Spurgeon Medhurst sends an interesting letter from Shanghai. He writes :

On Sunday afternoon I attended a meeting of the 'World Religions Society,' a purely Chinese organisation. It has for its object the unifying of all religions. The meeting had commenced before my arrival. It was still continuing when I left. Every religion in China was represented, perfect harmony prevailed. I heard about twenty addresses, few of which I could follow entirely owing to the differences of dialect in this part of the country from the North where I used to live. A missionary and myself were the only foreigners present. We both spoke by invitation, but the best address of the afternoon was made by a Chinese lady. The ladies here are taking as active a part in public affairs as the men. This afternoon I am attending a Committee meeting to help this 'World Religions Society' to arrange suitable plans for future work.

It is a most striking feature in the movement now going on in China, that women are taking so active a part, and that their co-operation is so heartily welcomed by the men.

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The Home Secretary has yielded to the strong protests sent from all parts of the country and



from abroad, and has placed Mrs. Pankhurst and Mr. and Mrs. Pethick Lawrence in the first division, where all truly political prisoners should be placed. The alliance between the Labour Party and the Union of Women's Societies is bringing pressure to bear on the Government, and both political parties, Liberal and Conservative, are beginning to realise that the flouting of women's claims means the loss of women's help in electoral contests.

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I lectured at the University of Palermo on June 23, and the invitations went out in the name of the Rector. Italian Universities seem to be very liberal, for the University of Genoa lent its Hall for the Theosophical Congress, which was to have been held last year. By the way, I saw in the German organ, *Mitteilungen*, that Dr. Steiner, speaking at the German Convention, blamed me severely for cancelling that same Congress. He said, quite truly, that the President of the Theosophical Society had no authority to cancel a congress of the European Federation. I fully agree with him, and I am sure he will be glad to know that I did not cancel it; I did not even suggest the cancellation nor should I have dreamed of taking such a liberty. All I did was to say that I was sorry to be unable to attend; and I believe that there is no rule to compel the President's attendance at any function, when he or she is unable to go to it. I hope to be at Stockholm next year, as the General Secretary for Scandinavia has been kind enough to invite me to attend. I shall try to arrange to visit Finland at the same

time, in answer to a cordial invitation from its General Secretary.

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We have had a very pleasant visit to Palermo—Mr. Arundale, my two wards and myself. A very interesting thing there is a portrait of the Christ, several copies of which were brought out in mosaic by the monks of Mount Athos, who have a traditional likeness of the great Teacher very different from that current in the rest of Christendom. I have obtained some very good photographs of these, reproductions of which will appear in our October number. The British Consul for Sicily, Mr. Macbean, is a faithful member of the Theosophical Society, and we stayed in Palermo under the shelter of the Union Jack—as did Mr. Leadbeater, when he came to Palermo in the early spring. The Lodge here is small, but has very earnest members, and possesses nice rooms, in which our private meetings were held. A meeting of the Order of the Star in the East was held in the Consul's rooms, and was addressed by Mr. Arundale and myself, the Head adding a few words of kindly good wishes to those present. A meeting of some three hundred people, invited by the University of Palermo, gathered on Sunday, June 23, in the University Hall. Professor Luigi Philippon, the acting Rector, introduced me in some very kind words, to the audience. There were only a few ladies, the bulk of the audience being men. I lectured on Giordano Bruno and his philosophy, and the audience proved to be a most satisfactory one, became deeply interested, and finally warmly

enthusiastic. The reports in the papers are very laudatory. It is noteworthy that the culture of the Continent is becoming friendly to the T.S. The University of the Sorbonne opened its great Hall last year. The University of Genoa granted its Hall for the use of the International Theosophical Congress at Genoa. Now the University of Palermo welcomes the President of the T.S. Dr. Schrader, at the Orientalist Congress at Athens, found the assembled savants friendly; they showed respect for the work being done by the Society along their own lines, and Dr. Schrader had the honour of a conversation with the King of Greece. So surely is passing away the hostility shown to the movement in its early days, and I often think how our heroic Founder, H. P. Blavatsky, would have rejoiced had some gleam of the present reached her in her lonely struggle, and how gladdened would have been the heart of our President-Founder, H. S. Olcott, had a little of the results of his sowing been reaped before he passed away. Well, he will have the richer reaping when he again takes up his work in the very promising body which has been assigned to him.

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I am very glad to be at last free to say what we have been doing for the last few months. I was obliged to seek a certain seclusion, in order to carry out a piece of occult work of vital importance, and could not, consistently with my duty, give any explanation until it was over. I had tried to arrange for it in Kashmir, and then at Ootacamund, but had failed to secure the necessary privacy, and

the certainty of being free from interruption. Hence, as the time was short, I hurriedly determined to seek in Europe that which I could not find in India. One could only smile half humourously, half sadly, as one read the supposed reasons for my "running away" and "hiding"—half humourously, because they were so very far from the mark, half sadly because some people were so ready to suggest evil motives, and to twist innocent actions all awry into a justification of their suggestions. I told only two people the real reason: one of these was the father of my two wards who agreed to my taking them to Europe, and the second was Miss Arundale. Outside these, I took none into my confidence, but gave only as reason for my seclusion the perfectly true fact that I had books to write. As I find that, wherever I go, people follow me, demanding interviews and information, and as quiet and privacy were essential, I gave the name of the place at which I was to stay only to Miss Bright, and to some kind Italian friends, who did *not* question me on the matter, but quietly forwarded my letters. We found a suitable temporary home in Sicily. As it was freely stated by the inimical—when they knew where I was—that Sicily was chosen because its criminal law was different from that of other civilised countries (!). I took occasion at Palermo to enquire as to this. It was a matter on which I was ignorant, as the criminal law of a country is not a matter which enters into one's mind. On making enquiry through the British Consul of the leading legal authority in Palermo, I found that the

statement was entirely false—a mere malicious fabrication. Well might a Master say of would-be disciples: “You must come out of your world into ours.” The real reason for the choice will be found below.



Sicily is one of the fairest islands of the world, and Taormina is perhaps its fairest spot. The village—it is scarcely more—nestles between great hills of volcanic origin, that wall it in on all sides, leaving it open only to the blue Ionian sea. Behind it towers a great cliff, crowned with the ruins of the old Acropolis; on another of the guardian hills are the ruins of a Greek theatre and of a Greek temple, and a fragment of the pavement still remains on which once stood Pythagoras, teaching the Greeks of the colony of Naxos—as they sat on the hillside, all intent on his words—their duty as citizens to the State. Close to the spot hallowed by his feet is buried one of the talismans planted in Europe by Apollonius of Tyana, one of the seven centres of occult force made by him for future use in direct connection with the Mighty One who wields the five-rayed Vajra. It is these things which, to the Occultist, hallow Taormina, marking it out as a fit spot for his holy and far-reaching work, for it is one of the sacred places, where the magnetism of the White Brotherhood is potent, and where all nature thrills harmoniously to the chord of highest life. Not many years ago it was reinforced, and knit to our Indian centre at Adyar by one of the unbreakable ties which belong to the occult

world. It was not therefore strange that we should be guided thither for three months of secluded life, for labour which should add new strength to the Theosophical Society, and open new avenues through which the force of the Brotherhood should flow out for the helping of men.



The heroic lonely efforts of that noble Messenger of the White Lodge, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, are bearing rich fruit to-day, and never must we forget, in these hours of growing light, to whom we owe its dawning, who laboured through the chill dark hours before the dawn, and saw but little fruit of all her sacrifices, of all her poured-out life. To her, as to Those who sent her, should our hearts go out in deepest gratitude, as we reap what she sowed, and garner in the harvest from the land she ploughed. If to-day the Theosophical Society is beyond all possibility of destruction it is because it was nourished by her life-blood, as it lay beneath her heart.



And so we give her thanks—thanks to our great Leader—that from this little Sicilian village two more of the children of men passed through the door that opens inwards only, the Strait Gate which admits to the Narrow Way leading to Eternal Life; and that two others, already on that way, passed through another of its Portals. This splendid increase of strength will show itself in accelerated progress for our beloved Society, in increased life and vigour. We need not wonder

that every possible difficulty was thrown in the way of the accomplishment of this great task, and that every effort was made to injure those on whose strength and stability of purpose the human side of it depended. But "greater are those that are with us than those that are against us," and the chariots of fire ringed round the mountain, as of old, guarding it against the assailing hosts. In the autumn of 1911, the task was set; the spring and early summer of 1912 have seen it accomplished. Many other such tasks must be wrought out in the years of preparation that lie before us, so that when the Master of Masters comes among us a fit body-guard of Initiates may greet and serve Him during His stay in the outer world. But let none suppose that this great work can be done in outer peace, without struggle and turmoil. "Every battle of the warrior is with confused noise and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and with fuel of fire." What matters it for those in whose hearts the Eternal Peace abides, and who, through the rents of the drifting storm-clouds, can see the shining of the Star?

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Many wonder that, in these days, we speak so openly of things that for long have been shrouded in mystery. There was no silence about the great fact of Initiation and of living Initiates in the ancient world; the Rishis walked among men in India, visited the courts of Kings, and no secrecy as to their persons was sought; the same was the case in Egypt and in Greece; the details of the methods

were ever guarded, but the results were known. And so it remained for tens of thousands of years. A new policy was rendered necessary by the murder of the Christ, and the shadow of that murder has darkened the world ever since. The persecutions which began with the acceptance of Christianity by the State rendered silence expedient even as to the doctrines the knowledge of which led to Initiation, and to have spoken of the facts of occult life would have been not only fatal to the speakers—which was a small matter—but useless to the world—which was a great one. Hence for fifteen hundred years a policy of silence was adopted. This has been broken since 1875 by H. P. Blavatsky who quite openly, spoke of one or two of her pupils—such as Damodar—as having reached discipleship; a further experiment as to publicity of the old kind was made by showing a few occult play-things—ringing astral bells, transferring objects from one place to another, and the like. This was found too disturbing, and the experiment was put an end to for a time, in order that the teachings might make their way, while Christian Science and Spiritualism familiarised the world with certain occult forces in a less aggressive fashion. Now, the doctrines of the Ancient Wisdom are becoming familiar, are widely accepted in their own form, and have infiltrated into the religious teachings every where. The theories of Occultism are known; the facts of the existence of the Path, of the Masters, of the Occult Hierarchy, are familiar in the ears of the public, and are no longer greeted with ridicule; our task now is to bring that public back to the



old quiet unexcited recognition of the further fact—that these things happen now, as much as they did in 1,000 or 10,000 B. C., and that living men and women who are Initiates walk about now as they did in the days of old. These forerunners of the coming host, will be sneered at, ridiculed, blamed for self-conceit and unproved assumptions. They need not mind, for all the arrows which break on their bosoms will be blunted, and there will be fewer to wound the coming Teacher. The more they can familiarise the public with the idea in their own persons, the less will that public be astonished and sceptical when He appears. Nor need they be troubled when they are “despised and rejected of men,” for a greater than they are met with exactly that fate. “It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord.”

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Our readers will be interested in the two pictures of Indian art reproduced in this number. Next month the two beautiful views of Sicily referred to above will be given.

THE DEATH OF BHISHMA.







## THE VISION OF THE SPIRIT<sup>1</sup>

By C. JINARAJADASA

**T**HE history of humanity is the history of ideas, and the stages through which men have risen from savage to civilised are distinguishable one from the other by the influence of certain great doctrines. Among these teachings that have moulded civilisations, the idea of Evolution stands out as heralding a new era in the world of thought. Considered at first as of mere academic interest, soon it was recognised as of practical value, and to-day it is known as necessary in the understanding of every problem in every department of being.

<sup>1</sup> A lecture delivered before the Thirty-sixth Annual Convention, T.S., held in Benares, 1911.

Nevertheless it is a fact that the doctrine of evolution is a theory after all. No one has lived long enough to see sufficient links in the evolutionary chain to attest that the changes postulated as having taken place actually did so occur, and that the chain is not a fancy but a fact. Yet evolution is accepted by all as a dynamic idea, for like a magic wand it performs wonders in the world of thought. It marshals the heterogeneous organisms of nature into orderly groups, and from inanimate element to protoplasm, from unicellular organism to multicellular, from invertebrate to vertebrate, from ape to man, one ascending scale of life is seen.

And striving to be man, the worm  
Mounts through all the spires of form.

Yet none can say that evolution in an agreeable fact to contemplate, for there is a ruthlessness to nature's methods that is appalling. Utterly cruel and wasteful she seems, creating and perfecting her creatures only to prey on each other, generating more than can live in the fierce struggle for existence; "red in tooth and claw with ravin" she builds and unbuilds and builds again, one-pointed only that a type shall survive and reckless of the pleasure or pain to a single life. Men themselves, proud though they be in a fancied freedom of thought and action, are nothing but pawns in a game she plays. The more fully evolution is understood from such facts as scientists have so far gathered, the more justifiably can men say with Omar of their birth, life, and death :

Into this Universe, and *Why* not knowing,  
Nor *Whence*, like Water willy-nilly flowing,  
And out of it, like Wind along the Waste,  
I know not *Whither*, willy-nilly blowing.

Of course this attitude does not represent that of the majority of men. Millions of men believe in a Creator and that "God's in His heaven, all's right with the world!" But it is no exaggeration to say that their optimism continually receives rude shocks. No man or woman of sensibility can look about him and not agree with Tennyson's comparison of life to a play.

Act first, this earth, a stage so gloom'd with woe  
 You all but sicken at the shifting scenes.  
 And yet be patient. Our Playwright may show  
 In some fifth Act what this wild Drama means.

Both the idea of evolution and the idea of a Divine Guidance, as at present conceived, fail to satisfy fully the needs of men for an inspiring view of life. The former indeed shows a splendid pageant of nature, but it has no message to individual man except to make the most of his brief day of life, and stoically resign himself to extinction when nature shall have no further use for him. The latter speaks to men's hearts in alluring accents of a power that maketh for righteousness, but it sees God as existing only in the gaps of that pitiless cosmic order that science reveals. It is obvious, therefore, that any philosophy which postulates an inseparable relation between God and evolution, between nature and man, is worthy of examination, and this is the view of life that Theosophy propounds in the light of one great idea.

This idea is that of the Evolution of Life. Just as modern science tells us of a ceaseless change of forms from protoplasm to man, so Theosophy asserts that there is, *pari passu*, a changing, growing life. This life does not depend on the forms,

though we see it associated with them; and of it Theosophy says that first it is indestructible, and second that it evolves.

It is indestructible, in the sense that when an organism is destroyed, nevertheless all is not destroyed, for there remains a life that is still conscious. If a rose fades and its petals crumble and fall into dust, the *life* of that rose has not therefore ceased to be; that life persists in nature, retaining in itself all the memories of all the experiences it gained garbed as a rose. Then in due course of events, following laws that are comprehensible, that life animates another rose of another spring, bringing to its second embodiment the memories of its first. Whenever therefore there seems the death of a living thing, crystal or plant, animal or man, there persists an indestructible life and consciousness, even though to all appearance the object is lifeless and processes of decay have begun.

Further, this life is evolving in exactly the same way that the scientist says that an organism evolves. The life is at first amorphous, responding but little to the stimuli from without, retaining only feeble memories of the experiences it gains through its successive embodiments. But it passes from stage to stage through more and more complex organisms, till slowly it becomes more definite, more diverse in its functions; as the outer form evolves from protoplasm to man, so evolves too the life ensouling it. All nature, visible and invisible, is the field of an evolution of life through successive series of evolving forms, and the broad stages of this evolving life are from mineral to vegetable,

from vegetable to animal, and from animal to man.

The doctrine of a life that evolves through evolving forms answers some of those questions that puzzle the biologist to-day. Many a fact hitherto considered as outside the domain of science is seen as illustrative of new laws, and existing gaps are bridged over to make the doctrine of evolution more logical than ever. It further shows nature as not wasteful and only seemingly cruel, for nothing is lost, and every experience in every form that was destroyed in the process of natural selection is treasured by the life to-day. The past lives in the present to attest that nature's purpose is not death crushing life, but life ever triumphant over death to make out of stocks and stones immortal men.

In each human being is seen this same principle of an imperishable evolving life. For man is an individual life and consciousness, an immortal soul capable of living apart from the body we usually call 'the man'. In each soul the process of evolution is at work, for at his entrance on existence as a soul, he is feeble and chaotic in his consciousness, vague and indefinite in his understanding of the meaning of life, and capable only of a narrow range of thought and feeling. But he too evolves, from indefinite to definite, from simple to complex, from chaos to order.

Man's evolution is by successive manifestations in bodies of flesh, passing at the death of one body to begin life once more in another new; and in this passage he carries with him the memory of



all experiences he has gained in the past behind him. This aspect of the evolution of life as it affects men is called reincarnation.

As all processes of nature are intelligible on the hypothesis of an evolution of organisms, so all that happens to men becomes comprehensible in the light of reincarnation; as the former links all forms by species and genus, family and order, class and group, sub-kingdom and kingdom into one unbreakable chain, so the latter binds all human experiences into one consistent philosophy of life. How reincarnation explains the mysteries around us and inspires us we shall now see.

Imagine with me that existence is a mountain, and that millions are climbing to its summit. Let many many days be needed before a traveller comes to his goal. Then as he climbs day after day, the proportion of things below him and above him will change; new sights will greet his eyes, new airs will breathe around him; his eyes will adjust themselves to new horizons, and step by step objects will change shape and proportion. At last on reaching the summit a vast panorama will extend before him, and he will see clearly every part of the road he climbed, and why it dipped into this valley and circled that crag. Let this mountain typify existence, and let the climbers up its sides be men and women who are immortal souls.

Let us now think for a moment of travellers at the mountain's base, who are to climb to its summit. We know how limited must be their horizon and how little they can see of the long path before them. Let such travellers typify the

most backward of our humanity, the most savage and least intelligent men and women we can find to-day. According to reincarnation these are child-souls, just entering into existence to undergo evolution and to be made into perfect souls. To understand the process of evolution let us watch one of them stage by stage as he climbs the mountain.

The first thing that we shall note is that this child-soul manifests a duality. For he is soul and body; as a soul he is from God but as a body he is from the brute.

The Lord let the house of a brute to the soul of a man,  
And the man said, Am I your debtor?  
And the Lord, Not yet, but make it as clean as you can,  
And then I will let you a better.

The body he occupies has in it a strong instinct of self-preservation, stamped upon it by the fierce struggle for existence of its animal progenitors; he himself as a soul coming from God has intuitions as to right and wrong, but as yet hardly any will. The body demands for its preservation that he be self-assertive and selfish; lacking the will to direct his evolution he acts as the body impels.

#### THE VISION OF THE SEPARATED SELF

Hence at this earliest stage of the soul his vision of life as he climbs is that of the separated self. 'Mine not yours' is his principle of action; greed rules him and a thirst for sensation drives him on, and he little heeds that he is unjust and cruel to others as he lives through his nights and days of selfishness and self-assertion. He seems

strong-willed, for he crushes the weaker before him; but in reality he has no will at all, for he is but the plaything of an animal heredity he cannot control. He has no more freedom of will than the water-wheel that turns at the bidding of the descending stream; he is but the tool of a 'will to live' that accomplishes a purpose not his own.

Millions of men and women around us are at this first stage. Their craftiness, hardly deserving the name of intellect, is that of a Falstaff for whom "the world is mine oyster which I with sword will open". In their least animal phases comfort is their aim in life: "they dressed, digested, talked articulated words; other vitality showed they almost none". The universe around them is meaningless, and they are scarce capable of wonder: "let but a Rising of the Sun, let but a creation of the world happen *twice*, and it ceases to be marvellous, to be noteworthy or noticeable". The centre of the circle of the cosmos is in themselves and they neither know nor care if another and truer centre be possible.

Yet when we recognise that each of these souls is immortal and that his future is "the future of a thing whose growth and splendour have no limit," we begin to understand why at this early stage selfishness plays such a prominent part in his life. For in the stages to come he must be capable of standing alone, firm on the basis of a coherent individuality; now it is, therefore, he must develop initiative and strength. He is quick to retaliate, but the germs of swift decision are grown thereby; he is domineering and cruel, but the seeds

of intelligent enterprise result from the animal cunning he displays. Every evil he does must sometime be paid back in laborious service to his victims; yet on the whole the evil he does at this stage is less in quantity and force, for all its seeming, than that done in later stages where intelligence is keener and emotion more powerful. At a certain period in human evolution selfishness has its place in the economy of things, for selfishness too is a force used to build the battlements of heaven.

These souls, whose youth alone is the cause of their selfishness, are in their essence divine, and there is in them no evil of a positive kind; the vices are but the result of the absence of virtues, and the evil is "null, is naught, is silence implying sound". Each is a 'good man' who deep down within him has a knowledge of "the one true way," though in his attempts to tread it he seems to retrograde rather than to evolve. Like plants in a garden they are all tended by Him from whom they come; He knows the perfect souls that He will make out of them by change and growth as the ages pass by.

Though still confused his service unto Me,  
 I soon shall lead him to a clearer morning.  
 Sees not the gardener, even while he buds his tree,  
 Both flower and fruit the future years adorning?

Life after life these souls come to birth, now as men and now as women; they live a life of selfishness, and they die, and hardly any change will be noticeable in the character; but slowly there steals into their lives a dissatisfaction. The mind is too dull to grasp the relation of the individual

to the whole, and the imagination is too feeble to realise that "man doth not live by bread alone". Hence it is that "the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to" are duly marshalled and employed to ruffle their self-centred contentment; old age and death cast over them shadows that have no power to sadden a philosophic mind; disease and accident lie in wait for them to weigh down their spirits and make them rebel against a fate they do not understand. Till their hearts shall enshrine a divine purpose, a Hound of Heaven pursues them, and "naught shall shelter thee, that wilt not shelter Me".

Thus are they made ready to pass on to the next stage; the foundations of abilities have been laid, and the individual is firm on a basis built through selfishness. Now has come the time to begin the laborious work of casting out the self, and so there opens before the soul's gaze the vision of the next stage. According to the type of soul, this vision is either the Vision of the Mind or the Vision of the Emotions.

There are in life two main types of souls, the one in whom intelligence controls emotion and the other in whom emotion sways the mind. One type is not more evolved than the other; they are both stages to pass through to grow a higher faculty, that of Intuition. The vision of the third stage is the Vision of the Intuition, but to it souls come from the first stage either through intellect or through emotion. Let us first consider those souls whose evolution is by way of the intellect.

## THE VISION OF THE MIND

We shall see in the past of these souls that much intelligence has been developed in the first stage; their selfishness has made them quick and cunning to adapt opportunities to minister to their comfort. This intelligence is now taken up by the unseen Guides of evolution, and the soul is placed in environments that will change mere animal cunning into true intellect. The past good and evil sown by him will be adjusted in its reaping, so as to give him occupations and interests that will force him to think of men and things around him apart from their relation to himself. Instead of weighing experiences in terms of personal comfort he begins now to group them in types and categories; little by little he begins to see a material and moral order in the cosmos that is more powerful than his will. Each law of nature when first seen is feared by him, for it seems to be there to thwart him; but later, with more experience of its working, he begins to trust it and to depend upon it to achieve his aim. A love of learning appears in him and nature is no longer a blank page; he has ceased to be "a pair of spectacles behind which there is no eye".

At this stage we shall see that the selfishness still in him will warp the judgments of his mind. He will be a doctrinaire, a pedant, combative and full of prejudice; for all his intellect his character will show marked weaknesses, and he will often see and propound principles of conduct which he will not be able to apply to himself. Again and again he will

fail to see how little he understands the world, since the world is the embodiment of a life that is more than mind, and whoso understands it with mind alone will misunderstand. Excess of intellect will become in him defect of intelligence, and he will see all things as through a glass darkly.

Many a life will pass while he slowly gains experiences through the mind and assimilates them into a truer conception of life. By now he will have begun to take part in the intellectual life of the world, and when he is on the threshold of the next stage we shall find him as a worker in science, philosophy or literature. But his intellect has too great a personal bias still, and it must be made impersonal and pure before the next vision, that of the intuition, can be his. Once again we shall see that there enters into his life a dissatisfaction. The structures which he builds so laboriously as the results of years of work will crumble one by one, because nature reveals new facts to show the world that his generalisations were only partly true; the world for which he toiled will forget him and younger workers will receive the honours that are his due. He will be misunderstood by his dearest friends, and "he is now, if not ceasing, yet intermitting to eat his own heart, and clutches round him outwardly on the Not-Me for wholesomer food".

But this suffering, though the reaping of sad sowings of injustice to others through prejudice brings in its train a high purification sooner or later; the soul learns the great lesson of working for work's sake and not for the fruit of action.

Now he knows the joy of altruistic dedication of himself to the search of truth. A student of philosophies but the slave of none, he now watches nature 'as it is,' and in a perfect impersonality of mind solves her mysteries one by one; of him now can it be said with the Pythagoreans that "a great intellect is the chorus of divinity". Thus dawns for him the Vision of the Intuition.

### THE VISION OF THE EMOTIONS

I mentioned when describing the transition from the first stage to the second that there were in the world two main types of souls—those who pass from the Vision of the Separated Self to the Vision of the Intuition by way of the mind, and those others who develop along a parallel path and pass from the emotions to the intuition. We have just seen how souls are trained through intellect to cast out the self; we shall now see how the same result is achieved for those in whom emotions sway the mind.

As the intellectual type showed in the first stage a marked development of intelligence of a low kind, so similarly shall we find that the souls we are going to consider show during the same stage a great deal of feeling. Not that this feeling will be refined or unselfish; indeed it will mostly be lust and jealousy, with perhaps a little crude religious emotion in addition. But the character will be obviously easily swayed by emotions, and this trait in the soul is now taken up and worked upon to enable him to pass to the next stage.



Following his emotional bent and selfish and oblivious of the feelings of those around him, the soul will compel others weaker than himself to be the slaves of his desires; but the passion and the sense of possession he has of these that minister to his lusts will link him to them life after life, till slowly he begins to feel that they are necessary to his emotional life and not dispensable at will. Gradually his impure passions will be transformed into purer affections, and then he will be brought again and again into contact with them so that his emotions shall go out impulsively towards them. But the evil he wrought them in the past will now cast a veil over their eyes and make them indifferent to him. He will be forced to love on, to atone for past evil by service, but despair will be the only reward; when in resentment he tries to break the bond that ties him to them he will find he cannot. He will curse love, only to return again and again to love's altar with his offerings.

Though life now becomes full of disappointment and despair, in his serener moments he will acknowledge that in spite of the suffering it entailed, his emotional life has slowly opened a new sense in him. He catches now and then glimpses of an undying youth in all things, and the world that seems dreary and aging will reappear under certain emotional stress as he knew it before life became a tragedy. These glimpses are transitory at first, lasting indeed only so long as the love emotion colours his being; but there is for him a time

When all the world is young, lad,  
 And all the trees are green,  
 And every goose a swan, lad,  
 And every lass a queen.

Life after life, fostered by his transitory loves, this sense will grow in him till it blossoms into a sense of wonder. Then nature reveals in all things in life new values whose significance he can henceforth never wholly forget. While love sways his being each blade of grass and leaf and flower has to him a new meaning; he sees beauty now where he saw none before. Everything beautiful around him—a face, a flower, a sunset, a melody—will link him in mysterious ways to those he loves; the world ceases to be a blank page.

Love wakes men once a lifetime each,  
 They lift their heavy lids and look;  
 And lo! what one sweet page can teach,  
 They read with joy, then close the book.  
 And some give thanks, and some blaspheme,  
 And most forget. But either way  
 That and the child's unheeded dream  
 Is all the light of all their day.

It will happen that this sense of wonder is intermittent, and that there come periods when the world is veiled; but the veil is of his own making, and must be torn asunder if he is to possess the Vision of the Intuition. Once more there enters into his life a dissatisfaction—a discontent that love itself is transitory after all. Those he loves and who love him in return will be taken from him just when life seems in flower; friends he idealises will shatter the ideals so lovingly made of them. Cruel as it all seems, it is but the reaping of sad sowings in past lives, but the reaping has a meaning now as always. He has so far been

loving not Love but its shadow, not the Ideal from which nothing can be taken away but its counterfeit which suffers diminution; he must now see clearer and feel truer. The character must be steadied so that it shall not rebound from enthusiasm to depression, nor be satisfied with a vague mysticism that prefers to revel in its own feelings rather than evaluate what causes them.

Hence the inevitable purification through suffering; the dross of self is burned away till there remains the gold of a divine desire. He then discovers that the truest feelings are only those that have in them the spirit of offering. Now for him thus purified in desire and for that other type of soul made impersonal in intellect there dawns the Vision of the Intuition.

### THE VISION OF THE INTUITION

“Before the eyes can see, they must be incapable of tears. Before the ear can hear, it must have lost its sensitiveness.” All souls that have come to this stage have learnt by now the bitter lesson that “it is only with Renunciation that Life, properly speaking, can be said to begin;” they have proved in their own experience that what once seemed death was but a “repentance unto life”. They have now discovered the meaning of life—that man is a child of God come forth to life to be a co-worker with his Father. It matters not that a soul does not state to himself his relation to the whole in these terms; it only matters that he should have discovered that his

part in existence is to be a worker in a work, and that nothing happening to himself matters so long as that work proceeds to its inevitable end. He knows that the end of thought and feeling is action for his fellow-men, and that this action must be either dispassionate and without thought of reward or full of a spirit of grateful offering.

He possesses now the faculty of the intuition, which transcending both reason and emotion yet can justify its judgments to either. He grows past 'common sense,' the criterion for common things, into an uncommon sense; for life is full now of uncommon things of whose existence others are not aware. In men and women he discerns those invisible factors which are inevitable in human relations, and hence his judgment of them is "not of this world". In all things he sees and feels One Life. Whatever unites attracts him; if intellectual he will love to synthesise in science or philosophy, if emotional he will dedicate himself to art or philanthropy.

Now slowly for him the Many become the One. The Unity will be known only in the vision of the next stage, but preparing him for it science and art, religion and philosophy, will deduce for him eternal fundamental types from the kaleidoscope of life. Types of forms, types of thoughts, types of emotions, types of temperament—these he sees everywhere round him, and life in all its phases becomes transformed because it reflects as in a mirror Archetypes of a realm beyond time and space and mutability.

Everything of mortal birth  
Is but a type ;  
What was of feeble worth  
Here becomes ripe.  
What was a mystery  
Here meets the eye ;  
The Ever-womanly  
Draws us on high.

‘The Ever-womanly’ now shows him everywhere one Wisdom; science tells him of the oneness of nature and philosophy that man is a consciousness creating his world; art reveals in all things youth and beauty, and religion whispers to his heart that Love broods over all. His sympathies go to all as his will is ever at their service.

Not far now is the time when for him shall dawn the vision of the Spirit. But to bring him to its portal a dissatisfaction once more enters his soul. No longer can that dissatisfaction be personal; the sad reaping of sorrow for evil done is over, and “only the sorrow of others casts its shadow over me”. Nor is it caused by any sense of the mutability of things, for absolutely, without question, he knows his immortality and that though all things change there is behind them that which changes never. Yet while he climbs to his appointed goal dissatisfaction must always be.

It comes to him now as a creator. For with intuition to guide him he creates in that field of endeavour in which he has trained himself in past lives; as poet, artist, statesman, saint, or scientist he is one of the world’s geniuses. But though his creations are a miracle to all, yet to him they are only partly true and only partly beautiful, for he sees the ideal which he would fain bring down

to men, and knows his failure as none others can know. Life is teaching him "to attain by shadowing forth th' unattainable".

As thus he grows life after life, scientist and poet, artist and saint, now merge into a new type of being who sees with "larger, other eyes than ours". He has regained his integrity of heart and his innocency of hands and is become 'a little child;' "by pity enlightened" he is now Parsifal, 'the Pure Fool,' who enters upon his heritage.

### THE VISION OF THE SPIRIT

Then it is that at its threshold there meets him One who has watched him climbing for many a life and all unseen has encouraged him. This is the Master, one of that "goodliest fellowship of famous knights whereof the world holds record". In Him the soul sees in realisation all those ideals that have drawn him onward and upward; and hand in hand with this 'Father in God' he now treads the way while the Vision of the Spirit is shown him by his Master. Who shall describe that vision but those that have it, and how may one less than a Master here speak with authority? And yet since Masters of the Wisdom have moved among men, since Buddha, Krishna and Christ have shown us in Their lives something of what that vision is, surely from their lives we can deduce what the vision must be.

In that Vision of the Spirit the Many is the One. "Alone within this universe He comes and

goes; 'tis He who is the fire, the water He pervadeth; Him and Him only knowing one crosseth over death; no other path at all is there to go."

Now for the soul who has come to the end of his climbing each man is only "the spirit he worked in, not what he did, but what he became". There is no high nor low in life, for in all he sees a ray from the Divine Flame; as through the highest so through the lowest too, to him "God stooping, shows sufficient of His light for us i' th' dark to rise by". Life is henceforth become a Sacrament and he is its Celebrant; with loving thoughts and deeds he celebrates and at-ones man with God and God with man. He discerns, purifies in himself, and offers to God "infinite passion and the pain of finite hearts that yearn;" from God on high he brings to men what alone can satisfy that yearning.

He has renounced 'the will to live' and thereby has made its purpose his own; "foregoing self the universe grows I." Yet he knows with rapture that that 'I' is but a tiny lens in a great Light. Henceforth he lives only that a Greater than he may live through him, love through him, act through him; and evermore shall his heart whisper, in heaven or in hell, whithersoever his work may take him: "Him know I, the Mighty Man, resplendent like the Sun, beyond the Darkness; Him and Him only knowing one crosseth over death; no other path at all is there to go."

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Thus do we, the happy few, the precursors of a new age, see life in the light of reincarnation.

As the evolutionist sees all nature linked in one ladder of life, and earth and sky and sea testify to him to evolution, so do we see all men linked in one common purpose, and their hopes and fears, their self-sacrifice and their selfishness, testify to us of reincarnation. Life and its experiences have ceased to be for us

An arch where thro'  
Gleams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades  
For ever and for ever when I move.

No longer can the world be for us as the poet sang :

Act first, this earth, a stage so gloom'd with woe  
You all but sicken at the shifting scenes.  
And yet be patient. Our Playwright may show  
In some fifth Act what this wild drama means.

The Fifth Act is here before our eyes. It is that Vision of the Spirit that is the heritage of every soul, and thither all men are slowly treading for "no other path at all is there to go".

C. Jinarajadasa





## AN OUTSIDE VIEW OF THEOSOPHY

By CHARLES J. WHITBY, M. D.

NO thinking person can dispute the significance or importance of the Theosophical movement. Its world-wide organisation, the high level of culture prevailing among its members, its evident appeal to all classes and to the most diverse nationalities and individualities, the vastness of its aims and the grandeur of its ideals, are, beyond question, matters for just pride to its promoters and for something more than respectful consideration from its critics. I myself, as one of the latter, feel in honour bound to begin what I have to say by way of criticism, with a tribute of admiration and gratitude. In common with most students, I owe much to Theosophy—for one thing, ready access to much of the world's greatest and most sublime literature; for another, many valued friendships; for others, the recollection of not a few eloquent expositions of subjects of profound interest and incalculable moment, as well as the satisfaction of knowing that so many capable men and women are devoting a fine enthusiasm to stemming the tide of materialism and its associate, Mammon-worship.

It may well seem surprising, in view of my sincere and avowed sympathy with its aims and

convictions, that I remain outside the fold of Theosophy, and, so far as one can be sure of one's future feelings or actions, intend so to remain. The reason for this will no doubt reveal itself as I proceed with my argument: it is too personal a matter to deserve separate discussion. The Theosophical Society offers freely to all who care to avail themselves of its hospitality all that it has to give in the way of enlightenment, without insisting upon any acknowledgment or return. It is a wise as well as a generous policy, of which I have not scrupled to avail myself as far as my scanty leisure has allowed. But you will, I am sure, agree that to carry the sense of obligation to the extent of becoming a member in the absence of any real conviction of the need of membership would be a poor compliment to pay you. It would be tantamount to the expression of incredulity as to the genuineness of your desire to share your spiritual wealth with all who care to partake of it.

One of the most interesting facts, to my thinking, about Theosophy is that it is very largely—I think one may without fear of contradiction say predominantly, a woman's movement. Not only are women in an obvious majority in most Theosophical meetings; a very large part of the organising and administrative work of the Society rests in their hands. As to your leaders—it is only necessary to mention the first two names that inevitably occur to one—those of Madame Blavatsky and Mrs. Besant. It seems to me a very strange and significant fact, a fact almost unique in the world's history, that this great spiritual movement should have grown up

under feminine guidance and control. Astrologists tell us that the earth is entering upon a new Avatara dominated by the sign of Aquarius, which, as I need not remind you, is a sign denoting the feminine qualities in general and, in particular, intuition. Certainly the auspices under which Theosophy has arisen and is making such marked progress in popular influence do confirm in a startling manner this astrological forecast. It is not by any means the only sign but it is one of the most striking signs of the dawn of an era in which woman will come into her kingdom, reaping the harvest of her long patience and self-sacrifice and achieving a position unparalleled within historic times. In reference to the leading part played by women as pioneers of the Theosophical movement, an observation occurs to me which I think is connected therewith. It is, that, although the mental activity and intelligence of Theosophists far exceeds the average of the modern community, Theosophy is not itself in essence an intellectual movement. It is one of your dogmas—I know that you do not own to the possession of any such incumbrances, but I am coming to that presently—that there are more or less latent in every human being powers and faculties far transcending the highest pertaining to the mind. And it is with these super-mental faculties that you are chiefly concerned, and upon whose development you mainly rely for the advancement of the race. I am not going to deny or even question their existence: I should on the contrary much prefer to accept a belief so flattering to human nature; but I will just point out in passing, that the existence

and progress of Theosophy does not in itself establish the truth of this belief. Assuming for the sake of argument that it were fallacious, it would be quite conceivable that a movement might arise based on dissatisfaction with accepted views as to the limitation of human faculties, and might win general or even universal acceptance. And yet, all the while, those limitations might be real and final, nevertheless. One must frankly own that human beings are liable to delusions and reluctant to face unpleasant facts.

Now as to the question of dogma. I am, of course, aware that, beyond the affirmation of acceptance of certain ethical obligations, questioned by nobody, candidates for admission to the Theosophical Society are not asked to bind themselves to any theoretical tenets. That is very right and proper, and quite justifies your disclaiming the intention to set up a standard as to what Theosophists may or may not believe. But the crucial question, to my mind, is not what is the avowed and intended, but what is the actual bond that unites your fraternity. Is it primarily an ethical bond—acceptance of the Brotherhood of Man and all the obligations thence derived? I venture to say that it is not. On the contrary, I am convinced that ninety-nine out of every hundred of your converts join you because they are in strong sympathy with your well-known views as to the nature of superphysical realities, your theory as to the existence and laws of the unseen worlds. They are in sympathy with your views as to these matters; they wish to hear more of them; they take the natural and reasonable

course of attending your meetings; their interest grows to conviction; they join you, and become believers and propagandists like yourselves. Now what I wish to point out to you is that where a number of people holding, or even inclined to hold, similar views upon highly debatable matters are constantly meeting and discussing these matters on the assumption that they are once for all settled, there will be an irresistible tendency for the views in question to crystallise into stereotyped convictions which are to all intents and purposes dogmas in the strict meaning of the word. You may be on your guard against this tendency—I hope you are and will be—but you cannot alter the fact that it is there, and will probably be too strong for you in the end. The time will come when it will severely tax your tolerance, when it will strike you as being something of an outrage for one of your members to get up among you and confess himself an unbeliever in or even a doubter of the doctrine of reincarnation or the doctrine of karma. Through hearing many lectures, reading many books and associating with many people in which and by whom these doctrines are assumed as incontrovertible and fundamental, you will insensibly become permeated with a conviction that only wilful perversity can account for the refusal of any sane person to accept them. That is a long way in the direction of the true believer who burns his doubting brother at the stake for the good of his soul. I heartily acquit you of the desire to burn me, or anybody; but I feel in duty bound to point out that

there was a time when it would have seemed grotesque to suggest that Christians would ever desire to burn those who questioned any fragment of their creed. In fact, as we know that there were Christians long before there was a creed, your present disavowal of the need of a definite doctrinal basis is by no means a proof that you will not some day discover its indispensability. But I hope you agree with me that the longer this day is in coming, the better for all concerned.

Certainly I should be among the last to deny that the doctrines held more or less explicitly by most Theosophists are in many ways an advance upon those which formerly held the field. When one considers the brevity of the average human life and the inequalities of inheritance and environment, it does not seem reasonable to believe that the fate of an immortal soul (assuming that we all have immortal souls) can once for all be decided within the span of a single earthly existence. Eternal bliss is a reward which seems to me altogether beyond the merits of even the best of us, while the alternative of eternal torment is now being repudiated with contumely even in the most orthodox quarters. These crude solutions are evidently quite unsuited to the needs of our time. If we must have an alternative—and it seems that we must, because the multitude can never in the long run be induced to await the results of investigation—I can conceive of no provisional doctrine more salutary and rational than yours. That we return to earth many times, reaping on every return, in the form of happiness or misery, the harvest of

our former good or bad actions, is a belief which has been held by many of the wise in former ages, a belief which may well be true. Its popularisation will have the beneficial result of supplying a natural motive for humane conduct and supplanting the superstitious notion of punishment, by the rational conception of moral cause and effect. We are not rewarded for our good or punished for our evil deeds: they come home to us in the form of beneficent consequences or recoil upon us with disastrous but inevitable effect, according to the nature of those intrinsic motives which gave them birth and sped them forth. It is a good working hypothesis, if it be no more than that. Disciples of the pragmatist school of thought founded by William James hold that the criterion of truth and falsehood in theories is merely this: a true theory is one that works usefully and fruitfully; a false one does not. If, as I certainly incline to believe, the general acceptance of the doctrines of reincarnation and karma would prove socially useful by mitigating the brutality of our western civilisation in many ways, that, so far as it goes, is a pragmatic argument for their truth. But I must point out that from the point of view of science it does not go very far. Science holds emphatically that utility, even of the highest kind or degree, is one thing, and objective truth quite another. They may or may *not* coincide. Science, to be worthy of the name, has to welcome with equal hospitality truths advantageous or disastrous to the dearest hopes and aspirations of mankind. Truth for Truth's sake is the motto of the scientist, as

Art for Art's sake is that of the artist. You yourselves affirm that there is nothing higher than Truth. But you must forgive me for saying that as a Society (not as individuals) you do not at present act up to it. In your journals, for example, extraordinary claims are from time to time set forth on behalf of certain of your leaders, claims to the possession of supernormal faculties and the ascertainment of events commonly accounted beyond mortal ken. We are told that such or such a person has the faculty of exploring the astral or manasic planes of existence or of recalling the events of his or her former lives upon earth. Or that he or she enjoys the privilege of familiar converse with Beings of an order of development far beyond our conception or imagination, Beings who condescend to preside over the destinies of your Society and even that of the race. These things, if true, are of an interest and significance that it would be impossible to exaggerate. I, for one, should be only too glad to believe them true. But, as a humble devotee of science and of the scientific standard of veracity, I dare not accept them on the strength of mere authority. And you offer as yet nothing more. On these lines you may go very far, I admit; you may conquer the whole world of popular acceptance; but one stronghold you will never subdue. Until your leaders come out into the open and submit their vast claims to the test of experimental confirmation, under those crucial conditions which impartial scrutiny demands, the scientific fortress will remain bolted and barred against you—of that you



may rest assured. Science will resolutely pursue her own path of independent investigation, making sure of every foothold before she advances to the next. If the domain of which you profess to know exists, she will sooner or later invade and explore it: already she seems to be standing on the very verge of the unseen. And while it is true that your doctrines need much fuller confirmation than they have yet received before they can be accepted by the representatives of science as established verities, it does not follow that there is any irreconcilability between what you believe and what men of science know. On the contrary you may justly claim that many of the most recent discoveries in the field of the higher physics confirm in a striking manner the views of Theosophical writers of an earlier date. I have lately read with deep interest an ably written work on *The Physics of the Secret Doctrine*, familiar no doubt to many of you, in the perusal of which I was impressed over and over again by the dovetailing of Theosophical doctrines into the fabric of orthodox physical science. And when one reflects that Madame Blavatsky's book was published long before our views as to the nature of the so-called 'atom' had been revolutionised, in consequence mainly of the discovery of radium, one must admit that this unexpected confirmation of her predictions does in great measure enhance their general claim to authenticity.

It does more than this: it raises in my mind the question whether you may not really be in possession of or upon the track of a method of investigation distinct from and supplementary to

the approved Baconian method—one which in the near or distant future may prove a serious rival or even a victorious opponent. I refer to the method of intuition, or, perhaps better, of meditation. Of course, this is not by any means a new method: it has been practised sporadically and individualistically throughout the ages by saints, philosophers and mystics. And men of science practise it also, when, by the use of the scientific imagination, they formulate those theories which they subsequently test and correct by observation and experiment. On the other hand it has never, I believe, been tried on a large scale, systematically and co-operatively, as ordinary scientific investigations are being tried at present. Now it seems to me that, granted the existence of at least the rudiments of an inner sense or senses, distinct from yet analogous to the sense of touch or vision, it would be worth while to organise the investigation of definite problems along these lines. The results obtained by a number of men and women in meditating upon a given problem under fixed and stated conditions could be compared and harmonised, and so far as possible tested by experiment. I know that something of the kind has been done by Mrs. Besant and Mr. Leadbeater in reference to the constitution of the atom, but I am not prepared to criticise the value of their work. Another example of the sort of work I have in mind, except that it is the product of a single highly-gifted imagination, is to be found in a book by Mr. Fournier D'Albe entitled *Two New Worlds*, which every Theosophist should read. He writes:

In proceeding to control the solar system, man may develop, or rather resume, powers now found only in a rudimentary form. In taking control of nature, man has lost many spiritual gifts once possessed by his ancestors. Clairvoyance and telepathy were once almost universal. They have been deliberately atrophied in order to fit man for the conquest of nature. The human mind not only requires delicate senses and perceptions, it also requires certain blindnesses and insensibilities. Some sensibilities have been crusted over. Man has become a crustacean as regards some of his faculties. They have become 'occult'. When they are once more required they will again come forth. They are beginning to come forth now.

That is precisely my own view or hope; and I have no doubt that you share it. On the other hand, I wish to emphasise the need of certain precautions, if this new-old method of research is to be safeguarded from abuse and consequent discredit. Many of those who at present possess or claim these extra faculties, clairvoyance, clair-audience, and the like, are quite unfit persons to employ them for purposes of genuine research, on their own account at any rate. They have no scientific training, no culture, no critical acumen, and no sense of reality. We must use them, if at all, as we use our microscopes and telescopes, as mere passive instruments; fallible instruments too; for the perceptions of the inner senses are no more above suspicion than those of ordinary sight and hearing. It is not merely foolish, it is positively wrong to accept with uncritical credulity anything that is given out as a result of 'intuition'. Surely the splendid achievements of science, which accepts nothing on faith or authority, have driven home the obligation of suspending judgment until conviction is irresistible—in other words, the Duty of Scepticism. In order to "hold fast that which

is good" it is essential to "try all things;" and to 'try' means to test them with keen vigilance and implacable rigour.

I am inclined to hope that the result of such an investigation would be the triumphant vindication of the possibilities of the rationally-controlled intuitive faculties as instruments of research. For when one comes to think of it, what is imagination but a form of inner vision? And when, as in the case of a great poet, artist, or composer, it co-exists in its highest form with a highly-developed intellect, do we not invariably find in its products an inexhaustible wealth of symbolically-expressed significance and truth? How otherwise than by the exercise of combined thought and imagination did such men as Newton and Darwin arrive at their epoch-making discoveries? And if it needed long years of tedious research and experiment to confirm and justify their faith in what they had 'seen' in meditation, was not the result nevertheless anticipated with sufficient confidence to encourage them to persevere to the very end? Perhaps it may even turn out that *any* theory with regard to the processes of nature upon any plane which in the first place is the result of a clear and genuine intuition, in the second place has been elaborated by a competent thinker, and in the third place falls naturally and harmoniously into the system of established laws, is necessarily and inevitably true. Perhaps we may learn in time to regard our present laborious and complicated methods of experiment and observation as in great measure superfluous, and to rely in the main upon the new-old

method which I have outlined above. But we should only be justified in doing so provided that we had amply assured ourselves of the objective validity of this new-old method; and, even so, a number of precautions against the creeping in and accumulation of errors and fallacies would be constantly required. For mankind was ever prone to credulity, loving rather to be flattered by charlatans than chastened and enlightened by the wise.

But, leaving these too-tempting speculations, let us return to the considerations of Theosophy as it is. One of the things for which much gratitude is due to it, is its popularising in the West of what is for us a new way of thinking about the unseen world. It has extended the bounds of Nature so as to include what was formerly regarded as exempt from law and order of any natural or conceivable kind. It has consequently made us feel at home in the invisible in a sense which was impossible to most people before; and this not only without in any way lessening the majesty of spiritual things, but, on the contrary, enormously enhancing our sense of their vastness and power. The happy result is or may well be the possibility of combining a genuine interest in the unseen world with an undiminished zeal for the improvement of terrestrial affairs. Formerly this was not so; other-worldly people made a point of depreciating the earth-plane and its interests in every possible way. They conceived it as divided by a sharply defined frontier from the so-called supernatural sphere; and as a rule they affected something like despair as to its nature

and prospects. The supernatural on the other hand was a sort of void in which even thought itself could not feel rightly at home. In order to get thoroughly rid of this bad form of other-worldliness it was necessary for western civilisation to pass through a period in which the very existence of the higher planes was repudiated, and leaders of thought insisted upon the concentration of all our aspirations and efforts upon the improvement of life here and now. That, I believe, is the true explanation of nineteenth century materialism, which, now that the need for it has largely ceased, is melting away like a sun-smitten cloud. Theosophy, I need scarcely remind you, has been enabled to render us this important service, in consequence of its own appropriation of an immense body of elaborately thought-out nature-lore bequeathed to humanity by the great Oriental mystics of the past. Whether their speculations be or be not confirmed in every particular is not, for the moment, material; the point is that they assume, throughout, the universal continuity of law on every plane of being, and so enable thought to range throughout the Universe and to link up the seen with the unseen. Theosophy, in the performance of this great service, is evidently functioning as a mediator between the wisdoms of the East and of the West. It is paving the way for a new synthesis with physical science for its basis, a detailed system of psychic and super-psychic nature-lore above that, and, at the apex, philosophy properly so-called.

At the same time it is worth while to remember that Theosophy, great as are the services it

is rendering in regard to the popularisation of a new and saner way of thinking about the unseen, has not by any means a monopoly in its investigations or theories. Quite outside its ranks there are a large and increasing number of intelligent people who are more or less interested in the theoretical or practical study of the Occult. There are, for example, the spiritists, the occultists, the New Thought and Christian Science devotees; and, last but not least, there is a small body of genuinely scientific investigators, of which the Society for Psychological Research forms in this country the best-known example. A revival of the higher forms of Mysticism is also a remarkable feature of contemporary thought; and it is matter of common knowledge that attempts are being made to re-establish Rosicrucianism and other forms of organised spiritual aspiration. It would be wise, therefore, on the part of those responsible for the guidance and control of the Theosophical Movement, remembering that their pronouncements will not be exempt from outside criticism, to be cautious in committing themselves prematurely upon all doubtful matters. It is a comparatively easy task to win the assent of the credulous crowd; but that will not in itself be any guarantee of a real and permanent success.

Some of us have recently enjoyed the opportunity of hearing your eloquent President discourse upon the subject of preparation for the coming of a World-Teacher. It appears that your leaders claim to know a good deal about the intentions of this mysterious entity; and, if rumour may be trusted,

that they are even prepared to indicate, in the person of a certain youth of extraordinary promise, the organism through which this World-Teacher will function. Far be it from me to prejudice this or any other matter; I would merely express the hope that all concerned realise the stupendous responsibility involved in such claims. I am not prepared to deny that the world needs teaching, although it could fairly be argued that what it needs more is any generally noticeable disposition to carry into effect the teaching already available. Certainly the Theosophical Society, with its world-wide organisation, could command for any individual who taught under its auspices, a hearing at any rate quantitatively greater than any unbefriended thinker need expect. Therein lies a danger, concerning which I venture to submit a friendly word of warning, which I trust you will accept in the same spirit. Suspicion may arise that you are exploiting popular expectation in regard to the 'second Advent' in the interests of your Society; and such suspicion, however false and opprobrious, might recoil upon your movement with disastrous effect. I refer, in particular, to the claim advanced by or on behalf of your leaders to avenues of information inaccessible to the world at large. As to the authenticity of these claims it is not for me to speak—I know nothing of the grounds upon which they are based. If you produced your World-Teacher to-morrow, I and those who think with me, discounting the fact that He had the Theosophical Society for His pedestal, should, as Mrs. Besant herself suggests, examine His teaching according to our lights. "After all,"



says Mr. Wodehouse, "no amount of anticipatory statement can ever fully justify a Great One to the world. By His own teaching He stands or falls." And in conclusion, remembering the amount of superstitious nonsense that is being disseminated by certain fanatics in other quarters in regard to this matter of the 'second Advent,' I cannot find it in me to regret that you, with your more enlightened views, have taken it in hand. With all its ideas, moral, social, political, economic, in the melting-pot, what the world needs above all things is a clear call to the work of reconstruction upon better and saner lines. There are some of us who, believing we know what shape these lines should assume, will gladly accept your aid in getting them presented to the world. For example, I, as a flat disbeliever in current views as to the actual equality of individuals—potential equality is another matter—look with confidence to you for the reinstatement of the hierarchical ideal. It is true that the time has gone by when the mere fact of manual or commercial employment was regarded as a token of individual inferiority. On the other hand, it is one thing to admit this, and quite another to claim for all individuals and for all avocations equal prestige and value. The logical result of such a position is that the life of its commander-in-chief is of no more consequence to a campaigning army than that of its humblest camp-follower. Life itself is and must ever be in some sense a war; it necessarily follows that upon some individuals, in virtue of higher and rarer capacities, more exacting duties and more onerous responsibilities

will fall than upon the average citizen. Justice therefore demands that, while all men and women who are in any way serving the commonwealth shall receive due homage, some attempt shall be made to determine the relative worth of the various kinds of service, and to ascribe special honour to those to whom special honour is due. In other words, we must have a scale of social values, based on the due subordination of material to ideal interests. At present nobody seems to have the moral courage to state frankly that the work of (say) a great poet is of more dignity or value than that of a given coal-bearer. Such unwelcome yet wholesome truths must be faced unflinchingly before we can hope to emerge from our present muddle. The Theosophical Society, by its enforcement of the neglected claims of true spirituality, and by familiarising the world with the conception of an infinite gradation of individual worth and achievement, may render invaluable service to the cause of social regeneration. It is a true and just instinct which prompts the worker, however humble his lot or arduous his toil, to claim for himself and his fellows not less but more consideration than those idle parasites who do no sort of service to the commonwealth are too commonly accorded. That is the element of truth in industrial democracy; and it is now strong enough to look after itself. On the other hand it must be broadly and humanely interpreted. Many people, many women in particular, would like nothing better than the chance of earning their own living, but are precluded by social and ethical obligations which they

cannot set on one side. The example of their self-abnegation may be of much more value to the community than any obvious utilitarian services that their more fortunate sisters perform. To condemn such unwilling dependents upon the wage-earning activities of others as parasites, is in my opinion as unjust as it is common to-day. I look to Theosophy to mitigate the crudity of utilitarian and socialistic standards by a leaven of tolerance and enlightenment. "They also serve (or at any rate may serve, if they will) who only stand and wait."

I have often wondered, as no doubt you yourselves wonder at times, what is to be the future destiny of your Society. Is its work to be that of permeation or that of conquest? There can be no question but that your ideas are producing a powerful effect upon the leaders as well as upon many of the members of the various Churches. There is a growing tendency to prefer the spirit to the letter in the interpretation of Scripture as well as of dogma. Perhaps one might sum up the main tendency of Theosophical teaching in a phrase by calling it a Gospel of Interpretation. I am of course aware of your wise policy of encouraging all your members to remain loyal to the obligations of whatever religious organisation they may be attached to at the time when they become Theosophists. But—to be perfectly frank—I regard this advice as likely to prove in many cases more honoured in the breach than the observance. And the policy upon which it is based is in my opinion provisional and likely to prove impermanent.

After all, there is a limit to the capacity of old bottles. Sooner or later, it seems to me, the majority of you will find yourselves at the cross-roads—compelled to choose definitively between the old and the new allegiance. Even in regard to spiritual matters, the truth holds that it is better to be whole-heartedly wrong than half-heartedly right, if one must be one or the other. We outsiders do not yet know quite what Theosophy is in its true inwardness; we cannot, I think, know that until it shall have shed the veil of its present perhaps in essence untenable eclecticism. For if there be a sense in which all religions can be called true, there is another and, as it seems to me, a higher sense in which only *one* can be called true; that namely which, at the time being, expresses in fullest measure the highest hopes and the deepest convictions of humanity. In religious as in social matters, the hierarchical point of view which logically results from the possession of a definite scale of values will prove in the long run indispensable. The claims of quality must be made to prevail over the democratic worship of quantity.

Charles J. Whitby

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## EDUCATION AND SPIRITUAL CULTURE<sup>1</sup>

By ALBA

At the basis of education must be laid that which is neglected in our schools—the religious conception of life.

L. TOLSTOY

OF all the problems of our diseased present there is perhaps none so distressing as the problem of education. The old type of school has ceased to satisfy any one; the new one, being in the period of formation and fermentation, is in many points defective. The education given in homes is carried on in a desultory way, without any definite plan, by fits and starts, by inspiration. The science of pedagogy has most certainly reached a turning point; it stands on the threshold of important discoveries, but it has as yet no firm ground under its feet. Having turned our backs on old ways, we have not yet discovered any new ones, and are, so to say, hanging between heaven and earth. Transition times are always difficult and painful. When dawn is nearest, night is blackest; we peer longingly into the dark sky, anxiously watching for a sign of the bright morning and sunny day, but we have in the meantime to grope still in the

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<sup>1</sup> This article, describing the condition of children and of education in Russia, is written by an experienced Russian educationalist. Translated by B. Poushchine, nee Princess Galitzine.

darkness and to advance cautiously, lest we make fatal mistakes, working as we do in the dark on finely woven, nervous, plastic and over-sensitive young organisms. What thoughtful prudence must educators needs exercise, lest they introduce into the souls of their pupils some harsh, discordant notes; lest they impede their spiritual growth, or direct them along dangerous lines! The consciousness of the necessity of such careful handling of our children is intensified by the study of all the abnormal conditions in the midst of which they are growing. The psychic atmosphere surrounding our young generation is a decidedly unwholesome one: it is agitated, thunder-laden, saturated with the worst psychophysical emanations, passions and thought-forms—the inevitable companions of the historical and social crisis we are just now undergoing. The seething waves of a mountain-stream shall form in time a pure beautiful, deep lake; the roaring storm purifies the air and after it is over nature thrills with renewed, powerful, quickened life. . . . But when the mountain-stream rushes down all foaming, speeding from rock to rock, nobody could recognise in it the still, radiant lake; when the storm whirls raging by, uprooting trees and flooding fields, fantastically far seems the hour when nature shall breathe freely and start a new and beautiful life.

At such times, even grown-up people, hardened in the strife, find it difficult to hold their footing amid social storms and whirlwinds; as for young, soft organisms, they easily lose the ground under their feet and perish. Dr. Radin writes, in his paper on the 'Problems of Psycho-nervous

## Hygiene of the Education and Instruction of Children in Schools':<sup>1</sup>

The nervousness of children constitutes a sign full of menace. One step more and we will find ourselves on the eve of degeneration. . . . The absence of spiritual interests in children makes them physiologically unstrung. This broken-up mosaic work psychically feeds its roots on the weakness of self-analysis or its transient character.

As a doctor he points out the features most vividly expressed in the children; weakness of will and egocentricity, which he very justly qualifies as the being in love with one's self (autophily). We cannot but agree with this characteristic: we observe in the growing generation a dreadful excitability, irritability, weakness of will, and boundless egocentricity.

On the other side, statistic data breed still more painful thoughts. Specialists for brain-diseases certify to a phenomenon unheard of till lately: to the growing percentage of mental illnesses amid children, necessitating their withdrawal from schools and their relegation to sanatoria.<sup>2</sup> All kinds of hysteria and neurasthenia are fast developing; the number of suicides is ever growing, and what is still more frightful, school-children show an important percentage of it and a percentage that is steadily progressing. Materials on this question are plentiful. Several newspapers keep records of these sad events; many data are to be found in the periodical paper, *School and Life*, and in the detailed reports of the National Education Office, which has set on foot a statistical investigation of this question. Important figures have

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<sup>1</sup> *Journal of the Russian Society for National Health*, 1911.

<sup>2</sup> *School and Life*, March, 1911.

already been drawn by the 'Commission for struggle with suicides among school-children,' appointed by the Society for Public Health in Petersburg. Those data, as confesses the Commission itself, are far from being complete. Notwithstanding that, the picture presented by them is an overwhelming one: In 1904 there were twenty cases of suicide among school-children; in 1909 their number shot up to 449. The average number of suicides for this period is 170. In 1904 for every 100,000 children there were 2.6 suicides, in 1909—nigh unto 15. As to the category of schools the number of suicides in 1909 was distributed thus: 20 per cent were in elementary schools, 50 per cent in colleges and 30 per cent in Universities and other centres of learning. After having heard in the course of the winter, a series of reports on the question in hand, the P. H. S. decided to point out to society at large, that *suicides amid school-children take on the character of an ever-expanding epidemic, requiring to be fought by the most energetic means.*

Summing up the aforesaid, we come to the conclusion, that the psychical and physical condition of our children is most unsatisfactory: (1) They manifest terrible nervousness, excitability, and immoderate irritability, resulting in total absence of self-control and endurance, making them unfit for work and throwing them completely off their balance, building thereby a ground most favourable for the development of all kinds of hysteria and neurasthenia; (2) alongside with those psycho-physical phenomena we see a lowering of moral standards; (3) this lack of moral development, combined



with the tendency to nervous diseases, breeds suicidal mania.

We cannot shut our eyes to this terrible reality: the country is in danger! But how are we to help our children? What is to be the issue?

We dare not lull ourselves to sleep with the argument that such are the diseases of our age, and that the problems of education will find their proper solution only when our life as a whole shall enter upon the highway of unfettered development. Life does not wait. Amid storms and blasts are houses built, telegraphs and railways and steamers work on as usual, trade is pursuing its course, lectures are delivered, pictures painted, books and music written. And the school itself, in the persons of its more advanced representatives, seeks new ways, not waiting for the happy time when Life's stream shall resume its natural course, and we shall begin to mould peacefully our existence along new lines. How should then the most important of all works stop—that of the education of the young?

But at this juncture instantly arise the usual questions: how can the young people be healthy and have moral equilibrium, when the *whole* of society is subject to the same diseases that affect them? Can the most ideal pedagogy be of any help in this case? Can there be any question of moral sanitation for society, as long as the abnormal conditions of our actual life exist in their totality? From the standpoint of materialism, explaining all phenomena by the influence of outer circumstances—certainly not. As long as external conditions persist, the state of the soul of society and consequently

of the younger generation cannot undergo any change. There is no issue; one has to wait for help from without in the succession of historical events.

But in the light of the scientific and religious synthesis that bears the name of Theosophy, and teaches that the law of conservation of energy and the law of causality act not only in the physical world but in the spiritual as well, the root of the disease lies not in the phenomena themselves, but in their *cause*, that is in the Spirit. As long as the Spirit is diseased, its manifestations cannot be healthy, even if all the outer circumstances were to change at once for the best. No life-forms, even the most perfect and ideal ones, will ever create a strong will and a noble character, without the help of the intense toil of the soul.

And this work of the soul is performed under the pressure of outer sufferings and collisions, that is—through a series of external shocks (the path of ordinary evolution) or through the free labour of the Spirit, through the development of personal activity and discipline, that is, through *self-education*.

But precisely these important points happen to be wholly absent from our schools. Society is not yet imbued with the sense of the importance of self-education, and does not yet realise the necessity of making it part of the educational plan. Besides, the new school, in its tendency to surround childhood with the best conditions, to make it as happy and interesting as possible, jealously guards its pupils from every strain, every weariness, dullness, every small or great suffering. As a reaction after the regime of the old school-system, this tendency has

its reasonable explanation, but it oversteps all limits, and weakens the initiative and the working capacities of the pupils. We cannot but welcome the effort of the new school to foster in children self-respect, dignity, the consciousness of their human rights; but unfortunately the sense of duty, the feeling of responsibility are at the same time too often overlooked and underrated.

Thus the strong emotions, which practically constitute the life of children, not finding a normal outlet in the labour of self-education, are directed towards the strengthening of the lower self, towards passionate self-assertion and heedless criticism of everything and everybody. This unhealthy disposition comes to the front even at the tenderest age, because in the homes as well as in the so-called kindergarten, the child is becoming ever more and more the conscious centre, around which circle all the thoughts and all the care of the grown-up people. The home-life children are sometimes so unreasonably spoilt, that every inconvenience, however slight—be it an effort to make, the necessity to wait for something, or a small privation—becomes a real tragedy for the child itself and for its parents. This tendency to steep, so to say, the child in happiness, has found expression in the now current formula; to learn in play, study is converted into a play, a game, and the child tolerates it only as long as it amuses it. Such an education is not a good preparation for the stern school of life. In his paper on 'Heroes and Heroic Education' Mr. Lozinsky has very accurately expressed this idea:

The child is preparing for life and the duty of every educator is to get it ready for it. Education is of value as far as it constitutes a real preparation for *life*, for the morrow. To-morrow needs energetic men, enterprising; and strong characters; it also wants its great men.

We may add: most certainly the actual enervating system of education cannot in any way build the strong characters that are needed for the future.

'Happiness! joy!'—such is the motto of the pedagogy of to-day; but it remains blind to the fact that this joy generates the habit of receiving always only pleasurable sensations, breeding a monstrous egoism, that refuses to take into account any surrounding circumstances.<sup>1</sup>

We are far from denying the significance of joy in children's lives. It is as necessary for their souls as sunshine is necessary for their bodies. But just as a healthy and elastic body must be trained to bear a sultry day, as well as a cold one, so the soul of the child must grow in fortitude and endurance, meeting on its way joy and pain, play and work, pleasures and privations. And in order that the child's character may be thus braced, it has to be subjected to a serious and regular training. We must mention here the unfortunate opinion, current in Russian Society, that education begins from the fourth year upwards, and that till then the child needs a doctor, but not a pedagogue. Professor Bechtereff strongly

<sup>1</sup> A schoolmistress, a friend of mine, heart and soul devoted to her children and to educational work, once confessed with tears in her eyes that her nine year old son began to exact first a book, then a picture, then a toy; and as his mother answered that she could not afford those expenses, he angrily retorted: "You have no right to refuse me this. I *will* have a happy childhood." This shows how easily and insensibly we impress the children with our thoughts, and what fatal consequences may result from our modern educational system.

protests against this erroneous point of view, finding it based on the fact, that the line between instruction and education is not distinctly enough drawn. He says:

I think that our first task consists in the clearing up of this error. The child stands in need, from the first day of his life, of moral, as well as of physical care. From the very first he wants a guiding influence in connection with his physical development; a guiding influence is equally needed by it in the psychical sphere; if the influence concerning the physical body is entrusted to a doctor and a hygienist, the moral care of the child ought to be handed over to a psychologist and a pedagogue.<sup>1</sup>

He points out further that this early education ought to compass within its limits not only the regular development of the receptive organs and of powers of observation, but the evolution of moral and ethical elements, the building of character, and the training of its psycho-dynamic forces in general.

We are happy to state that, in modern Russian literature, voices are being heard, advocating the necessity of clearly outlining the problems of education in schools and homes, without blending them with the problems of instruction.

In our times, when all life-forms are falling to pieces, when the consciousness is so evidently outgrowing old forms, and when the human organism is becoming so subtle, that coarse vibrations are getting well-nigh unbearable for it, there can be no doubt whatever as to the fact, that we have done with unconscious evolution, that the time has come for us to strain all our inner powers in order to take our evolution into our own hands, and to direct it to the higher goal, for the attainment of which

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<sup>1</sup> *The Problems of Education in Early Childhood.* Professor Bechtereff.

everything exists in the Universe. Having left behind the savage state, man began to evolve consciously a physical culture; later on, the intellect was called to life in him, and it directed his attention to higher and more abstract things: the man created intellectual culture, the European civilisation presenting a high specimen of it. Now man evolves within himself the aspiration towards unity and brotherhood. This new consciousness will create in time a new spiritual culture, based not upon rivalry and competition, but upon common labour and love. And just because this new consciousness is dawning on humanity, it bears to the front great thinkers and great movements, that lift up this ideal of brotherhood and of spiritual culture. The value of Theosophy consists in the starting of this new, spiritual culture, in the call for conscious inner work, aiming at the training of worthy educators for the young generation. Count Tolstoy insisted upon the necessity of this inner labour, and in the last years of his life he worked with much love on his *Cycle of Reading*. Such books of his as: *On God*, *On Truth*, *On Reason*, and especially *On the Divine Nature of Man*, all tend to make man recognise the necessity of self-education.

Humanity feels instinctively the need for taking cognisance of its spiritual life, and it suffers in its search. The same reason accounts for the aching cravings of the younger generation. We do not deny the importance of a healthy, social life; although we cannot but recognise the disintegrating influence of social disorders and kindled passions on the minds and the souls of the young; but the more intricate

and difficult the external conditions, the more energetically and powerfully must those stormy waves be breasted. As saith the poet: "The darker the night, the brighter glow the stars." The root lies not in the darkness, but in the light, that always follows on darkness and dispels it.

The cause of the evil lies in the disease of the Spirit: its cure depends on the healing of the Spirit. But if it is to be cured, the problems of spiritual culture, of self-education, must be definitely recognised and formulated.

And so the root of the diseases of our young generation lies in the absence of seriously defined problems of spiritual culture. This explains the lack of moral development in our children, as well as the absence of equilibrium, because where there are no restraining moral centres, all other centres are also weakened.

But at this juncture arises another question. If we so forcibly insist upon the problems of spiritual culture, is it not our duty to solve them first for ourselves? Can we preach fortitude, nobility and purity, if we do not ourselves offer an example of those virtues? The first task arising out of the setting down of self-education as the foundation-stone of education at large is *self-education of the educators themselves*.

Parents and tutors must not only carry on a ceaseless inner work, but must always bear in mind their responsibility for their feelings, thoughts and humours, which so easily affect children. They must enter a schoolroom as they enter a church, leaving at its threshold all care and worry, all

anger and depression. They must be bright and strong, when approaching children, bringing into their atmosphere only pure emotions and pure thoughts. But in order to achieve that, they must be imbued with the importance of this inner work, with enthusiasm, with readiness to sacrifice themselves and their moods at any moment for the sake of the great labour of Love.

We have touched thus the very root of the question: the disposition, that glows with unquenchable fire, that kindles others, gives the strength to reform one's self and one's life—such a disposition is born only of the *religious consciousness*. Where it is lacking, the inspired building of life is not possible, it having no ground under its feet, no root. All the tragedy of the fall of moral standards in actual life consists precisely in this estrangement from religious consciousness. This estrangement turns man into a miserable, weak, unhappy creature; it manifests itself in the soul-soreness of our times, in the ever growing percentage of suicides; it explains also why modern pedagogy fails to start education along regular and reasonable lines. We have lost faith in ourselves, in our divine destiny, and have exchanged the ideals of the Christ for the psychology of the animal. Religious consciousness is atrophied in society, and precisely because of this fact and because it is becoming artificially more and more deadened, society is powerless to help the young. It is high time to recognise that *in the centre of education must stand the religious consciousness, leading to the prevalence of moral principles in life.*



What is religious consciousness? The sense of these words must be clearly defined. It is not this or that form of religion, to which we officially belong more or less; it is not the totality of certain dogmas in various explanations, which frequently screen from us the living religion, *i.e.*, the free and joyous union of man with God. *The religious consciousness is the consciousness of the divine principle, of the divine nature of man and the universe, and this consciousness finds its expression in an active and loving attitude towards the world.* Its awakening generates the comprehension of the basis of ethics and that is why it must form the cornerstone of education. The prophetic words of Tolstoy come involuntarily to the mind: "At the basis of education must be laid that which is neglected in our schools—the religious conception of life."

Alba

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Much better you should indulge in dreams, for even if these never be realised you will at least have had your dreams, which is always something to the good. Into noble dreams properly nourished you may instil the germ of life. Aim to play a leading part in your youth, and if fame should devolve upon you later you will be in your element. The young man or woman who cannot entertain a very considerable opinion of himself or herself lacks an important element of future success. Young ladies, is there not a homely Scottish proverb I have heard somewhere—"She never bode for a silk goon that didna' get the sleeve o'd." Aim high; be king or queen in your dreams.

—A *Rectorial Address* (to the students in the University of Aberdeen) by ANDREW CARNEGIE.



## THE FOUR-DIMENSIONAL WORLD<sup>1</sup>

By A RUSSIAN

**H**AVING arrived at the conclusions reached by the consideration of the working of consciousness in animals and men, we may now ask: "How can we see the real four-dimensional world, hidden from us by the illusory three-dimensional world?" We can 'see' it in two ways.

<sup>1</sup> This paper follows the one printed last month, entitled, 'Perception in Men and Animals'.

We can sense it directly through a developed 'sense of space,' and other higher faculties, about which I will speak later on—or we can understand it intellectually, by discerning its possible properties.

By the help of abstract reasoning, we have already found that the fourth dimension must lie in time, *i.e.*, that time is the fourth dimension of space. We have already found the psychological proofs of this statement. Comparing the perceptions of the world by living beings of different grades—a snail, a dog, a man—we saw how different to them are the properties of *one and the same world*—just those properties which for us are expressed in conceptions of time and space. We saw that time and space must be conceived by them differently. That which for a lower animal, a snail, is TIME, for an animal of a higher order, a dog, becomes SPACE, and the time of this latter creature becomes space for a still higher being, a man.

This appears to show that our idea of time in its essence is complex, and that it contains really two ideas—a certain space, and motion in this space. Or we may say more accurately, that the contact with a certain space, which we do not clearly conceive, brings out in us a sense of motion in this space—and all this together. That is, the vague consciousness of a certain space, and the sense of motion in that space, we call 'time'.

This further proves that the idea of time did not arise from the observation of motion existing in nature, but that the very sense and idea of motion arose from the existence in us of a 'sense

of time,' which is really an *imperfect sense of space*, or a limit, a boundary, of the sense of space.

The snail senses a line as space, *i.e.*, as something permanent. It senses the rest of the world as time, *i.e.*, as something ever-going. A horse senses the plane surface as space. The rest of the world it senses as time. We sense the infinite sphere as space. The rest of the world we sense as time. In other words, every creature senses as space that which is grasped by its sense of space; the rest it ascribes to time; the *imperfectly sensed* is ascribed to time. Or we can define it in this way: every creature senses as space all that it is able, by the help of its sense of space, to represent to itself outside itself in form; and all that it is unable to represent to itself in form, it senses as time, *i.e.*, as ever-going unstable, so inconstant that it cannot be imagined in form.

THE SENSE OF SPACE IS AN ABILITY OF REPRESENTATION IN FORM.

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'The infinite sphere,' the shape in which we imagine the universe, changes constantly and uninterruptedly; at every successive moment, it is *something different* from what it was a moment before. There is always going on in it a constant change of pictures, images, relations. It is for us like the screen of a cinematograph with quickly running reflections of pictures on it.

But where are the pictures? Where is the light, which throws the reflection on the screen? Where do the pictures come from, and whither do they go? If the 'infinite sphere' is the screen

of the cinematograph, our consciousness is the light. Penetrating our mind, our store of impressions (pictures), it throws on the screen their reflections, which we call *life*. But where do the impressions come from? From the same screen.

In this lies the incomprehensible side of life, as we see it. We create it, and we also take from it everything. Let us imagine a man who sits in an ordinary cinematograph theatre. Suppose he knows nothing about the arrangement of a cinematograph, knows nothing of the existence of the lantern *behind his back*, and the little transparent pictures on a moving ribbon. Suppose he wishes to *explore* the cinematograph, and begins to study what appears on the screen, to make notes, to photograph, to observe the order of appearances, to calculate, to build hypotheses, etc.

What can he arrive at?

Evidently at nothing accurate, till he turns round with his back to the screen, and begins to study the *source of the appearance of the pictures on the screen*. The causes lie in the lantern, *i.e.*, in the consciousness, and the moving ribbon of pictures in the mind. To understand the cinematograph these have to be studied.

The Positive Philosophy studies only the screen and the pictures passing over it. Therefore the question of where the pictures come from, whither they go, and why they come and go instead of remaining for ever the same, is for it an eternal enigma.

A cinematograph must be studied first from the source of light; then we may pass to the

pictures on the moving ribbon, and then only must we study the reflections. So must the universe be studied from the consciousness, then we may pass to its store of impressions and then only to phenomena.

We have established the fact that an animal (a horse, a cat, a dog) must sense as motion, as temporary phenomena, the immovable angles and curves of the third dimension. The question then arises: Do not *we* perceive as motion, as temporary phenomena, the immovable angles and curves of the fourth dimension? We usually say that our sensations are moments of conceiving certain changes going on outside of us, such as sound, light, and all the 'vibrations of ether'. But what are those changes? Perhaps in reality, there are no changes at all. Perhaps the permanent angles and curves of some 'things' existing outside of us—things we know nothing about—only *seem* to us motion, *i.e.*, changes.

Perhaps our consciousness—not being able with the help of our organs of sense to grasp these 'things,' and represent them in their wholeness, as they are, and grasping only separate moments of its contact with them—builds an illusion of motion; and imagines that something is moving outside it, *i.e.*, that the 'things' are moving.

If this be so, then 'motion' indeed may be 'derivative,' and may arise in our mind at the moments of its contact with the things which it is unable to grasp as a whole. Let us imagine that we are approaching a strange town, and that it slowly *grows* before us as we approach. We think that it really *grows*, *i.e.*, that it did not exist

before. Here *appears* the belfry, which was not there before. There *disappears* the river which was visible for a long time. Just like this is our relation with time, which gradually comes, as if arising out of nothing, and goes away into nothing.

Everything for us lies in time, and only the section of a thing lies in space. Transferring our consciousness from the section of the thing to those of its parts, which lie in time, we get the illusion of motion of the thing itself. We can thus say: The sense of motion is the consciousness of transition from space to time, *i.e.*, from a clear sense of space to a vague one. Taking this as a basis, we can understand that we conceive as sensations, and project into the outer world as phenomena, the permanent angles and curves of the fourth dimension.

Is it necessary, and can it be shown on this principle, that there is no motion whatever in the world, that the world is immovable and unchangeable, and that it seems to us moving and evolving only because we look upon it through the narrow slit of our sense perception? We come again to the question: What is the world and what is consciousness? But now the question about the relation of our consciousness to the world begins to formulate itself much more clearly. If the world is a GREAT SOMETHING, possessing a consciousness of its own, then we are rays of this consciousness, conscious of ourselves, but unconscious of the whole.

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Does motion exist?

We do not know. If it does not exist, if it is an illusion, we must seek to discover how

this illusion could have arisen. Phenomena of life, biological phenomena, very much resemble a passage through our space of some *circles* of the fourth dimension, very complicated circles, consisting each of a multitude of interlaced lines. The *life* of men, or of any other living creature, resembles a complicated circle. It begins always at the same point (birth), and closes always at the same point (death). We have a full right to suppose that this is *one and the same point*. The circles may be large or small. But they all begin and close in the same way—and they close at the same point where they began, *i.e.*, at the point of *non-existence*.

What is a biological phenomenon, a phenomenon of life? This question remains unanswered by science. It is an enigma. A living organism, a living cell, a living piece of protoplasm, has *something* undefined, which makes 'living matter' different from the dead. We conceive this *something* only in its functions. Its main function, not found in a dead organism, a dead cell, dead matter, is *the faculty of reproduction*.

A living organism multiplies infinitely, absorbing dead matter. This faculty of reproducing itself and of absorbing dead matter, with the mechanical laws working in it, is the inexpressible function of 'life,' showing that life is not merely a complexity of mechanical forces, as the Positive Philosophy seeks to imply.

This principle, that life is not a complexity of mechanical forces, is also confirmed by the *incommensurability* of the phenomena of mechanical motion and the phenomena of life. The phenomena



of life cannot be expressed in formulæ of mechanical energy, in units of heat or weight. And the phenomena of life cannot be created artificially in a physico-chemical way.

If we examine every separate life as a circle of the fourth dimension, it will explain to us why each circle inevitably goes away from our space. This happens because the *circle* closes inevitably at the point at which it began, and the 'life' of a separate being, having begun at birth must close at death, which is a return to the point of departure. But, during the passage through our space, the circle throws out certain lines, which, joining other lines, give new circles.

In reality, all this happens differently; nothing takes birth and nothing dies, though it seems to us to do so, because we see only sections of things. In reality the life's circle is only a section of *something*, and this *something* doubtless exists before birth, *i.e.*, before the appearance of the circle in our space, and continues existing after death, *i.e.*, after the disappearance of the circle from our field of view. The phenomena of life within our observation resemble very much the phenomena of motion, as these appear for a two-dimensional creature, and this is why they may be motion of the fourth dimension.

We have seen that a two-dimensional creature will consider as motion of bodies the properties of three-dimensional permanent bodies; and we regard as phenomena of life the real motion of bodies going on in higher space. In other words, that motion which remains motion in the higher space

presents itself to the lower creature as the phenomena of 'life,' and that which disappears in the higher space, transformed into a property of a permanent body, presents itself as mechanical motion. Phenomena of life and phenomena of motion are as incommensurable to us, as for a two-dimensional creature are incommensurable two kinds of motion, one of which is real and the other illusory. Hinton speaks of this in his book, *The Fourth Dimension* (p. 77):

There is something in life not included in our conception of mechanical movement. Is this something a four-dimensional movement? If we look at it from the broadest point of view, there is something striking in the fact that where life comes in there arises an entirely different set of phenomena to those of the inorganic world.

Upon this principle, we may suppose that those phenomena which we call phenomena of life are motion in higher space. Those which we call mechanical motion are phenomena of life in space lower than ours, and, in the higher, this is merely a property of permanent bodies.

If we take three kinds of existence, the two-dimensional, ours, and the higher existence, we shall see that the motion observed in two-dimensional space is to us a property of permanent bodies; 'life' as observed in two-dimensional space is motion as we see it in our space. Furthermore, motion in three-dimensional space—all our mechanical motion and the display of physico-chemical forces, light, sound, heat, etc.—are sensations of some inconceivable properties of four-dimensional bodies. Our 'phenomena of life' are motions of bodies in higher space, and these appear to us as birth, growth, and death of living creatures. If, however,

we suppose space, not of four but of five dimensions, then the 'phenomena of life' will prove to be properties of permanent bodies—kinds, species, families, tribes, nations, etc.—and only 'phenomena of thought' will perhaps seem to be motion.

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We know that the phenomena of motion are closely connected with expenditure of time. And we see that by gradual passage from lower to higher space, motion disappears, becoming a property of permanent bodies; that means that the expenditure of time disappears, and the need of time disappears. A two-dimensional creature needs time in order to explain the most simple phenomena—an angle, an ascent, a hole. For such explanations, we do not need time, but we use it for the explanation of phenomena of motion and physical phenomena. In still higher space, our phenomena of motion and physical phenomena probably will be seen as without any time, as properties of permanent bodies, and biological phenomena—birth, growth, reproduction and death—will be considered as phenomena of motion.

Thus we see how, with the widening of consciousness, the idea of time recedes. We see its conditionality. We see that by time are indicated characteristics of space higher than the one in which the observer is living, characteristics of phenomena sensed by a higher consciousness than that of the observer. For a one-dimensional creature all indications of two, three, and four-dimensional space lie in time; for it, they are all time. For a two-dimensional creature, time contains all indications of three, four, and more dimensional space. For a

man, a three-dimensional being, time contains indications of four-dimensional space, and so on. Thus with the widening and heightening of consciousness and its forms of conception, the indications of space grow, and the indications of time decrease. In other words, the growth of the sense of space is proportionate to the decrease of the sense of time. Or we may say, that the sense of time is an imperfect sense of space, *i.e.*, an ability of imperfect representation, and, in developing, it passes into a sense of space, *i.e.*, into an ability of representation in form.

If we imagine the universe, even in a very abstract way, upon the principles explained above, it will certainly not be at all the universe which we are used to represent to ourselves. First of all, it will not in any way depend on time. *All* will exist in it *always*. It will be a universe of the Eternal Now of the Hindu Philosophy, a universe which will have no *before* and *after*, which will have only the present, *known* or *unknown*.

Hinton feels that with the widening of the sense of space, our view of the world must altogether change, and he speaks of this in his book, *The New Era of Thought* (p. 66):

The conception which we shall form of the universe will undoubtedly be as different from our present one, as the Copernican view differs from the more pleasant view of a wide immovable earth and vast vault. Indeed, any conception of our place in the universe will be more agreeable than the thought of being on a spinning ball, kicked into space without any means of communication with any other inhabitant of the universe.

What then does the world of many dimensions represent? What are the bodies of many dimensions, whose lines and sides are sensed by us as motion?

It requires a great deal of imagination in order, even for a moment, to withdraw from the limits of our representations, and mentally see the world in different categories. Let us imagine some object, say a book, outside time and space. What does this mean? If we take a book outside time and space, it will mean that all books that ever were, that exist now and which will exist, *exist together, i.e.*, occupy one and the same place and exist simultaneously, forming, as it were, *one book*, containing all properties, characteristics, and indications of all possible books. When we say simply *book*, we have in view something which possesses characteristics common to all books—this is a *concept*. But that book which we are speaking about just now, possesses not only general characteristics but all the individual characteristics of all possible separate books.

Let us take other subjects: a table, a tree, a house, a man. Let us try to represent them outside time and space. We shall have *objects*, each possessing such an endless number of characteristics, that a human mind is unable to perceive them. And if a man should try to perceive them, he must unavoidably dismember them in some way, take them in one sense, from one side, in one section of their existence. What for instance is 'man' outside time and space? It is all humanity, man as species, *homo sapiens*, but at the same time it must possess the characteristics, indications, and tokens, of *all* separate men. It is I, and you, and Julius Cæsar, and the conspirators who killed him, and the newspaper-man at the corner whom I pass daily—all kings, all slaves, all saints, all

sinner, taken all in all, *melted* into one indivisible being of *man*. Can we with our mind understand and conceive such a creature?

What is motion? Why do we sense it, if it does not exist?

H. P. Blavatsky, in her first book, *Isis Unveiled*, touched on the relation of life to time and motion. She wrote:

As our planet revolves once every year around the sun, and at the same time turns once in every twenty-four hours upon its own axis, thus traversing minor circles within a larger one, so is the work of the smaller cycle periods accomplished and recommenced within the Great Saros. The revolution of the physical world, according to the ancient doctrine, is attended by a like revolution in the world of intellect—the evolution of that world proceeding in cycles, like the physical one. Thus we see in history a regular alternation of ebb and flow in the tide of human progress. The great kingdoms and empires of the world, after reaching the culmination of their greatness, descend again, in accordance with the same law by which they ascended; till, having reached the lowest point, humanity reasserts itself and mounts up once more, the height of its attainment being, by this law of ascending progression by cycles, somewhat higher than the point from which it had before descended.

The division of the history of mankind into Golden, Silver, Copper and Iron Ages, is not a fiction. We see the same thing in the literature of peoples. An age of great inspiration and unconscious productiveness is invariably followed by an age of criticism and consciousness. The one affords material for the analysing and critical intellect of the other.

Thus all those great characters who tower like giants in the history of mankind, like Buddha-Siddhartha, and Jesus, in the realm of spiritual, and Alexander the Macedonian and Napoleon the Great, in the realm of physical conquests, were but reflexed images of human types which had existed ten thousand years before, in the preceding decimillennium reproduced by the mysterious powers controlling the destinies of our world. There is no prominent character in all the annals of sacred or profane history whose prototype we cannot find in the half-fictitious and half-real traditions of bygone religions and mythologies. As the star, glimmering at an immeasurable distance above our heads in the boundless immensity of the sky, reflects itself in the smooth waters of a lake, so does the imagery of men of the antediluvian ages reflect itself in the periods we can embrace in a historical retrospect.

*"As above, so it is below. That which has been, will return again. As in heaven, so on earth."*

All that is said about a new understanding of time-relations is very vague. This is due to our language not being at all adapted to space expressions of time conceptions. We have no words required for them, we have no verbal forms. Properly speaking, in order to express these new relations, we need some new forms—*not verbal*. The language of these time-relations must be a language without verbs. We need quite new parts of speech, an endless number of new words. Meanwhile, in our present human language, we can speak of 'time' only in hints. Its real essence is inexpressible for us. We never should forget this inexpressibility. It is an indication of truth, an indication of reality. What can be expressed cannot be true.

Every system which speaks of the relation of the human soul to time—of existence after death, reincarnation, karma, which are all symbols—is striving to express relations which cannot be expressed on account of the poverty and weakness of language. They cannot be understood literally, just as art symbols and allegories cannot be taken literally. We must seek for their *hidden meaning*, that meaning which cannot be expressed in words.

A Russian

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## ZOROASTRIAN RITES AND CEREMONIES

By SHAMS-UL-ULMA ERVAD JIVANJI J. MODI, B.A.

[In this paper, I have tried to give a brief description of the Zoroastrian rites and ceremonies. Where possible and available, for example in the case of some of the socio-religious, purificatory and the initiation (Naojote) ceremonies, I have given references to the religious books and have briefly explained the signification and symbolism, without attempting any justification.]

I WILL divide the subject of my paper under the following heads :

I. Socio-Religious Ceremonies; *i.e.*, ceremonies observed in connection with the chief events in a man's life; *viz.*, (a) birth, (b) marriage, and (c) death.

II. Purificatory Ceremonies.

III. Initiation Ceremonies.

IV. Consecration Ceremonies.

V. Liturgical Rites and Ceremonies.

### I. SOCIO-RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES

#### (A) BIRTH

The birth of a child is a very auspicious event in a Parsi home. It was so also in ancient Persia. According to the *Vendidad*,<sup>1</sup> Ahura Mazda

The Birth of a child : an auspicious event

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<sup>1</sup> IV., 47.



says: "I prefer a person with children to one without children." The very ground whereon a man lives with his children is allegorically described as feeling happy.<sup>1</sup> Cultivation and a good supply of food are recommended to people, because they make mankind healthy and able to produce healthy progeny.<sup>2</sup> To be the father of good children was a blessing from the Yazatas like Tishtrya,<sup>3</sup> Mithra,<sup>4</sup> Haoma,<sup>5</sup> Atar<sup>6</sup> and from the Fravashis.<sup>7</sup> To be childless was the result of a curse from the Yazatas.<sup>8</sup> Domestic animals, when ill-fed and ill-treated, cursed their master with childlessness,<sup>9</sup> which was considered a punishment from heaven.<sup>10</sup> Kingly splendour was associated with those who were blessed with children.<sup>11</sup>

A Zoroastrian woman often prayed for a good, healthy child.<sup>12</sup> Man and wife prayed before their sacred fire for a good and virtuous child.<sup>13</sup> A woman without a child was like a fertile piece of land that is not cultivated.<sup>14</sup> She prayed for a husband who could make her a mother of children.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.* III, 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* III, 33.

<sup>3</sup> *Yasht*, VIII, 15.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* X, 65.

<sup>5</sup> *Yaçna*, IX, 4, 7, 10, 13, 22.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* LXII, 10; *Vendidad*, XVIII, 27.

<sup>7</sup> *Yasht*, X, 3; XIII, 134.

<sup>8</sup> *Yaçna*, XI, 1, 3. Cf. the blessing and the curse of Cambyses (Herodotus, III, 65). Cf. also those of Darius (Behistun Inscriptions, IV, 10, 11).

<sup>9</sup> *Yaçna*, XI, 1, 2.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* XI, 3; *Yasht*, X, 38, 108, 110.

<sup>11</sup> *Yasht*, XIX, 75.

<sup>12</sup> *Yaçna*, IX, 22.

<sup>13</sup> LXII, 5.

<sup>14</sup> *Vendidad*, III, 24.

<sup>15</sup> *Yasht*, V, 87; XV, 40.

Among the Achæmenides, a wife who gave birth to many children was a favourite with her husband, who did not like to displease her in any way.<sup>1</sup> Children, being the choicest gift of God, their lives, as it were, were pledged by parents for the solemn performance of an act.<sup>2</sup> We read in Herodotus<sup>3</sup> that, "next to prowess in arms, it is regarded as the greatest proof of manly excellence to be the father of many sons. Every year the King sends rich gifts to the man, who can show the largest number; for they hold that number is strength". Strabo<sup>4</sup> also makes a similar statement. We know from the writings of the Christian martyrs of Persia that the ancient Persians did not, for the above reasons, like the Christian prohibition against the marriage of holy young Christian girls.

All the above statements show, that the birth of a child was, and is, a great event in a Zoroastrian home. Such being the case, pregnancy brings joy in the household. In the Avesta itself, we find no reference to any ceremony or rite during pregnancy. We find there only one allusion: "Women, on finding themselves *enciente*, prayed before Ardvicura for an easy delivery,<sup>5</sup> and for a copious supply of milk for their children."<sup>6</sup>

The *Shayast la Shayast*<sup>7</sup> directs, that when it is known that a lady of the family has become

<sup>1</sup> Herodotus, IX, 111.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* VII, 10.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* I, 136.

<sup>4</sup> Strabo, Bk. XV, Chapter III, 17.

<sup>5</sup> *Yasht*, V, 87.

<sup>6</sup> *Ardvicura Niayash*, 3.

<sup>7</sup> X, 4; XII, 11. *S. B. E.*, vol. V, pp. 316 and 343.

pregnant, a fire should be maintained most carefully in the house. The *Sad-dar*<sup>1</sup> also gives this direction. We have perhaps a remnant of this injunction in the present custom, among the modern Parsis, to light a lamp of clarified butter in the home on the day of the completion of the fifth or the seventh month of pregnancy. The reason assigned for this is, that the fire so kindled keeps out evil influences from the house. Again a lighted lamp is symbolical of the continuation of a line of offspring.

The *Shayast la Shayast*<sup>2</sup> enjoins that in the state of pregnancy a woman should abstain from coming into contact with any dead or decomposing matter and even with a tooth-pick which may contain germs of disease.

The *Vendidad*<sup>3</sup> enjoins that the room where a birth is to take place must be clean, dry and least frequented by others. A lamp is lighted there on the birth of the child and kept burning for at least three days. The *Sad-dar*<sup>4</sup> says: "When the child becomes separate from the mother, it is necessary to burn a lamp for three nights and days. If they burn a fire, it would be better." Some keep the lamp burning for ten days and some for forty days.

The *Vendidad*<sup>5</sup> enjoins that after delivery the mother is to avoid contact with fire, water and the *barsam* (i.e., sacred ceremonial twigs) of the

<sup>1</sup> XVI, 1-2; *S. B. E.*, vol. XXIV, 277.

<sup>2</sup> X, 20; XII, 13; *Sad-dar* XVII 2. *S. B. E.*, vol. V., pp. 323, 344, vol. XXIV, 278.

<sup>3</sup> *Vendidad*, V, 46.

<sup>4</sup> XVI, 2; *S. B. E.*, vol. XXIV, p. 277.

<sup>5</sup> V, 45-49.

house. It enjoins a period of twelve days for such an isolation in the case of stillborn children.<sup>1</sup> Later Pahlavi<sup>2</sup> and Persian books have extended the period to forty days in all cases. The original object of the injunction seems to be that of enjoining perfect rest for the mother and of preventing the spread of illness like that of puerperal fever.<sup>3</sup> Some of the later Pahlavi and Persian writers do not seem to have properly understood the original good object of their predecessors, and so, have carried the rigour of isolation too far.

At the end of the period of confinement, the mother has to purify herself by a special bath before mingling with others. Latterly, she generally goes through a ceremonial sacred bath, known as Nahan (Sanskrit, Snan). All the articles of her bedding and clothing are destroyed.

According to the *Haoma Yasht*,<sup>4</sup> Haoma is said to bestow good healthy children; so, formerly, a mother in childbirth drank a few drops of the consecrated Haoma juice. The child also was given a few drops. Anquetil du Perron<sup>5</sup> refers to these religious customs as being prevalent in his time at Surat.

## (B) MARRIAGE

Marriage is highly recommended by Parsi books. Ahura Mazda recommends to Zarathushtra a

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.* V, 55-56.

<sup>2</sup> *Sud-dar*, XVI, 4; *S. B. E.*, vol. XXIV, 277.

<sup>3</sup> *Vide*, the chapter on 'Maternity and Its Perils', in H. Ellis's *Naturalisation of Health*.

<sup>4</sup> *Yaçna*, IX, 22.

<sup>5</sup> *Zend-Avesta*, vol. II, 564.

married man above an unmarried man.<sup>1</sup> The very ground on which a married man lives is said to rejoice and feel glad.<sup>2</sup> The reason why marriage is highly recommended, is, that ordinarily, a married person is more likely than an unmarried one to withstand physical and mental afflictions and to lead a good and virtuous life<sup>3</sup>. The husband and wife are each expected "to clothe the other with righteousness".<sup>4</sup> That being the case, it is considered meritorious to help others to marry,<sup>5</sup> and such an act serves as atonement for sin.<sup>6</sup>

The strictly solemn or the religious part of the marriage ceremony is more or less originally Persian.<sup>7</sup>

It consists of:

- (1) Preliminary benedictions.
- (2) Questions to the witnesses and to the marrying couple.
- (3) Joint address by the two priests.

Of the two priests who officiate at a Parsi wedding, the senior generally places the right hand of the bride in the right hand of the bridegroom, reciting, during the process, the sacred *Ahunavar* or *Yatha Ahu Vairiyo* prayer. This part of the ritual is called the *Hathavero*; *i.e.*, the hand-fastening ceremony. Then begins the *Ashirwad*, *i.e.*, the recital of the marriage blessings.

<sup>1</sup> *Vendidad*, IV, 47.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 48, 49.

<sup>4</sup> *Yaçna*, LIII, 5.

<sup>5</sup> *Vendidad*, IV, 44.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, XIV, 15.

<sup>7</sup> *Vide Harlez's Avesta*, Introduction, p. clxxi.

Two officiating priests stand before the marrying couple, who are made to sit side by side. The senior priest, who stands before the bridegroom, then recites in Pazend, the following words of benediction :

May the Creator, the Omniscient Lord, grant you a progeny of sons and grandsons, plenty of means of provision, heart-ravishing friendship, bodily strength, long life and an existence of one hundred and fifty years.

The senior priest then puts the following questions to the person who stands by the side of the bridegroom, as a witness to the marriage on behalf of the bridegroom's family :

2. Questions to the Witnesses and to the Couple.

"In the presence of this assembly that has met together in<sup>1</sup>....., on<sup>2</sup>..... day<sup>2</sup>,.....month of the year<sup>3</sup> .....of Emperor Yazdgard, of the Sassanian dynasty of auspicious Iran, say whether you have agreed to take this maiden<sup>3</sup>.....by name, in marriage for this bridegroom, in accordance with the rites and rules of the Mazdayacnans, promising to pay two thousand *dirams* of pure white silver and two *dinars* of real gold of Nishapore coinage."<sup>4</sup>

The witness replies: "I have agreed."

Then the following question is put to the witness on the side of the bride :

"Have you and your family, with righteous mind and truthful thoughts, words and actions, and

<sup>1</sup> Here, the name of the city or town, where the marriage takes place, is recited.

<sup>2</sup> Here, the particular Parsi day, month and year on and in which the marriage is performed are mentioned.

<sup>3</sup> Here the name of the bride is mentioned.

<sup>4</sup> This sum seems to have been fixed in ancient Persia as the sum to be presented by the family of the bridegroom to the bride.

for the increase of righteousness, agreed to give forever this bride in marriage to.....<sup>1</sup>?"

The witness replies: "I have agreed."

Then the priest asks the mutual consent of the couple in these words:

"Have you chosen to enter into this holy wedlock, up to the end of your life, with righteous mind?"

Both reply: "I have chosen."

These questions are repeated three times.

Then follows a joint address to the marrying couple by both the priests. This ad-

3. The joint Address of  
the Priests to the Couple.

dress consists of (a) admonitions, (b) prayers, and (c) benedictions.

(a) The admonitions consist of some practical advice about one's conduct in life.

(b) In the recital of the prayers, they pray to God to confer upon the couple certain moral and social virtues which are said to be the characteristics of the thirty yazatas, or angels, who give their names to the thirty days of the Zoroastrian month.

(c) In the benedictions, certain departed worthies of ancient Iran are invoked, and it is besought that the pair may be blessed with the virtues and characteristics which have made them famous.

The ceremony ends with the recital of the *Tandaructi* prayer, which also is a form of benediction.

### (C) DEATH. FUNERAL CEREMONIES

We will treat the subject of funeral rites and observances under two heads:

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<sup>1</sup> Here the name of the bridegroom is mentioned.

- I. The rites that relate to the disposal of the body.
- II. The rites that relate to the soul.

### I. CEREMONIES RELATING TO THE DISPOSAL OF THE BODY

The main principle underlying the Parsi custom of the disposal of the dead and the strictly religious ceremonies enjoined in that connection is this: The body, when the immortal soul has left it, should, with all due respect for the dead, be disposed of in a way least harmful to the living. To properly understand the ceremonies that relate to the disposal of the body, one must look to the ancient Zoroastrian ideas of sanitation, segregation, purification and cleanliness, as expressed in the *Vendidad*.

As Professor Darmesteter says, the object of all the rites and observances of this order can be summed up in two sentences, which are the same as those that to-day sum up all the prophylactic measures in the case of an epidemic; *viz.*, (i) to break the contact of the living with the real or supposed centre of infection, and (ii) to destroy the centre itself. To be on the safe side, all corpses are supposed to be infectious.

Again the Parsi custom of disposal points to simplicity, and illustrates the words of Sadi, that "when the pious soul thinks of departing, it is all the same, whether one dies sitting on a throne or on the bare ground". The Parsi method of the disposal of the body, from beginning



to end, is the same for all, the rich and the poor alike.

A place is washed on the ground-floor of the house where the body is to be placed before its removal to the Tower. The shroud, or the dress with which the body is to be covered, is also washed beforehand in the house. The body of the deceased also is washed. The shroud or dress is white and made of cotton. It need not be new, as all unnecessary waste of clothing over the dead body is forbidden.<sup>1</sup>

When a case is given up as hopeless, the relatives send for two or more priests, who stand at the bed of the dying person and recite for his benefit *Patet*; *i.e.*, the repentance prayer. The priests are paid in money and in kind, *i.e.*, corn. This part of the ceremony is not generally performed now-a-days. The origin of the custom seems to lie in the fact that it was believed that a person must always say his *Patet* and be penitent for his sins. If he is able, he may himself recite the *Patet*. His near relatives and friends may join in the recital. If not the whole *Patet*, at least the recital, a short time before death, of the *Ashem Vohu* formula<sup>2</sup> is considered meritorious.<sup>3</sup> In the *Vendidad*<sup>4</sup> a shorter period of mourning is enjoined for the surviving relatives of a righteous person than for those of the sinful. According to tradition, the

<sup>1</sup> *Vendidad*, V, 60.

<sup>2</sup> This may be thus translated: "Piety, or Righteousness is the best good and happiness. Happiness to him who is pious for the best piety."

<sup>3</sup> *Hadokht Nask*, I, 14-15.

<sup>4</sup> Chapter XII., 1-19.

righteous is one who has said his repentance prayer or recited the *Ashem Vohu*. A longer period of mourning is enjoined for the sinful, because, in his case, the surviving dear ones have to mourn, not only for his loss, but also for the fact that he did not lead a good life and therefore has to meet his punishment.<sup>1</sup> A few decades ago, there was a custom, which is well-nigh dead, at least in Bombay, that a short time before death, a few drops of the consecrated Haoma juice were poured into the mouth of the dying person, the Haoma plant being an emblem of immortality.<sup>2</sup> Sometimes, if the Haoma juice is not available, the juice of a few grains of the pomegranate, which is considered essential in some Parsi religious ceremonies, is dropped into the mouth of the dying person.

A short time after the final bath referred to above, the corpse is supposed to fall under the influence of the Daruj-i-Nasush; *i. e.*, the evil influence of decomposition or destruction. Therefore, a touch with the corpse is considered dangerous from the point of view of health and is forbidden to all except the corpse-bearers. The touch is likely to be dangerous, not only to those (hamrit) who come into contact with the dead, but also to those (patrit) who come into contact with them (the hamrit). An accidental or unavoidable touch by a person makes him (riman) polluted and requires a particular purifying bath.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Hamlet's words of grief for the death of his father who was suddenly murdered, and so, was not given time to repent for his sins.

<sup>2</sup> The Haoma plant reminds one of the 'Tree of Life' of the Christian Scriptures (*Genesis*, (II, 9) in the Garden of Eden, and of the Sedra or Lotus of the Muhammadan Scriptures (*Qur'ân*, LIII, 14-20). *S. B. N.*, vol. IX, p. 252.

Two corpse-bearers, after performing the Padyab Kusti,<sup>1</sup> and after reciting the *Sraosh baj* prayer, hold a paivand between them and place the body on the ground on a clean white sheet of cloth and cover it with a shroud. The whole of the body except the face is covered. They then place the body so covered on slabs of stone. Wood is prohibited in all the rites of the disposal of the body, lest, being porous, it may carry infection. The body is so placed as to avoid facing the north. The ancient Iranians had a hatred for the north, from which, they believed, proceeded all kinds of dangers and evils, whether climatic, physical or mental.<sup>2</sup> From the south proceeded all good influences.<sup>3</sup>

After the placing of the body on the stone slabs, one of the corpse-bearers draws three boundary lines<sup>4</sup> (*kashas*) round the body with a piece of metal.<sup>5</sup> This is intended to show that the ground is temporarily closed to others, to avoid the least chance of infection. It is enjoined, that the place in the house, where the dead bodies are laid, must be free from dampness and little frequented by men.<sup>6</sup> After thus dressing and placing the body, the two corpse-bearers leave the house for the time being.

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<sup>1</sup> *Vide infra*.

<sup>2</sup> *Vendidad*, XIX, 1; VIII, 16; *Hadokht Nask*, III, 25; *Yasht Fragment*, XXII, 25.

<sup>3</sup> *Yasht Fragment*, XXII, 7. *Hadokht Nask*, II, 7. *Vendidad*, III, 42.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* V, 10.

<sup>5</sup> *Vide* my paper on *The Kashas of the Iranian Barashnum and the Boundary Lines of the Roman Lustrum*. *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay*, vol. viii, No. 7. pp. 520-30. *Vide* my *Anthropological Papers*, pp. 330-39.

<sup>6</sup> *Vendidad*, VIII, 5.

The next ceremony is that of the Sagdid. A dog (sag), especially a chathru-chashma,<sup>1</sup> or four-eyed dog; *i.e.*, a dog with two eye-like spots just above the eyes, is made to look (did) at the corpse. Various reasons are assigned for the Sagdid. (*a*) The principle one is, that the dog, being a flesh-devouring animal, is believed to look instinctively at the corpse if life is really extinct, and to avoid looking at it if that is not the case. (*b*) According to Dr. Haug<sup>2</sup> some attribute a kind of magnetic influence to the sight of a dog. (*c*) Others say, that the dog, being a faithful animal, his presence is symbolic of the expected loyalty and faithfulness on the part of the living towards the dead. (*d*) Again the dog may be taken to be symbolic of the destruction of immoral passions to which death puts an end.<sup>3</sup> The Sagdid is repeated at the house, at every gah,<sup>4</sup> and outside the Tower, before the final disposal of the body. If a dog is not available, a flesh-devouring bird, like the vulture or the crow, can be substituted.<sup>5</sup>

After the first Sagdid, fire is brought into the house and kept burning with fragrant sandalwood and frankincense. This is done with a view to destroying the invisible germs of disease that may be floating in the air in the room where the corpse is placed.<sup>6</sup> A priest sits before the fire, reciting the

The Final Ceremonies at Home

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the 'four-eyed dogs' of the Rig Veda (10th Mandala.)

<sup>2</sup> Essays on the Parsis, 2nd Ed., p. 240, n. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Dante's *Divine Comedy*, Hell, Canto I, ll. 94-102.

<sup>4</sup> The gahs are the five divisions of the day.

<sup>5</sup> *Vendidad*, VII, 3.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* VIII, 79, 80.

Zend-Avesta and keeping the fire burning. The presence of a priest is not necessary. Any member of the family can do this. The priest, or whoever does this, is enjoined to sit at a certain distance from the corpse to avoid the risk of infection.<sup>1</sup> A body is removed to the Tower of Silence only when the sun is above the horizon.<sup>2</sup> In case of an accidental death, a longer interval is generally allowed, because, as the *Vendidad* says,<sup>3</sup> in such a case, decomposition does not set in at once.

About an hour before the time fixed for the removal of the body to the Tower, two of the corpse-bearers, dressed in white, perform *padyab kusti* and enter the house. All the parts of their bodies, except the face, are covered to secure safety against infection through exposure. The corpse-bearers must be, at least, two, even if the corpse was a mere infant. No one should carry the body alone.<sup>4</sup> If the body is heavy, it must be carried by four, six, eight, or such even number. The corpse-bearers recite the *Sraosh-baj* prayer, and then two priests recite the *Geh-sarna* prayers, which are believed to stand against the *Druj* (evil influence) that runs from the dead to the living, and thus to give them courage and fortitude.<sup>5</sup> The priests perform the *padyab*, hold a *paivand* between themselves, and, standing at the door of the house, at some distance from the body, recite the *Ahunavaiti Gatha*,<sup>6</sup> which forms

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.* VIII, 6, 7.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* V, 18.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* VII, 4, 5.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* III, 14.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* X, 1, 2.

<sup>6</sup> *Yasna*, XXVIII—XXXIV.

the *Geh-sarna* prayer. After the recital of nearly half the prayer,<sup>1</sup> the corpse-bearers remove the body from the stone slabs and place it upon an iron bier. The priests now turn toward the bier and finish the prayer. The friends and relatives who have assembled at the house have a last look at the deceased, whose face is then covered, and the body is carried to the Tower.

On the removal of the body from the house, *gaomez*, *i.e.*, cow's urine, is sprinkled over the slabs of stone and over the way by which the body is removed. Cow's urine was believed by the ancient Zoroastrians to possess disinfecting properties; so, it was also used in purifying things that had come in contact with the decomposing matter of deceased men and animals.<sup>2</sup>

In most of the ceremonies for the disposal of the body, a pair, or the number two, plays a prominent part, and the pair always holds a *paivand* between them. The corpse-bearers must be in pairs. The priests must be two. The mourners, who go to the Tower in the funeral procession, must go in pairs. The members of all these pairs hold a *paivand* (literally, connection) between them; *i.e.*, they hold a piece of cloth or string between them, which is symbolic of mutual help and sympathy during this time of grief and affliction.

When the funeral bier leaves the house, the male relatives and friends of the deceased, who

The Removal of the  
Corpse to the Tower

<sup>1</sup> Up to *Yaçna*, XXXI, 4.

<sup>2</sup> *Vendidad*, VII, 74, 75. Vide Dr. Wilhelm's paper *On the Use of Beef's Urine, according to the Precepts of the Avesta, and on similar Customs with other Nations*. Vide Haug's *Essays on the Parsis*, second edition, page 286, for its use as a remedy by peasant physicians.

have met at the house, follow the bier, out of respect, for some distance and then disperse. The mourners, who follow the bier up to the Tower, are required to walk at a distance of at least thirty paces from the bier. They are all dressed in white, and they go in pairs holding a paivand between them. They are always preceded by a pair of priests who follow the bier reciting a prayer.<sup>1</sup>

When the bier reaches the Tower, it is put on the ground, and the friends and relatives who have come in the funeral procession have a last reverential look. The *Sagdid* is performed for the last time and the body is taken into the Tower, where it is left on the floor, the clothes being removed from it.<sup>2</sup> The clothes thus removed are rejected and never used again.

After the disposal of the body, all the mourners, who are required to commence the recital of *Sraosh-baj* on starting with the procession, finish the *baj*, say a short prayer in honour of the dead, disconnect their paivands and wash the exposed parts of their bodies. The near relatives and priests recite the *Patet*, or the Repentance Prayer, and disperse.

## II. THE FUNERAL RITES THAT RELATE TO THE SOUL OF THE DECEASED

According to Parsi Scriptures, the soul of a deceased person is believed to remain within the precincts of this world for three days after death. During this time, it sees, as it were, a picture of its

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.* VIII, 14, 19-21.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* VIII, 10.

past deeds. If it is the soul of a pious person, it sees a beautiful picture of its deeds in the shape of a handsome, well-formed, strong damsel<sup>1</sup> and feels happy and joyful. If it is the soul of a wicked person, it sees a horrible picture of its past deeds in the shape of an ugly, ill-formed, weak woman, and shudders and feels unhappy at the sight and is at a loss where to go.<sup>2</sup> For those three days and nights the soul is believed to be under the special protection of the Yazata Sraosha, who guards the souls of men while living and even when dead;<sup>3</sup> so, the religious ceremonies for the souls of the dead during the first three days are performed in honour of that angel; *i.e.*, to please and thank that angel by the grateful recognition of his services.

At the commencement of every *gah*, two or more priests and the relatives of the dead say the *Sraosh-baj* and the prayer of that particular *gah* and at the end, the *Patet*. At night, at the commencement of the *Aiwisruthrem gah*, the *Afringan* in honour of Sraosha is recited. Besides these prayers and ceremonies for three days and nights at the house of the deceased, the *Yacna* prayers, and sometimes, the *Vendidad* are recited at an adjoining fire-temple for three days and nights.

In the *Uziran Gah* of the third day, the *Oothamna* ceremony is performed. The friends and relatives of the deceased and a few priests meet, and the particular prayers of that *gah*, the *Sraosha*

<sup>1</sup> *Vendidad* XIX, 30-32; *Hadokht Nask*, chap. II. Dr. Cheyne calls this, "a very noble allegory". (*The Origin and religious contents of the Psalter* 1891, pp. 398, 399). Vide my paper 'An untranslated Chapter of the *Bundehesh*,' in my *Asiatic Papers*, pp. 217-234.

<sup>2</sup> *Yasht* Fragment XXII; *Hadokht Nask* Chap. III 1-6, 16, 20.

<sup>3</sup> *Yacna* LVII, 25.



*Hadokht*,<sup>1</sup> the *Patet* and the *Dhup Nirang* prayers are recited. At the end of the ceremony, the relatives and friends of the deceased generally announce donations to charity funds in memory of the deceased. If the deceased is a male and of the age of fifteen and has left no son, the name of a son of a near relative is announced as that of a son given to him for adoption. The announcement is made at the assembly.

The dawn after the third night is considered a great and solemn occasion. At that time, the soul is believed to leave the precincts of this world to go to the other. The soul passes over a bridge called the *Chinvat*.<sup>2</sup> The bridge is guarded by the angel *Mithra*.<sup>3</sup> He, with the assistance of *Rashna*, the Angel of Justice, and *Ashtad*, the Angel of Truth, judges the actions of the deceased. If his good deeds overweigh, even by a small particle, his misdeeds, his soul is allowed to pass over the bridge<sup>4</sup> to paradise.<sup>5</sup> If his good deeds are equal to his misdeeds, the soul goes to a place called *Hamesta-Gehan*.<sup>6</sup> If his misdeeds outweigh his good deeds, even by a particle, he is cast down into hell. Thus, the dawn after the third night being the time when the soul is judged, it is considered to be a solemn and important occasion

<sup>1</sup> *Yasht*, XI.

<sup>2</sup> *Vendidad*, XIX, 29.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* XIX, 28.

<sup>4</sup> The *Chinvat* bridge of the Parsis reminds one of the *Sirat* of the Arabs, the *Wogho* of the Chinese, the *Giaell* and *Bifröst* of the Scandinavians. Vide my paper 'The Belief about the Future of the Soul among the Ancient Egyptians and Iranians.' (*Journal of the B.B. Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. XIX, pp 365-374. Vide my *Asiatic Papers*, 137-146.)

<sup>5</sup> *Vendidad*, XIX, 32.

<sup>6</sup> *Viraf-nameh* vi, 11.

for the performance of religious ceremonies for the good of the soul. The Oothamna ceremonies performed in the Uzrian Gah on the previous day are repeated and the *Afringan* and *Baj* prayers and ceremonies are performed in addition. Man is likely to err, so relatives and friends pray for God's mercy on the soul of the deceased. The Baj ceremonies on this occasion are performed in honour of the angels who have an important task in this connection. The first Baj is in honour of the angels Rashna and Ashtad, who help the angel Mithra, ordinarily known as Meher Davar; *i.e.*, Meher, the Judge. The second is in honour of Ram-Khvastra, who is the angel presiding over the rarefied atmosphere or ether through which the soul is believed to pass to the higher regions. The third Baj is in honour of Ardafarosh; *i.e.*, the spirits of all the departed souls whose company the soul of the particular deceased has now joined. The fourth Baj is in honour of Sraosha, who had guided and guarded the soul of the deceased during his life and for the three days and nights after death. With the recital of the Baj of Ardafarosh, a suit of white clothes,<sup>1</sup> known as Shiava, is consecrated, together with the Darun or sacred bread and other sacrificial articles.

The other principal occasions, on which the Afringan and Baj ceremonies are enjoined in honour of the dead, are the cheharum, dehum, siroz, salroz *i.e.*, the fourth, the tenth, the thirtieth and the anniversary day after death. According to the Zoroastrian belief, the relation between a pious deceased and his surviving relatives does not

<sup>1</sup> *Yasht*, XIII, 50.

altogether cease after death. His holy spirit continues to take some interest in his living dear ones. If the surviving relatives cherish his memory, remember him with gratitude, try to please him by good thoughts, good words, and good deeds, it is believed to be likely that the departed spirit will take an interest in their welfare and assist them with an invisible helping hand. The most essential requisite, by which a surviving relative can please the holy spirits of his departed dear ones, is this: he must be good in thoughts, good in words and good in deeds.<sup>1</sup> For this reason, it is not unusual among the Parsis to give, on the above-mentioned occasions of the third, fourth, tenth, thirtieth and anniversary days after death, clothing and food to the poor of their community and to give various sums in charity. These are the occasions on which the surviving relatives remember the deceased with feelings of gratitude, respect and love, and pray to God that his soul may rest in peace and tranquillity and be under His protection.

It appears from all the above description, that the funeral ceremonies of the Parsis are intended to produce in the minds of the survivors, a great solicitude for the health of the living, respect for the dead, feelings of gratitude and love for the deceased, and ideas of morality and virtue, inculcated by the thought that death levels everybody and that they should always be prepared for death, which may overtake them at any moment.

*(To be Continued)*

Jivanji J. Modi

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<sup>1</sup> *Yagna*, XVI, 7.

## THE COMING CHRIST

By A GROUP OF AMERICAN STUDENTS

THE world is entering upon a constructive period. Any effort to tear down or deny a fairly well-established view—such as this of the return of the Christ—must now be accompanied by suggestions of a still more rational plan, a wider and wiser theory upon which to rebuild. The opponents of the near-coming view have, so far, advanced no new theory, but have offered as their chief objections that: “No real proof of such a coming exists;” or, “no need for such a coming is established;” or, “if it is true, it cannot in the nature of things be pre-millennial, and therefore it indicates the final end of the world”.

How can these objections be met? The question arises whether an extensive research into all the world-scriptures may not be necessary in order to supply this called-for proof.

There are certain truths which are common to all religions, which are universal. These were known in ancient days as Theosophia, meaning Divine Wisdom. Then, and now, the universality of these statements confirmed their source. If we can find in all the great religions references to World-Teachers, and to Their return to earth from

time to time, we shall have helped to establish a proof, accepted in the ages past, the accepted basis of all research to-day.

The student seeks for reasons, for proofs, for something upon and around which his intellect can play, and out of which he can build definite thought-forms which shall help him to a satisfactory philosophy of life. In so great a question as this—the return of the Supreme World-Teacher—a past, a present and a future clearly outlined, strongly substantiated, related by a common-sense logical succession of events, are to him a necessity. The mind asks to see the plan; to be allowed to glimpse the outline of a world as a whole and in parts; and to learn of its purpose from the beginning to the end of its existence.

Such an outline exists in *two* books; one, a series of ancient writings that have come down from the far past in India, called Puranas, meaning old; the other, H. P. Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine*. Both are the works of great seers who, reading the records, past, present and future, of the globe and of the humanity evolving upon it, tell us the same story, give us corroborative evidence from ancient past to immediate present that the reading is true. As this authority may be questioned, and the existence of great seers able to read the occult records of humanity and its worlds be denied, we suggest that a full study of the law of evolution precede such criticism. If evolution is true, then beings far more highly evolved than we, able to read, to understand and to be custodians of such records, and still others far less evolved than we,

with their powers still in latency, can and do exist among us.

Some of the facts—universal—concerning World-Teachers and Their return to earth from time to time, have been briefly outlined in the following pages, and they are sent out by a body of students, with the hope that other bodies of students also will publish the results of their studies.

### A DIVINE WORLD-TEACHER

In the ancient scriptures of the East we find described a graded Order, a Mighty Hierarchy of great Rulers, who are behind human evolution, administering the laws of nature, directing the affairs of the world. These are the true Rulers of men and of worlds, of whom all earthly kings and teachers are but the shadows and the symbols. They have guided humanity since its birth down to the present day, and Their work in the future is outlined.<sup>1</sup>

In this great Hierarchy there are two chief departments; one, that of law, which guides outer evolution, shapes the types and courses of races of men, and builds up and casts down nations and continents; the other, the department of teaching

which gives religion after religion to the world as the world has need of it, which, holding in its hands the vast circle of the Truth, gives out portions from time to time in forms to be understood of the people, gives to the world its spiritual teachers, the founders of all its faiths, and guides all its spiritual and moral unfolding.<sup>2</sup>

These two great departments are described in the western scriptures, Jewish and Christian, as

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<sup>1</sup> *The Vishnu Purana.*

<sup>2</sup> *The Immediate Future*, by Annie Besant, p. 53.

administered by Moses the Lawgiver, and Aaron the High Priest or Teacher; thus is confirmed and emphasised this great universal fact in human evolution that a guiding Hierarchy exists; that there are always a Lawgiver and a great Teacher watching over mankind; that while the Lawgiver of the Race, the Manu, establishes the type and gives out the laws by which the people can, if they will, live in health, peace and prosperity, the great Teacher, the Jagad-Guru, the Bodhisattva, working side by side with Him in evolution, gives to each nation, to each sub-race, a religion appropriate to its needs.

This supreme Teacher is ever proclaiming the universal, the One Self, and, inseparable from It are the thread-souls, the human individualised rays, fragments of the One, ourselves. The World-Teacher of the race Himself comes forth to each sub-race under different names, and with modifications of His teachings according to the needs of nations and individuals; to the philosopher as the Mighty God, to the stern intellectual mind as the One All-pervading Thinker, to the mystic as the very image of humanity, becoming incarnate, suffering and rising again triumphant, carrying with Him humanity to God.

Five forms of religious thought, all with the common basis of the One Self, have been brought out successively to the five successive sub-races of the Aryan race. A new sub-race, the Sixth, is beginning to form in America, and to-day all over the world, expectations of great events are growing, signs of a new forthcoming of the Great Teacher of angels and of men are appearing. It is deeply felt by many

that He must come to establish peace and give humanity an uplift. And it is ever true that where an idea is born in the hearts of the people as now, when religious organisations are looking toward union, bodies of men and women are discussing universal peace and the possibility of world-federation, the dominant world-idea must needs take incarnation in some mighty Being, who is able to focus around Himself the powers, the intellectual and spiritual forces of the world and carry the movement on to realisation. Who but the great World-Teacher can do this? It is reasonable to expect that when to Him the fitting time arrives, He will make His own words true that "before Him shall be gathered all nations,"<sup>1</sup> and they shall hear His voice.

#### WHAT IS A WORLD-RELIGION?

When people begin to recognise that prophets are of no one nation, but of all; when people begin to understand that scriptures belong to every religion, and not to one alone; when they realise that in that great household all are in their Father's house—when that begins to dawn on men, and it is dawning on the flower of humanity to-day in every nation—then the conditions become possible for a World-Faith, a World-Religion, as they have never been possible before; and one understands that the feeling may spread which is voiced in one of the ancient scriptures of the Indian peoples,<sup>2</sup> where, in the person of Shri

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<sup>1</sup> *S. Matthew*, xxv. 32.

<sup>2</sup> *The Bhagavad-Gita*, iv.



Krishna, the Supreme God is speaking and declares :  
"Mankind comes to me along many roads, and on whatever road a man approaches me, on that road do I welcome him; for all roads are mine."

The Supreme World-Teacher, the Christ, is recorded in the western scriptures as saying the same thing to His followers, in different language :

Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd.<sup>1</sup>

This is the great Truth embodied in the many religions. God is the centre, the religions are all on the circumference, and as all the radii lead to the centre, so all religions lead to God at last. He is the one Sun of Truth shining through every religion, and each ray of that Sun, however coloured, has its root in Him. When a World-Religion comes, it will not be one religion, or another, but He will bring all faiths together in one great chord of harmony, every note perfect, needing only the union in Him into one great symphony, to express the splendour and beauty of the whole.

#### THE ANSWER OF THE SELF

All that we know depends on the testimony of consciousness. The surest thing we have is the 'I am' consciousness. Professor Huxley said that man has but two means of knowledge—the senses, whereby he observes external phenomena, and the reasoning powers, by which he considers those phenomena and draws conclusions from them. But many have found a consciousness of something

<sup>1</sup> S. John, x. 16.

beyond the senses and the reason; have found that behind the mind is the 'I am,' the Self, a continuing life, a consciousness which never changes, and is not dependent on senses or mind.

This inner Self, whose presence is not realised by sense perception, nor by argument, nor by intellectual concept, is only found when the heart of Love within has wakened the spiritual nature of the real ourself, has glimpsed the universal, the divine Self, of which it is an "undetached spark,"<sup>1</sup> of which it is an individualised fragment held by a thread whose root is in God Himself. And it is from this Self, universal, immortal, that religion springs; for religion is the search by man for God. In every heart is the inevitable necessity for finally finding its source. For long ages the 'I am' takes up, tries, and, as each is found to end always in pain, discards pleasure after pleasure, until in despair the soul turns to service of God and man. Here it finds that through its heart-breaking pain has been born the power of sympathy, and strength to give light and joy to others, and the need of the inmost nature begins to be satisfied.

The older souls in evolution, those whom humanity most reverence, are those in whom the religious consciousness, the knowledge of the inmost Self, the completest self-sacrifice, is most actively manifest. Who can yet stand beside the Buddha and the Christ as types of supreme humanity? Millions upon millions in every generation offer love and homage and reverence to the greatness of these mighty two. And it is because every

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<sup>1</sup> *A Study in Consciousness*, by Annie Besant, p. 48.

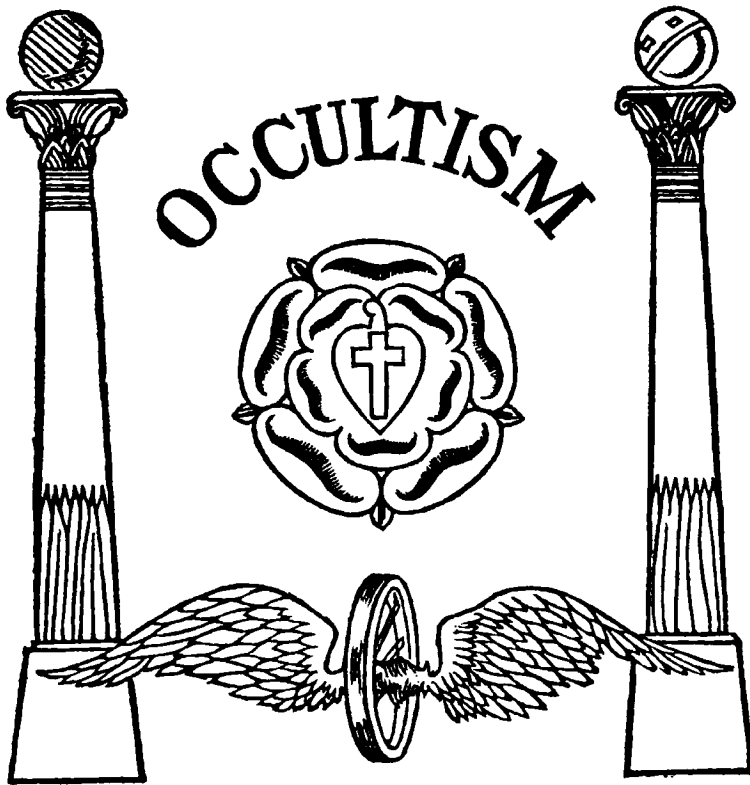
being has within himself the latent power of "response to every sigh and thought of all that lives and breathes," and also the sure unfolding of these qualities of the divine Self within, and that this unfolding can be hastened by their help, that the 'Elder Brothers' return again and again to aid the younger humanity in its evolution.

*(To be Concluded)*

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Natural Science, as we at present know it, was not produced by a gradual accumulation of sense impressions. It arose rather with an abrupt break with the traditional view of things. The break was felt to be necessary because the conceptions which had hitherto been in vogue appeared to be too anthropomorphic. And further, it seemed possible to obtain a scientific comprehension of Nature only by acknowledging its complete self-dependence, its independence of man. But Nature could not attain this independence even in our conceptions, if thought did not itself assert an independence of the impressions of sense and place itself over against the environment, and if by processes of analysis and synthesis thought did not bring about a complete transformation of the first impression. Before all, what led to this transformation was a desire for truth, an impulse to understand the real nature of the objects of perception, and thus to gain an inner expansion of life. Yet how could the representation of Nature be delivered in this manner from the subjectively human, and from all that is peculiar and contingent in the reflection of the individual; how could a conception of Nature be formed, if thought were not a power in itself in contrast with sense perception? . . . We may justly say, therefore, that nothing more conclusively refutes Naturalism, with its limiting everything to Nature, than modern Natural Science with its transformation of Nature into an organised whole in the realm of thought. The more adequately the spiritual achievement and inner structure of modern Natural Science are appreciated, the more definite will be the rejection of Naturalism.

*Naturalism or Idealism ?* by RUDOLF EUCKEN



INVESTIGATIONS INTO THE  
SUPER-PHYSICAL<sup>1</sup>

By ANNIE BESANT, P.T.S.

AS evolution steadily carries on the mass of humanity, the crest of its wave must ever be advancing towards new and hitherto unexplored—or only partially explored—regions. Great re-

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<sup>1</sup> This paper is the amplified substance of part of a lecture delivered at several places in England, Scotland, and also in Paris, in the spring of the present year. It was reported in each case, and I have written the paper with the help of these reports.

ligious teachers have laid down certain doctrines, far-reaching in their consequences, drawn from a knowledge of super-physical worlds, and their followers have accepted these doctrines on faith, since they were incapable of acquiring for themselves the knowledge of the facts on which they were based. The doctrines of reincarnation and karma, of man's immortality, of the existence of super-physical worlds and their inhabitants—all these recommended themselves to the reason; any one of fair intelligence could grasp them, but their claim to acceptance rested more on authority than on proof. Reincarnation, for instance, may be shown to be the most reasonable hypothesis for man's continual life, but it cannot be demonstrated as a fact—any more than can evolution itself. Karma may be shown to be in harmony with law as we know it, but we can only see in our world a fragment of its huge sweep, insufficient for clear and definite proof. Reason demands data on which to found its judgments, and data in the non-physical worlds are useless to a mind limited to the workings of the brain and nervous system.

Intuition is sufficient for the person in whom its light is burning, but that light is useful only to its possessor; intuition in A cannot satisfy the demand of the reason in B for proofs, and no firm edifice can be built on the foundation of another's intuition. Hence in an age when the concrete mind has grown powerful and little willing to yield to authority Religion has found itself in parlous case. But the progress of evolution is beginning to come to its aid by unfolding in many the

powers latent in all, powers which belong to the super-physical worlds and find therein their appropriate field of exercise. An ever-increasing number of people occupies the crest of the evolutionary wave pouring onwards into the 'Borderland' and across it. Where a century ago there was a single seer, there are now dozens. Seers trained, half-trained, untrained, are numerous. Sensitives impressed by influences from the super-physical worlds are on the increase. For seventy years discarnate entities have been offering information through mediums. The 'other-world' is pressing into this world. Under these circumstances it is surely desirable that all students should understand something about investigations into the super-physical, in order that they may avoid the blind credulity which accepts all, on the one side, and the equally blind incredulity which rejects all, on the other.

Before dealing with investigations, let me make clear my own position with regard to all questions of opinion and belief within the Theosophical Society itself. Some of our members echo the statements of one seer or another, and seem to consider that such a statement ought to preclude further discussion. But no one in the T.S. has any authority to lay down what people shall think, or not think, on any subject. We are not in the position of an orthodox Church, which has certain definite articles of faith, which imposes certain definite creeds in which all faithful members are bound to believe. The only point which we must accept is Universal Brotherhood, and even as to that we may differ in our definition of it. Outside

that, we are at perfect liberty to form our own opinions on every subject; and the reason of that policy is clear and an exceedingly good one. No intellectual opinion is worth the holding unless it is obtained by the individual effort of the person who holds that opinion. It is far healthier to exercise our intelligence, even if we come to a wrong conclusion and form an inaccurate opinion, than simply, like parrots, to echo what other people say, and so put out of all possibility intellectual development.

In fact, differences of opinion among the members ought to be regarded as safeguards to the Society rather than as menaces, for our one great danger, as H. P. B. recognised, is the danger of getting into a groove, and so becoming fossilised in the forms of belief that many of us hold to-day; this will make it difficult for people in the future to shake off these forms, and thus will involve posterity in the same troubles which so many of us have experienced with regard to the teachings among which we were born. The Society is intended, always has been intended, to be a living body and not a fossil, and a living body grows and develops, adapting itself to new conditions; and if it be a body which is spiritually alive, it should be gaining continually a deeper and fuller view of truth. It is absurd for us to pretend, at our present stage of evolution, that we have arrived at the limit of the knowledge which it is possible for men to obtain. It is absurd for us to say that the particular form into which we throw our beliefs at this moment is the form which is to continue

for ever after us, and to be accepted by those who follow us in time. All of us who study deeply must be fully aware that our conceptions of truth are continually deepening and widening, that, as we might reasonably expect, we find new avenues opening up before us; and nothing could be more fatal to a Society like ours than to hallmark as true special forms of belief, and then look askance at any one challenging them, trying to impose these upon those who will come after us. If the Society is to live far into the future, as I believe it will, then we must be prepared to recognise now, quite frankly and freely, that our knowledge is fragmentary, that it is partial, that it is liable to very great modifications as we learn more and understand better; and especially is this true of everything which goes under the name of investigation.

Even if we take a broad truth, like that of reincarnation, which is perennial, even then it is unwise to insist upon putting it into one particular form, and to treat it as though it could have no other. We ought to recognise that this vital doctrine has been taught in many forms in the past, and is likely to be taught in many other forms in the future. The one important thing to recognise is the evolution of man, the inner Man who has continually grown and is capable of attaining perfection; but it is certain that in the course of time we shall gain much knowledge on all subjects that at present we do not possess, and that even with regard to fundamental truths, there ought to be the fullest discussion, the freest pointing out



of weak places in the arguments with which they are supported; there ought to be a continual attempt to add to the amount of the truth which we already possess, for if one thing becomes clearer than another to those who are opening up in themselves the finer faculties of man, it is that all our conceptions are so immensely below the truth, so much narrower than the truth, that they seem like the mere prattlings of children compared with the arguments of philosophers. Hence it is wise to be humble as well as studious, and always to be willing to hold the form with a comparatively loose hand, while clinging to the essence of that which is inspiring and really nutritious to the spiritual life.

Looking back into the history of the past, no longer blinded by the dust of its conflicts and the whirl of its passions, we can see that the most serious divisions in Christendom arose out of matters beyond human ken, which did not touch the inner realities of the spiritual life, but only the forms into which the various disputants threw their conceptions of matters incomprehensible to them all. Arians and non-Arians disputed furiously as to whether the second Person in the Christian Trinity was of "the same substance as" or of "like substance with" the Father, and the Arians were hunted out of the Church, and persecutions slew their thousands. The Catholic Church was split in twain, and became the Eastern and Western Churches, the Greek and the Roman, on the question whether the Third Person, the Holy Spirit, proceeded from the Father, or from the Father and the Son. It

is fairly obvious that neither side was in the position to *know* anything about the matter, and that it could make no difference which statement was the nearer to the truth. All that really mattered was that the influence represented under the name of the Holy Spirit should enter the human heart, sanctify and illumine the human life. Whether it came from one Person or from two was unessential to the growth of the spiritual life, yet for this that which Christians loved to call "the seamless robe of Christ" was rent in twain. Among us of the Theosophical Society to-day there are very many different opinions as to the nature of the Christ, as to His place in history, as to the proper name to be assigned to Him, as to His position in the Hierarchy, as to the particular body He used in the past, or may use in the future. Again it is obvious that these questions are beyond the range of the knowledge possessed by most of those inclined to dispute over them. But the only thing which is of vital importance, which really touches the spiritual life, is the existence of a Being who affords us a glimpse of a little more of the Divine Nature than we should otherwise see, who is to us the Supreme Teacher, whom we regard with the profoundest reverence, even, perhaps, as an Object of worship. None of the differences of opinion touch this intimate, this sacred side, the side which concerns the relation between the disciple and his Lord; the Holy of Holies wherein these meet is far from the tumult and the battle-cries of theological strife, and no clash of tongues may penetrate into the silence of that secret sanctuary.

It is vital for each of us that we should realise the Ideal of a divine Man, that we should see in Him an example of what humanity may become, that we should draw from Him all the inspiring power of a great Ideal, of a perfect Example; that we should have an Object to which our love and devotion may flow out—that is the important part of the Ideal of the Christ. But whether we label Him with one name or another, whether we know or do not know His exact nature and His exact place in the great Hierarchy of Supreme Men, Divine Men, in Divinity itself—that is not really so important as some people are inclined to think, when they rush into vehement controversy in support of some half-understood teaching of a favourite leader. If in his heart a man recognises the Supreme Teacher, let him give to him the name which to him seems best as expressing what He is to that man's own heart and life. Before these great manifestations of spiritual power to us who are so far below Them all, it is scarcely seemly for us to quarrel as to the special name or special nature of any one of Them. To the heart that loves and worships, the name of the Object matters but little, for the aspiration of the heart goes upward and brings response, where no response will come in answer to disputes about His nature. The atmosphere of dispute is not one which illumination can pierce. Shall we not learn the lesson contained in the story of the past, and separate our spiritual ideals from the husks of theological definitions? The ideals belong to the Eternal, the definitions to Time.

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Super-physical investigations may be divided into different classes, according to the vision which is used. The power of perception may be exercised by the consciousness working in the emotional (astral), mental, causal, intuitional (buddhic) or spiritual (atmic) vehicle. If the seer is studying phenomena connected with the astral or mental worlds—the inhabitants of these worlds, the conditions of purgatory and heaven and the dwellers therein respectively, thought or desire-forms, lower auras, and the like—he will use astral and mental vision, as is convenient; if he can only use his astral body, he cannot see outside that world, and can only study astral phenomena; if he can use the ‘illusory body,’<sup>1</sup> *i.e.*, the mental body with a temporarily created astral materialisation, he will use mental vision, and as much astral as he needs. If he is studying the past, he will work through the causal for though glimpses of past incarnations may be caught on the astral and mental planes—stray pictures thrown or drawn down by special causes—consecutive and voluntary study of the past can only be carried out by the consciousness working in the causal body. The student must not confuse such study with the special activity of the consciousness in the causal body working by abstract thought, with attention turned inwards not outwards, any more than he must confuse the special activity of the consciousness in the mental body, creating thought-images and reasoning on them, with the observation of the external phenomena of the mental world, taking place outside his own

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<sup>1</sup> The *Mâyavi Rûpa*.

mental body. We perceive through the causal body the full picture of the past, and can observe as much detail as we choose; that picture contains a perfect reproduction of the whole past scene, and can be passed quickly or slowly before our gaze, and can be repeated at will; we see not only the causal body, say, of a man, but also his mental, emotional and physical bodies, and the 'causal vision' of the trained seer includes all, and more than all the powers of sight exercised on lower levels.<sup>1</sup>

Observations on globes of our Chain other than the earth are made by going to them in the intuitional vehicle, and shaping any organs there required out of the material of those globes.

There are many passages in the Upanishats implying these ideas. It seems to me that we come down into the physical world in order to make our power of perception definite and precise, by its subdivision into senses through the organs of the senses, and that we then carry the precision and accuracy thus gained back with us to be used by our power of perception when exercised in any of our subtler bodies. It is a fact of experience to every seer who is able to use his causal body freely, with outward-turned attention, that he sees things belonging to all the lower planes, *i.e.*, concrete phenomena; I think the explanation of this lies in the experiences which he has gone through on the lower planes.

Previous Rounds may also be studied in this way. Observations on the two earlier Chains must

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<sup>1</sup> "Without senses, enjoying sense objects." "Without eyes, He sees, without ears He hears," etc., "He is the Seer, the Hearer, the Knower."

be made with the spiritual vision. These higher powers of vision, again, include all, and more than all, the powers of sight exercised on lower planes; they do not see vaguely, indefinitely, mistily, but with a clarity and an accuracy beyond all words. As each new power of sight unfolds, the seer is inclined to exclaim: "I never saw before." It is as though the words of the Apostle were reversed: "Then I saw through a glass darkly, but now face to face. Then I knew in part, but now I know even as I am known."

It is evident, then, that in considering investigations into the super-physical we have to deal with various powers of vision, and with an immense range of very varied phenomena. Moreover, as we ascend, the number of seers diminishes, and the reason of the non-seer will be deprived of even the few data for forming a judgment that he could use on lower levels; with regard to those, there being a large number of witnesses, he can compare their testimonies, note where they agree and where they differ. But with regard to such subjects as past Races, Rounds and Chains, it seems impossible for those who lack the power to investigate for themselves to exercise any reasonable judgment as to the statements made, for they are thrown back on a mere handful of investigators. We have available: The wonderful series of letters from the Master K. H., systematised by Mr. A. P. Sinnett and published in his invaluable book, *Esoteric Buddhism*, the first in point of time that deals sequentially with these subjects; then we have H. P. Blavatsky's splendid work, *The Secret Doctrine*,

unrivalled in its range; there are the books on Lemuria and Atlantis, issued by Mr. Scott Elliot; there is a little book on Atlantis, issued by Mr. Kingsland; there are the researches of Dr. Rudolf Steiner; and there are the records of observations by Mr. Leadbeater and myself, now collected in the book, *Man: Whence, How, and Whither*. There may, of course, be others which I do not know. There is, with minor differences, a fair consensus of opinion among all these, with the exception of researches made by Dr. Rudolf Steiner; and the differences in those may be largely due to the fact that he deals with the subject rather from the psychological standpoint than from that of the observation of the succession of external phenomena. Reasoning on ordinary possibilities in the physical world known to all is of very little use in this case. We are in a region where we have all described things that are facts or not facts; either they exist or they do not exist. We are not dealing with theories, but with records of observations, or flights of fancy, or a mixture of the two. Hence the need of caution, both in accepting or rejecting—for the time being—the statements made. The value of W. Kingdon Clifford's arguments on the fourth dimension, based on the higher mathematics, can only be estimated by his mathematical peers; the rest of us cannot judge them, and any opinion we may form is worthless. It is much the same when the non-seer is confronted with the records above-named; many accept for the time the seer who appeals to them on other grounds, and they accept him, on those grounds, as an *authority*, not

being able to judge for themselves; by the exercise of their intuition, or otherwise, they regard one particular person as their teacher, and where reason stops, they believe him or her. That is all right enough, but none of these has any right to impose his own belief in his teacher on any body else, and it seems fitting that all such should be careful to be moderate in their language, as they are only putting forward opinions which are repetitions of the views of their own respective favourite authorities, and these they are themselves unable to justify by any first hand knowledge. Whoever the authority may be, he or she is only an individual, who cannot rightly formulate beliefs for others, though fully justified in recording his own. I am well aware that, in the past, the differences of opinions which have caused great schisms have been—as above pointed out—just those on which the combatants on both sides could have no personal knowledge. But mistakes in the past are signals warning us of pitfalls in the present, and we should profit by them rather than repeat them. It is inevitable that each should form an opinion on the value of the researches made, but none should force his opinion on others; to proclaim one person as an infallible authority on a subject unknown to the proclaimer is to show fanaticism rather than reason. I would ask my own friends not to do this with me.

I do not argue that because, in the higher research, all the students but one agree in the main outlines, therefore the one is wrong. *Athanasius contra mundem* is sometimes right. But let



me put a case which suggests caution. Dr. Steiner says in his *Lemuria* and *Atlantis*<sup>1</sup> that at a certain time the history of our earth—at what we call the periods of the early middle third Race—when that earth was already largely inhabited, the sun and moon drew gradually away from the earth; we had then three globes where “till now there had been no material separation,” there was a “common globe” composed of what are now sun, earth and moon. Man’s advance from generation by cleavage to generation by sex was accomplished through “the cosmic happenings”. Thus the statement appears to refer to matters physical, not allegorical nor mystical. My own astronomical knowledge is of the smallest, and is entirely secondhand, for I have never made a single astronomical investigation; but my occult research, as well as the teachings of the White Lodge, given through H. P. Blavatsky and A. P. Sinnett, make me deny the above statement, if it be intended to convey a physical fact, and is not merely a symbolical indication of some mental happening; the surface meaning is, in fact, so incredible, that one’s instinct is to look for another in the case of a writer so justly respected. Moreover, the physical meaning would contradict the whole of the teaching on evolution hitherto put forward in the Society as to Chains, Rounds, and Races, the relation of the lunar to the terrene Chain and so on. This must all be rewritten, and the statements made by the Masters originally, and confirmed by the researches of Their disciples afterwards, must be thrown aside.

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 159.

Hence caution is necessary before believing the above statement, though the making of it is quite within the right of any member of the T.S.

It is interesting to notice that the matters on which considerable differences of opinion arise are—with the exception of the views of Christ, noted above—matters which do not bear on life and conduct, but on those which, however interesting as knowledge, are outside that which is needed for the guiding of human life. Life and conduct are immensely influenced by a knowledge of the astral and mental worlds—which include purgatory and heaven—of thought and desire-forms, of the lower auras, and other matters of that ilk. This great class of super-physical investigations is the class most useful to the ordinary man; the yet more vital teachings of brotherhood, reincarnation and karma can be taught on intellectual and moral grounds, apart from super-physical research, though they may be aided and re-inforced thereby. The class of super-physical phenomena, then, which is most useful is the one which is most within reach, which a fair number of people can investigate, and on which students are fairly agreed. The differences which arise are differences common to all forms of scientific research, and to these we now turn.

*(To be Concluded)*

Annie Besant

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## RENTS IN THE VEIL OF TIME

### LIVES OF ERATO

#### VII

THIS time also Erato was born as a girl, the place of birth being Middle China. The people of the country seem to have been good, peaceable, well-meaning folk, but tied hand and foot and paralysed by convention. Their civilisation was already ancient and, as frequently happens in such cases, life had become for them merely a matter of elaborate rule and custom, rigid in its routine yet only half understood. The race to which they belonged, ethnologically, was the old Turanian.

Erato grew up a studious little girl and received a good education, the books used being written in characters half-way between the old picture-writing and the more modern Chinese script. Her family were well provided with worldly goods, and thus her childhood was surrounded with comforts. She was a contented little creature with a broad smiling countenance; and everything seemed to promise a happy life for her when, unfortunately, she quite suddenly fell ill and died. After a brief stay in the astral world she just touched the heaven-world and returned into incarnation after the short interval of twenty-two years.

The student may not unreasonably ask: "What is the use of such a life as this?" It is easier to ask than to answer; but various ideas suggest themselves to the mind. For example, it is noteworthy that Erato moves with praiseworthy regularity through the sub-races, taking them religiously in order; and to keep up his reputation in this respect, this tiny life in the fourth sub-race was necessary between his last sojourn among the Toltec third and his next appearance in the semi-Semitic fifth. Or he may have needed a little something which only this sub-race could give—some tiny touch of the peculiarities of the Turanian tribes. Or again, it may be that in this case, as in so many others, a short incarnation was introduced simply to bridge over an inconvenient interval, and bring him to the succeeding life at the appointed time into a certain set of appropriate circumstances. This indeed is most probable, for we see that the next life was a crucial one. Yet again, his appearance here may have been not so much on his own account as on that of others; he may have been here principally as the instrument of karma for his parents, who had deserved the sorrow of losing a child. At least we may be sure that no injustice was done to any of the parties concerned, and that all that occurred was so arranged as eventually to work out well for every one of them.

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#### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

*None Identified*

## VIII

Again as a girl, Erato reappears far across the seas on a mountainous peninsula of North Atlantis. Her father Egeria was the chief of his race, a fair-skinned people belonging to that stock of white Atlanteans from which both the Aryans and the Semites sprang. It was a strong handsome hardy race, which, conquered many years before by the invading hosts of red Atlanteans, had been driven into the mountains at the north end of Poseidonis, where it now dwelt. Here Erato grew up to early womanhood, leading a healthy, strenuous outdoor life, hunting and fishing with her brothers, and being especially remarkable for her skill and daring as a swimmer.

Southward lay the great city and country of the red Atlanteans; and this proud and grasping race had long coveted the airy upland region of the North, and for many years had waged a ceaseless though somewhat desultory warfare against its scanty yet virile population, in the hope of winning that desirable tract of land for itself. The chief attraction lay in its remarkable mineral wealth; for it was full of mines, and these at the time were worked by the descendants of the second sub-race of Atlantis.

For some time all such attempts were unsuccessful. But at last, when Erato was seventeen or eighteen years old, victory attended the efforts of the invaders and the mountaineers were utterly and hopelessly defeated. Every male upon whom the victors could lay hands was butchered, while

the women were carried away into captivity. The whole of Erato's family were wiped out, and she herself was carried off, a slave, to the great capital city of the island.

It will be remembered that Erato had once before dwelt in this same city, in the third life of the present series; and the life in question, placed amidst the most corrupting and degrading conditions, had been of so unhappy and so unsatisfactory a nature that it had ended in self-destruction. The task this time was actually even harder than before; for what had been, at that earlier period, a hard, grasping, materialistic civilisation, full of luxury and gilded vice, and marked by violent extremes of wealth and poverty, had now reached a point where it might truly be said that the very idea of morality had ceased to exist. So far as evil can be absolute, it was absolute in the Poseidonis of that age. There is a point beyond which moral degeneration cannot go: what with every kind of wickedness, of cruelty, and of self indulgence, heightened and intensified by the sinister arts of the darker magic, Poseidonis had now reached its nadir; no further descent was possible, and so, according to the law of the great Hierarchy which rules our world, nothing remained for it, save to be utterly destroyed. At the time when our story begins, the land had come to the very brink of that mighty cataclysm which, dimly remembered ages afterwards in the days of Solon and of Plato, destroyed in one huge upheaval the great island of Poseidonis and buried the last remnant of the

mighty Atlantean continent for ever beneath the green and silent waves of ocean.

In spite of the terrific doom-laden atmosphere into which she had come, it must be confessed that Erato's life as a captive was far from being an unpleasant one. Treated with consideration as the whilom daughter of a chief, she was eventually married to Ursa, a son of the rich family which had purchased her. Light though her slavery had been, she was yet grateful to her husband for having lifted her out of a condition degrading to a proud and sensitive nature. More than gratitude, however, she could hardly feel, since in everything which touched personal character her lord and master was far from an admirable type of being.

Weak, indolent, self-indulgent and self-centred, he was hardly qualified to win love and respect. Yet at the same time he had sufficient rudiments of kindness and good nature to do what he could to please his wife; and one of the ways in which he was able to gratify her was in consenting to remove her out of the town atmosphere, which she detested, to his country seat in the mountains. But even here, although she rejoiced in the keen pure air which brought back memories of earlier days, yet the house was so terribly magnificent and the gardens and landscape so intolerably artificial that it was all little better than the town.

Any happiness which she might have got out of her married life gradually slipped away from her, as her husband became more and more dissipated with time and grew mentally and physically

coarser. Not only were his boon companions of the most undesirable kind, but he himself hastened his own degeneration by drink and drugs. The last stage was reached when he commenced to dabble in the black arts under the instructions of professors who were, at this time, everywhere to be found and were ready to teach their revolting secrets and devilments for a pecuniary consideration.

Things were at this stage when one day Erato was visited by a venerable looking old man with flowing white hair and beard, who had once been a priest in her tribe and had somehow managed to escape the general slaughter at the time of its conquest. He had sought her out now in order to tell her, as one of the few survivors of the tribe, that it had been supernaturally revealed to him that the whole country would shortly be destroyed. In lurid words he painted the wickedness of the age and the terror of the impending doom, and earnestly entreated her to escape in time. Erato believed him, and although she had by now lost all respect for her husband, yet, moved by a lingering remnant of gratitude and devotion, told him what the old man had said and begged him to take the warning. But the sodden fool only laughed at her and declared that the old man was either mad or had some secret object in frightening her. Nor would he listen to any suggestions of hers as to his leaving the country, though he told her that she was perfectly at liberty to go herself if she wished to do so. Finding it impossible to bring him to reason, Erato made up her mind to do the only loyal thing and, instead of saving



herself as she might have done, determined to stay till the end and perish at his side.

It is impossible adequately to describe the end of Poseidonis. Something has already been written elsewhere about this stupendous catastrophe, and more perhaps may be written at some future date. Suffice it that of a sudden a great mass of land began to sink, and as it sank the water rushed in and enveloped the country. On every side the land seemed to melt and dissolve away. So appallingly swift was the work of destruction that within twenty-four hours the whole of Poseidonis had disappeared beneath the flood, except the peaks of a few of the highest mountains, which still remain as islands but, strictly speaking, it was more than a century before the land absolutely ceased from sinking and the turbid waters regained their clearness. The loss of life was enormous, for only a very few persons, who contrived to reach the mountain tops were saved. At the time of this catastrophe, Erato was only thirty-nine years of age, but nevertheless the interval before her next descent into incarnation was but little less than a thousand years.

It would seem that with this eighth life we come to the close of a minor cycle of soul-evolution; in it we see the success of a kind of evolutionary experiment. In that first life in Chaldæa—first only in the sense that our investigation chanced to begin there, and we did not then know what had gone before it—the ego was thrown into surroundings which made a good life eminently probable for him. Born in the priestly caste, he

encountered none but virtuous examples; virtue was universally expected of him, and in every way made easy for him. To have sinned seriously would have been difficult; it would have been to fly in the face of all comfortable conventions; it would have needed a determination in the direction of wickedness which our hero happily did not possess. So he succumbed to his fate, and was good. In the second life one may see the application of a test to the habit of goodness which had been set up in the previous incarnation. Here were circumstances distinctly less favourable than the Chaldæan; would the ego prove strong enough to rise superior to them? He did; he came triumphantly through the ordeal, and thereby strengthened his character. In the third life a far harder test was applied, and he was plunged into the midst of civilisation so unsatisfactory in every way that to lead a good life under the conditions would have been more difficult than to lead an evil one as a priest in Chaldæa. He was not strong enough for this; he became the creature of his circumstances, and lived as did others around him. It may have been but natural for *them*, but for him it was a failure, for he had known something far better. Consequently, his next life shows a distinct drop. There was here a certain amount of physical suffering, which no doubt toughened his fibre even while it discharged some portion of his heavy karmic debt. In the succeeding incarnation he had a great deal of emotional and mental suffering. On the whole he bore it well and nobly, and came out of it purified and strengthened. The Peruvian life was clearly an



## THE SECRET OF A STAR

By EVA M. MARTIN

(Continued from p. 598)

### II

As if some miracle, some hand divine, unseal'd my eyes,  
Shadowy vast shapes smile through the air and sky.

—Whitman.

Who gives to seas and sunset skies  
Their unspent beauty of surprise. . . .  
Or, if in thy heart he shine,  
Blends the starry fates with thine,  
Draws angels nigh to dwell with thee,  
And makes thy thoughts archangels be.

—Emerson.

AFTER his mother's passing Lucien's whole environment changed. He was taken by some distant cousins, his only relatives, to live in a little village some way from the old home, and this new life was very different from the old one. These people were fairly well-to-do farmers, narrow-minded and prejudiced in many ways, but kind-hearted on the whole. They tried to 'do their duty' by Lucien, and their three children made him a welcome sharer in all their games and pleasures. The life, though rough, was simple and healthy, and the boy grew strong in body and supple in limb, with a rare spiritual beauty of

countenance that marked him out from the rest of the village children. His aunt and uncle, as he soon learnt to call them, noted it, and often remarked mysteriously that he was very like his poor mother, but they rejoiced, as the weeks and months passed by, to see that he grew less dreamy and took an increasing interest in the every-day life of games and lessons which he shared with the other children.

One day, when he had been there for more than a year, the four of them were coming home together from the village school, which lay some little distance from the rather isolated farm-house where they lived. It was a blustering, late September day—a day of intense blue sky and massive white clouds, with a wind that seemed to fling itself across the heavens and swoop down upon the earth, making the trees sway and bow their proud heads, and scattering behind it whirling clouds of gold and crimson leaves.

The children were crossing an open common bordered on one side by a wood, and Lucien lingered a little behind the other three, who ran on, chasing one another and laughing at the wind's mad pranks. Suddenly it seemed to him as if a great gust blew out of the sky, making a wide aerial pathway from heaven to earth, and down this wind-swept thoroughfare there ran towards him at lightning speed a radiant figure veiled in flying robes of cloudy blue and purple. Its feet touched the earth, it stooped, caught up the child in an embrace that thrilled him to the soul, and pressed on his brow a kiss of such purity and power that he trembled long after at the remembrance. All the strength of blown waves, bare hill-tops, and wide

plains; all the tenderness of summer showers and growing violets; all the wonder and beauty of the whole living earth, seemed to be pressed into his spirit by those ardent lips. But in a flash it was over, and the figure had vanished, borne away on the wings of a great rush of wind that swept the common and made the forest sing.

Lucien stood still, stammering with surprise, trembling with delight, and his youngest cousin, a child of six, came running back to him.

"Who was that speaking to you?" she said. "I saw a—a—someone in a grey cloak standing beside you. Where's he gone?"

Lucien took her hand, and walked on.

"It was the wind," he said. "Listen! can't you hear him talking now?"

And as they passed the end of the wood, it seemed indeed to be full of whispering and singing voices.

But the child was not quite satisfied, and later, when they all sat round the table at tea-time, she referred to it again.

"The wind came down and spoke to Lucien on the common," she said. "I saw him—a big grey man—no, not exactly a man—but when I went back he was gone."

The other children laughed her to scorn, and declared that there had been no one on the common when they crossed it, no one even in sight, and when the little one insisted she was sharply bade be quiet and not tell wicked lies. Lucien pressed her hand under the table, but as he refused to deny her tale, displeasure fell upon him too, and they were both sent to bed in disgrace.

The boy lay long awake in the dark, thinking and remembering. Nothing of what his mother had told him, or of the happenings of that wild night when they had lain together in the fire-light, had been altogether forgotten, but the memory had grown vague, the contrast of his present life and the company of his new playmates having conspired to drive such things into the background of his mind. Now remembrance had been revived. A new world, that was yet a world of long-familiar joys and beauties, seemed to have suddenly opened its doors to him, and he fell asleep with the firm determination never to forget again, so long as he lived.

A day or two later, on a half-holiday afternoon, he contrived with some difficulty to evade his cousins, and climbed alone to the top of a grassy hill behind the farm-house. In a little hollow, shaded by a thorn-bush and well out of sight of the house, he sat down, rested his chin on his knees, and fell into deep thought, waiting for what he felt sure must come.

But the minutes fled rapidly and nothing happened. Only the wind rustled fitfully in the grass, and now and then a lark rose, singing, and soared into the low cloudy sky.

The boy grew impatient.

"O Hermes! Come to me!" he exclaimed aloud. "I am sure you are near."

"If you are really sure," said the indescribably lovely voice that made his whole being thrill with strange dreams and memories, "there is no use in waiting any longer."

And there sat the God on the grass close by, smiling a welcome.

Not as Wind-God did he come this time, nor as guide of the dead, but more in the guise of an old-time shepherd or woodman, dressed in dull shades of russet and gold.

Lucien's instinct, as once before, was to fall on his knees, covering his face, but other feelings swept this away, and almost before he knew he had flung himself into the God's opened arms, and was clinging to him as though to his only friend on earth. In one great rush of emotion he realized in that moment how lonely he had been in the past months, how alien his surroundings were to him, how he had missed the tender, spiritual influences that had been shed over his earlier life—and as all this swept over him he clung to the God in just such an ecstasy of joy as one would feel who, after long months in prison, beheld again at last the open daylight, and the wide free spaces of the sky.

"Come, come," said Hermes at length. "That is indeed a warm welcome! But thine arms are strong, and I have no wish to be strangled."

"Why did you not come before? Where have you been?" said the child, releasing him.

"The second is too big a question. As to the first, I came often, but not so that thou couldst see me, for thy little mind was full of new impressions, and it was better not. Indeed, I was not sure whether thou wouldst see me when I touched thee on the common the other day."

"O, I saw you!" said Lucien proudly. "I felt you . . . . O Hermes! I have missed you so!"

"But thou didst not know it until now?" queried the other, with a smile.



"No . . . One of me didn't. The outside 'me' didn't know. But / knew, Hermes! I missed you really, all the time."

The God nodded.

"I understand," he said. "But now stand up, and let me look at thee. Thou art grown tall and strong." He passed his hand approvingly over the firm muscles and the well-shaped little limbs. "Thou wilt be a fine man one day. This last year has been good, indeed, for the welfare of thy body."

The child stood silent, looking into the friendly, smiling eyes, fascinated and puzzled by what he saw there.

"Who are you, really?" he asked, with a great sigh, at length.

"I am more than thou thinkest," replied the other, and a strange fire glowed in his mobile face. "And—I am also less. Thou art too young yet to understand. Some day it will be explained to thee."

"My mother used to tell me about you," Lucien said thoughtfully. "Where is she now? Why did she go away?"

His lip trembled, and the God laid a kind hand on his shoulder. "I took her," he said, "but thou must not hate me for it, for I had no choice. She is very happy, and she thinks often of thee."

The boy sighed again. "I wish she could come back," he said. Then all at once his face lighted up. "I remember one story she told me, of how you made a lyre out of a shell, the first lyre that ever was made! O Hermes! couldn't you make one now?"

"That was long ago," said the God, a little sadly. "Long ago, in Arcady, where I was born. I gave it to Apollo, in exchange for his cattle, the clouds, that I had stolen away, and his anger was soon changed into delight by reason of the sweet music that it made. I was a mischievous rogue in those days, Lucien—or so they said. But they were rare days for the Gods—rare days indeed!"

He seemed inclined to fall into a dreamy reverie, and Lucien came a little closer.

"I would like to have heard the music of your lyre," he whispered, insinuatingly.

"Music? Well, thou shalt have music, if it please thee, though not *that* music. Come, we will go to the cottage of the old fiddler in the village. Hold my hand tightly, so."

The boy obeyed, and immediately a soft wind seemed to rise up all around them, with a sound as though invisible fingers had swept a thousand quivering harp-strings, far away. Hand-in-hand they raced merrily down the grass-covered slope, and in a few moments were standing outside the fiddler's cottage.

Hermes peeped through the window.

"The old man is asleep," he said. "Let us go in."

In the little dim low room they found the old fiddler, who was village shoe-maker as well, dozing in his chair. On the bench beside him, among nails and strips of leather and half-mended shoes, lay his violin and bow. Hermes picked them up, while Lucien seated himself on a little stool beside the window.

Then the God began to play, and what a music he made! All the wild wonder of sea and sky rang through it, the joy of growing grass and flowers, the peace of forest trees dripping moonbeams on soft June nights, while the nightingales warbled in their branches. And more than all else there was the strength and glory of the wind, the power and splendour of great storms, the gentleness of waking airs at dawn. Music of Mercury it was—music of Sarameias, “the breeze of a summer morning”.

Presently the theme changed, and as Lucien listened, breathless, with wide eyes fixed on the player, the walls of the little room faded away and he saw a white temple on a hill overlooking the sea. He saw garlands of flowers everywhere, and processions of maidens and youths who played on stringed instruments and chanted strangely beautiful songs. He saw himself standing within the temple, before an altar which was open to the sky and to the four winds of heaven—standing with raised hands and head flung back, and singing a glad, wonderful pæan of worship and adoration. Almost he heard the words of this immemorial chant, almost he saw the radiant vision that filled the eyes of the adoring priest with such a light of ecstasy, and then the scene faded. He heard the last strains of the wonder-working music die away to an enigmatic whisper; he rubbed his eyes, and saw Hermes laying down the violin; but even as he looked, the figure of the God vanished, like the figure which he had recognised for his own in the Grecian temple. A cool, delicious breeze ran through the little

cottage room, and the old shoe-maker awoke with a start, and glanced hastily round him.

"Eh, was that you, Lucien? What a draught you made, opening the door. I never heard you come in."

"You've been dreaming, Mr. Barley," said the child, with a twinkle in his dark eyes.

"Dreaming? Ay, so I have. Queer dreams, too, though I can't remember what they were now. But dear me! to think of me nodding all afternoon, and it getting dark so early these days. I must set to work."

Lucien sat a little longer by the window. He often came in to see the old man, who would play funny jigs and dances to him and the other children, when he was in a good humour.

"Mr. Barley," said the boy, suddenly, "do you ever see things that happened to you before you were born?"

The shoe-maker paused in his hammering.

"Good gracious, child, are you out of your mind? Don't ask me questions like that. Such nonsense, indeed."

Lucien sighed, and got up to go. As he passed the shoe-maker's bench he touched the violin caressingly with one hand, then suddenly stooped and kissed it several times, as if in a passion of reverence and love.

The old man stared after him as he ran out of the cottage.

"Well—I'm blest!" he said. "What in the world possessed him to do that? I always thought there was something queer about that boy."

*(To be Continued)*

Eva M. Martin

## OF LOVE AND LIFE<sup>1</sup>

By PHILIP OYLER

IT is compromise that we need and can judge only with great difficulty; compromise between work and rest, between comradeship and solitude, between luxury and self-denial, between words and silence.

Those who have not one true friend are the world's paupers.

It is by setting a noble example that we teach most and learn most.

One happy thought often leads to another.

If we knew all, we should be silent for ever.

We are rich to the amount with which we are able to dispense.

Look for beauty in others, for faults in yourself.

The extent of beauty that we see depends upon the extent of beauty that we are.

If we attain to our ideal, we have failed.

If we do not find peace in love, then our love is not of the highest.

Have compassion, not pity.

We are all mystics at some turn in the road. No one was ever a complete materialist.

We can all be princes of kingdoms—within ourselves.

So live each day that at sundown you may say to yourself: "I am more worthy to be loved to-day than ever before."

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<sup>1</sup> Some of these thoughts were published in our issue of April 1912. A further instalment will follow.—ACTING EDITOR.

Why should we read the records of history? Have we not, each one of us, the history of the past within us, and of the future too?

We owe more to our ancestors than these human bodies and more to posterity than merely to give it birth.

We cannot expect a full crop of fruit as well as an orchestra of birds.

If children do not love you, you must have serious faults that you should correct.

When you can read the poems that people are, you will have no need and no desire to read the poems that they write.

We ought to have as many feelings as there are stars. How many stars are there?

Sow forgiveness, and you shall reap love.

Listen with your heart, and silence then is full of gladsome songs.

If others hurt us, let us not blame them but ourselves. Did we only love enough, none could hurt us.

As the parched earth rejoices after the rain-shower, so is the soul ecstatic after the passage of a beautiful thought.

We do not have any great moments of inner goodness without those surrounding us being dimly conscious of it.

If things appear ill, dwell upon the memory of their one-time best.

We are all bound to the infinite. We all live in eternity. It is only the intellect that strives to divide up space and time.

We all see beauty that is with us. Genius sees it where it is not yet.

If you would see beyond the horizon, you must close your eyes and look with your light.

Whether our horizon be snow-clad heights or courtyards, quiet fields, busy streets or the thin line where sky and ocean kiss, we should remember that we can all look upwards, think upwards, feel upwards through the stars.

A pure mind needs no reward, a weak one no punishment. Right living has its reward in joy. Disease and remorse are greater punishments for wrong-doing than any which men could devise.

If your skies are grey, shut your eyes and think of the sunshine.

There is no such thing as father-love, but some men are capable of mother-love.

If education does not lead to greater happiness, it is valueless.

Never a kind word was spoken but the hillsides were brighter for it.

Knowledge is a storehouse of facts and may perish or be destroyed, but wisdom is the quintessence of feeling and is as true and lasting as eternity.

Dwell on every smile. That will add to the sunshine of winter days.

How great and how small is love! It can embrace infinity, it can be all-surrendered in a look.

We can never be so lonely as in a crowd.

The poet and the lover know in the dawn, but the community as a whole sees only in the full light of noon.

Make yourself worthy to be loved, and you will inevitably be loved.

Every kind thought which you have of your neighbour enriches both him and yourself.

*(To be Continued)*

Philip Oyler



## REVIEWS

*A Textbook of Theosophy*, by C. W. Leadbeater. (THE THEOSOPHIST Office, Adyar, Madras, India. Price Re. 1 or 1s. 6d. or 40c.)

This little handbook, intended to serve as an introduction to the study of Theosophy, shows the qualities which we expect to find in Mr. Leadbeater's works—splendid accuracy of observation, and remarkable lucidity in exposition. The first chapter briefly expounds 'What Theosophy Is' in a way to entice, rather than to alarm, the hesitating enquirer. Theosophy seems to be delightfully easy as thus presented, and by the time the difficulties begin, the hesitating enquirer will have become the eager student. 'From the Absolute to Man' shows, in one broad sweep, the mighty chain of interlinked lives from their common source to our present humanity, and then the writer passes at once to 'The Formation of a Solar System' by the outpouring of the first Life-Wave; dull indeed will be the student who does not gain from it clear ideas of the planning and building of the great Architect. 'The Evolution of Life' follows, and we have the outpouring of the second and third Life-Waves, with a lucid description of the group-soul. Chapter V deals with 'The Constitution of Man', and should enable the beginner to grasp this somewhat complicated subject, obtaining an outline into which he can fit details by further study. 'After Death' brings us into the astral and mental worlds, and the conditions of life in the astral body and of the way to make the best of them are carefully described; then the reader is taken on into the mental world, to study it with equal care, and thus reaches 'Reincarnation', the subject of the seventh chapter. Under this, karma, the law of cause and effect, is shown, and the opportunities given by the different Races and sub-races are sketched. The following chapter, on 'The Purpose of Life' is, perhaps, the most useful in the book, as it marks out, in a few



pregnant sentences, the stages of evolution, offers the definition of Right and Wrong—the same as is given in our C. H. C. Text Books—points to the Ideal, and shows how to attain it. With only one sentence, the last in the chapter, do I find myself in disagreement: “The man who reaches the Adept level has exhausted all the possibilities of moral development, and so the future evolution which still lies before him can only mean still wider knowledge and still more wonderful spiritual powers.” But surely the compassion of a Buddha, of a Christ, is fuller, deeper, wider, than is even the exquisite embodiment of that great quality in one of the Masters of Kindness. After this we are led to study the Planetary Chains, and the book closes with ‘The Result of Theosophical Study’. If this chapter were put into practice by members, the T.S. would indeed be filled with Theosophists.

Mr. Leadbeater has once more laid the T.S. under a debt of gratitude to him.

A. B.

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*Naturalism or Idealism?* by Rudolf Eucken; translated by Alban G. Widgery (W. Heffer & Sons, Ltd., Cambridge. Price 1s.)

One of the best philosophical lectures we have come across for a long time is here presented in a handy form. It is the Noble Lecture (now appearing in English) delivered in Stockholm in 1909 by the well-known Professor of Jena University and forms, in the words of the translator, “the kernel of his teaching”. A review cannot do adequate justice to the very learned and highly philosophical but certainly practical discourse in which Eucken gives his answer to the great problem: “Is man simply a part of Nature, or can he become something higher, something essentially higher than Nature?”

The author first describes the evolution and present position of Naturalism indicating the important part Natural Science has played therein and the change in practical life brought about thereby. In conclusion he gives the convincing argument that Natural Science itself conclusively refutes Naturalism; the basis of modern industry and structure of modern society enable us to decide that “Naturalism is on no account an adequate expression of the tendencies of life in the Modern Age”.

Next, our author turns to Idealism and by very clever and logical arguments brings us to the recognition that life is

occupied "not so much with externals as with itself; its own development is its chief aim; it forms in itself a spiritual realm". A further intelligent examination of problems that we have to face to-day in the world at large makes us realise that "at every point we are driven beyond the standards of Naturalism;" further the author shows that "the peculiar experiences and needs of our own time call especially for a renewal of the movement towards Idealism".

The lecture, to be appreciated, must be studied.

B. P. W.

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*Religious Thought in Holland during the Nineteenth Century*, by James Hutton Mackay, M.A. (Hodder & Stoughton, London. Price 6s.)

The Rev. J. H. Mackay was for six years a minister of the English churches in Middleburg and Flushing in Holland, churches which have long been incorporated into the Dutch Reformed Church. As such he has given a good deal of time to the study of Dutch religious life and tendencies. Upon the resultant knowledge he has drawn for material in giving, as the Hastie Lecturer, in the University of Glasgow, for 1909-1911, a course of five lectures on the movement of religious thought in Holland during the last century.

The author has evidently studied hard and read widely to qualify himself for his task, and that with success. His title however is somewhat misleading, for the scope of his work is narrower than there indicated. As a matter of fact he leaves out of the discussion all reference to Roman Catholicism and nearly all reference to ultra-orthodoxy. The minor sects and their religious tendencies are also silently passed over and the book is almost exclusively engaged with a description of the growth of 'liberal' protestant theology. Perhaps the restriction was a wise one, enabling him to arrive at greater precision in the description of a religious movement of a whole nation during a full century; for even in this narrower field complexity is great enough to demand adequate space in order to prevent mere flimsiness of treatment or loss of logical sequence. Mr. Mackay has done his work well, treading the mazes of a century's theological jungle with decision and precision. Many a Dutchman could take this book in hand and read it with profit.

For a foreigner, the author's knowledge of the literature he treats is remarkable. His style and exposition are lucid. Several Dutch quotations are given, without English translations to the disadvantage of the English reader, and in several places not without some typographical errors. Here and there there is some dry humour in the work and his delineation of the Dutch character (in the first chapter) is not without shrewdness. But in a few places a Dutchman would differ in certain estimates: as, for instance, his calling the *Tijdspiegel* a leading literary journal (it may have been but is so no longer), or *Bilderdijk* Holland's greatest poet.

The little historical description of the *Eglise Wallonne* and the Scottish churches in Holland on pp. 109-111 contains some quiet wit, the most delightful paragraph being that which mentions a worthy who was "a zealous elder of the Church when on shore, and when on board his brig as bold a smuggler as ever ran out a sliding bowsprit to the winds that blew betwixt Campvere and the East coast of Scotland". Of course the individual referred to was a Scotsman.

And so we are presented with the story of a more or less peaceful war between sects, tendencies, trends, interpretations, dividing the Central Christian conceptions into ever smaller factions. As the author rightly remarks (he is a ex-Indian Chaplain): "The tendency of a long residence in India, where Christianity appears visibly as minute spots against a vast background of Hindüism and Islámism, is perhaps to make one view it in what seem to be its simpler and more radical elements." Yet these theological wrangles should not be regarded as mere quibbles and vain disputations. They may be interpreted in a deeper way in their vastly human significance. A frank record of such theological strife, touched with not too heavy a hand, approached with not too serious a mind, keeping a sane sense of proportion and relative values, is indeed instructive and reveals much that is beautiful, the outcome of noble and honourable strivings of mankind. For when all is said and done the basis of all this struggle is the desire for more light, more wisdom, more knowledge. And the mode of manifestation is nothing but a long drawn out attempt to mutually adjust honesty and piety, conscience and hope, mind and heart. We nevertheless (and perhaps the claim may seem arrogant to some) cannot help thinking, after having finished a book like the one we are reviewing: would that these people had had

some knowledge of, and insight into, the best and most essential elements of what we now-a-days call Theosophy.

We heartily recommend the work to all those who are interested in the working in actual history, in the lives of men, of the eternal quest for the highest.

J. v. M.

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*To Members of the T. S.* (THE THEOSOPHIST Office, Adyar, Madras, India. Price 6 Ans. or 6d. or 12c.)

Mr. W. H. Kirby has done a very useful service to the Theosophical Society in compiling this little book of extracts from the writings of H. P. Blavatsky, Annie Besant, C. W. Leadbeater and others. It is intended to be sent out with each diploma to the new member, so that he may see and feel something of the nature of the Society into which he has come, of the Theosophic attitude towards life, of the true aim of the Theosophist. The compiler has done his work admirably, selecting and weaving together apposite paragraphs and short articles, that present a clear impression of the Theosophical spirit. A list of General Secretaries and Presidential Agents follows, and an outline of the organisation of the T.S. Books are recommended for study, and a list of Magazines is given. We strongly advise general Secretaries to utilise this pamphlet, and every T.S. member should possess one. It would also be very useful for propaganda.

A. B.

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*The Religion and Ethics of Tolstoy*, by the Rev. A. H. Craufurd. (T. Fisher Unwin, London. Price 3s. 6d.)

A better title for the book would have been 'Criticism on the Religion and Ethics of Tolstoy,' for that it verily is; and the criticism is deep, intelligent and honest. Though the reader is sometimes amused at the superior air of the writer, when he takes into consideration that the book is more a criticism than an exposition of Tolstoy's philosophy, he can well overlook this. Tolstoy is revealed in a new phase when we see him through the eyes of our author, who has written this essay in a clever manner showing much knowledge. The book is not devoid of interesting passages pregnant with thoughts of a spiritual nature.

B. P. W.

*Chemical Phenomena in Life*, by Frederick Czapek (Harper's Library of Living Thought. Price 2s. 6d. net.)

This small book presents an outline of the most recent advances in that branch of Chemistry which is steadily pushing back the borderland of the unknown by reducing more and more of the vital processes in living organisms to the definite category of chemical reactions. It is evident that much progress has been made in recent years in this direction without recourse to experiments on animals, and, to judge from the expectations of the author and his confrères, we are possibly on the verge of some startling discoveries bearing on that mysterious substance called protoplasm. Such a subject necessarily involves many terms and references that are foreign to any but the specialist, but we recognise that any further simplification would have deprived the work of much of its scientific value. We are sure that all progressive students of biology will derive much profit from a study of this compact and up-to-date summary.

W. D. S. B.

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*Priests, Philosophers and Prophets*, by Thomas Whitaker. (A. & C. Black, London. Price 5s. net.)

The work is one for the expert rather than for the man in the street. Only the former can estimate at its fair value the author's profound knowledge. Of the Messianic idea in general, anything on which is now of importance, it is said:

The obscure early history of the Messianic idea has yet to be investigated in full; but we may take the meaning of it to be, that a viceregent of the Supreme God is to bring the world under one rule, as the founders of empires had aspired to. Thus it could easily coalesce with the idea of a mediator-God.... It has long been a commonplace of criticism that the survival of the individual soul plays no part at all in the religion of the Old Testament. The theory of this (the Orphic movement) as of other new religions was that by mysterious rites, as well as by observing a distinctive code of moral conduct with more or less ascetic features, each soul was to obtain a glorified life as the God, whether called Dionysus or Osiris, or by some other name, had attained it after his suffering and descent into the underworld. In what precise way all these ideas interacted, and came together in the completing religions of the Roman Empire it may never be possible to determine, except conjecturally; but we know of the existence of all the strands. We know also from the result that the finally triumphant religion succeeded in representing itself as continuous with the official Judaism, which, in its priesthood and its central rites, perished at the capture of Jerusalem, and the burning of the temple by Titus in the year 70 of the Christian era.

We have quoted this extract merely because a study of the past throws light upon the present. The Orphic movement had distinct points of agreement with the Theosophic. The present times also present the spectacle of a decay in the existing established religions joined to a general religious interest, a religious ferment tending towards a blending, a fusion of many varieties of religious experience.

Another significant point which tallies with the Theosophical is the conclusion that "the principal, though not the only source of the Christian form of this gnosis, this wisdom among the perfect, which rises among the popular religions, yet springs out of them by a series of stages, is the Pauline epistolary literature. Paul, as both Dieterich and Reitzenstein find, moves essentially in the circle of ideas which has been recovered for us in its 'heathen form' in the Hermetic literature and in the magic papyri: it is on this side that explanation has to be sought: the Christian ideas being not original but derivative." Then in a footnote, notice is drawn to a very interesting expression. "Schopenhauer has drawn attention to the singularly un-Jewish character of an expression in the Epistle of James, 'the wheel of birth,' to which he would ascribe an Indian origin. This, however, is also Orphic: compare Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophy*. The literature of Orphism might be described as an early phase of the Gnosis." With regard to the expression 'the wheel of birth,' the Revised Version gives it as 'the wheel of nature' with a marginal alternative of 'birth,' for nature, while the Authorised Version gives simply 'the course of nature'. The verse runs (Revised Version): "The tongue is a fire: the world of iniquity among our members is the tongue which defileth the whole body and setteth on fire the wheel of nature (or birth) and is set on fire by hell."

The author's own view of the origins of the Christian Canon is that the "Pauline Epistles are pseudepigrapha and the Gospel Story is in its base mythical". He holds "that the style of composition of the new sacred literature was fixed by that of the old". He insists that "there is much in the Christian story not properly either Hellenic or Hebraic but appealing primordially to the miscellaneous new populations incorporated in the Roman Empire. King worship and existing Asiatic Cults had their influence. The name itself of Jesus Christ, there is reason to suppose, was that of an ancient Semitic

God, combined with the title of the Jewish Messiah translated into Greek." Again, "As in the case with Judaism we cannot succeed in getting back to a stage of inchoated belief before the construction of the elementary dogma—that is to say, we have no direct knowledge of the past coalescence of the group of practices and beliefs that formed the Christian ritual and dogma."

The book will be of interest to the many who are studying the second of the Theosophical Society's three objects, *i.e.*, "comparative religion, philosophy and science". It treats its subjects in a wide spirit, raises some very vital problems, and presents some very suggestive ideas. In a word, the book gives plenty of material for thought.

E. S.

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*Studies in Jacob Böhme*, by A. J. Penny. (John M. Watkins, London. Price 6s. net.)

As a supplementary volume to their series of reprints of Böhme's works in English, Mr. Barker as editor and Mr. Watkins as publisher, have now issued a work of considerable importance. Mrs. Penny has been an almost lifelong student of Böhme, and though she has never written a systematic book on the German mystic, she has contributed during a long series of years a large number of articles and essays on him to various periodicals. The more important of these are here gathered together in a stout volume, uniform in size and get-up with the reprint edition of Böhme. As is the case with the latter, the editorship is careful and painstaking. A preface gives a short biography of the author (1825-1893) and contains a valuable bibliographical table of the chief autobiographical references to be found in Böhme's works. An appendix gives a list of the unreprinted essays and letters by Mrs. Penny which were contributed to *Light*. C. C. Massey contributes a character sketch of the author and a fine portrait of her is reproduced. The collection of essays numbers some forty in all, some only short in extent, some of them fairly extensive.

A feature of these studies is the wide reading and catholic attitude they show. Mrs. Penny was evidently very well and widely read in international mystic literature. She quotes Swedenborg, Eliphaz Lévi, Sinnett, H. P. B., Rama Prasad, Claude de Saint Martin, William Law, Franz Baader and many others. Nevertheless

she is always Böhme-centric and her great familiarity with Böhme's seems to have influenced her own style and mode of treatment. There is a reflection in them of that element of remoteness and non-directness which strikes one so forcibly in the writing of the shoemaker from Görlitz. The whole tone of the volume is somewhat recondite, though the word is not fully adequate. It will remain a valuable adjunct to Böhmean studies, and in many places contains rich food for thought, not only for the exclusive disciple of Böhme but also for students of comparative mysticism. Editor and publisher have laid the public under a debt by rescuing these fugitive fragments from oblivion in the dusty pages of old files of unwieldy magazines. It is announced that if the volume meets with sufficient success a further volume may be published, containing additional articles and private letters.

J. v. M.

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*A Manual of Buddhism*, by Dudley Wright. (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd., London. Price 2s. 6d.)

A neat booklet which may introduce intelligent enquirers to the profound philosophy and the grand ethics of Buddhism. We do not wholly approve of the plan on which the manual is based, but it certainly makes out a very good case in favour of the Buddhist faith. "There are no little books on Buddhism," writes Mr. Mills in his Introduction, and we agree with him; for even this small manual is a great book hinting at great truths.

B. P. W.

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*Eternal Consciousness*, by Alice C. Ames (T. P. S., London. Price 2s. 6d. net.)

Under the above title are gathered together a number of short essays which form Volume II of Mrs. Ames' 'Meditations'. The first essay in the present series is introductory. In it the author explains the aim of meditation, gives reasons for its necessity as part of the daily life of thoughtful men and women, and sketches the method by which its earlier stages may be accomplished. 'The Mystery of the Christ', 'On Right Action', 'The Kundalini', 'Concerning the Ego'—these, among many others, are the subjects of the meditations that follow. In each case a passage from one of the world-scriptures is elaborated and interpreted, the writer giving the results of her own meditation and study for the helping of those who would tread the old path of wisdom, and develop in themselves the power



to know. As she says, "all meditation to be fruitful, must come from within," but there are many people "who have not the leisure or perchance the knowledge to study for themselves the old Scriptures of the world," and it is with the hope that it may be of assistance to these that the author has published these 'Meditations'.

A. de L.

[Mysore] *Government Oriental Library Series.* Bibliotheca Sanskrita.

No. 36. *The Taittiriya Brahmana, with the commentary of Bhattabhaskaramisra.* Ashtaka I. Edited by A. Mahadeva Sastri, B.A. (Mysore, Government Branch Press. Price Rs. 3/8.)

No. 37. *The Arthasastra of Kautilya.* Edited by R. Shama Sastri, B.A. (Government Branch Press, Mysore. Price Rs. 3.)

We welcome these two new volumes of the Mysore Government Oriental Library Series with great pleasure. Mr. Mahadeva Sastri, the learned Curator of the Mysore Government Oriental Series, is the direct Editor of one of the volumes and the supervising Editor of the other; and everything which bears the imprint of his workmanship is sure to be full of good qualities. We cannot do more, here, than draw attention to these works. But with regard to the Arthasastra it may be remarked that it was edited from a single MS. and that the chief editor appeals to all lovers of Sanskrit literature and all Sanskrit scholars who might perchance be in possession of other (partial or complete) MSS. to send him these on loan for a short time, so that he may be enabled to note down all better readings, which can then be published afterwards in a supplementary part, containing, amongst other things, a full index and a glossary of technical terms. The Arthasastra, it may be added, is a treatise on the social and civil polity of the ancient Hindus and seems to be the oldest and most elaborate as well as systematic Sanskrit work on the subject. Throwing a flood of light on the moral, social and political conditions of the ancient Hindus, it has an important bearing on Indian history. Besides, the work is considered as having been the basis of many subsequent Indian treatises. On account of its unique value it was judged more desirable to edit it, though perhaps imperfectly, than to let it continue its obscure existence in the form of a single MS.

J. v. M.

