

INTRODUCTORY GUIDE

To

THEOSOPHY

**THEOSOPHICAL MANUALS
UNDER
KATHERINE TINGLEY**

Also available:

Introductory Guide to Theosophy:
Theosophical Manuals under G. de Purucker

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By Grace F. Knoche
Theosophical University Press 2001

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**THEOSOPHICAL MANUALS
UNDER
KATHERINE TINGLEY**

COMPILED AND EDITED BY

SCOTT J. OSTERHAGE

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

The following *chapters* of this book were originally each published separately as part of an 18 part series of small *manuals* in the early 1900s at the Theosophical University Press, by Katherine Tingley. Subsequently, G. de Purucker also published a 15 part series of Manuals though many have different titles, and the content varies from these.

It was felt that these writings still have some value, especially as a general introduction to the simple, yet complex, subject of THEOSOPHY. While there are a plethora of books out there on theosophy, this one for the first time brings all of these manuals into one book. If you also have the book: *Introductory Guide to Theosophy — Theosophical Manuals under G. de Purucker*, you will notice some overlap; but for the beginner, or even one familiar with theosophy, the overlap of material can be helpful.

However, the manuals should not be considered a 'textbook' of theosophy. Theosophy, being wholly non-dogmatic, is impossible to state in unchanging hard-and-fast rules, bullet-points, or final declarations. It is rather stated in concepts that grow and change over time, especially in one's understanding. Therefore this publication should be considered merely an introduction and jumping-off point in one's studies, and not the end-all of any theosophical teaching.

Theosophy is as old as Humanity. It is in essence the TRUTH about the Universe and Humanity, and when delved into fully, can show the student the pathway to a higher life. Study, dialogue, concentrated thought, and finally inculcation of these principles is crucial to understanding the technical teachings of theosophy. From a purely esoteric standpoint, all we need do is 'live the life' to know the doctrine. "*Man, know thyself*," though an oft-repeated term, is so because of its complex simplicity. If we truly know who and what we are, by introspection, by living a compassionate life, and by knowing (living) altruism in all its aspects, we can also come to understand the essence of all things — the TRUTH.

Scott J. Osterhage
Tucson, Arizona
May 8, 2024

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

These *manuals* are not completely verbatim with the original. Some words were updated and standardized for continuity, capitalizations changed, and footnotes were added in small text and brackets [] within the text. Any of this editor's notes, comments, or references are in braces { }. Some language used in the original would seem out of place or harsh today, and some of it disparaging or not useful. So, it was either changed or in a few places deleted.

All the changes made in *no way* affect the meaning of any of the text, especially the theosophical concepts, and in fact, may help it to be more readable and to flow better.

While some changes were made, the original use of a purely masculine voice and examples, was the convention of the time, remains. It would be a monumental task to revise all of them, and it was felt that the reader will understand the context of trying to have the book be both historical. If written today, it would be much more unitary in its presentation, and not use a specific gender or cliché examples. Simply, *Man* and *Men* refer mainly to humans and humanity, and more specifically to the principle of *Manas*, or Mind. Theosophy and the Theosophical Society do not discriminate on the basis of gender, or any other *differences*.

The words race and racial appear often, and refer to “life-waves of humanity” and not to people with different color skin. One race is not superior to another — we are all just on the *path to enlightenment*.

While the main theosophical thoughts are still pertinent today, they must be read with the context of the time they were written in mind.

Some additional reference page numbers have been given for *The Voice of the Silence* and for *Light on the Path*. These refer to the latest Theosophical University Press editions. For full text online or for purchase of these you may visit theosociety.org.

For technical Sanskrit or general theosophical terms, you may refer to theosociety.org/pasadena/etgloss/etg-hp.htm.

The Theosophical Society was founded in 1875 by H. P. Blavatsky, H. S. Olcott, William Q. Judge, and others. In 1895 William Q. Judge changed the name to the Theosophical Society in America. When Katherine Tingley took over a couple years later, she changed the name to the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society; stressing *universal brotherhood*. Today it is again called the Theosophical Society, with International Headquarters in Pasadena, California.

PREFACE

TO THE KATHERINE TINGLEY SERIES OF MANUALS

Originally published 1907.

The remarks under this head are intended to be introductory to each of the Manuals.

First, as to the spirit in which they are offered. These Manuals are not written in a controversial spirit, nor as an addition to the stock of theories awaiting public approval. The writers have no time to waste in arguing with people who do not wish to be convinced, or who ridicule everything which is new to their limited outlook. Their message is for those who desire to know — those who are seeking for something that will solve their doubts and remove their difficulties. For such, all that is needed is a clear exposition of the Theosophical teachings; for they will judge of the truth of a teaching by its power to answer the questions they ask. People realize, much more now than in the early days of the Theosophical Society, the value of Theosophy; for the ever-increasing difficulties engendered by selfishness and materialism, by doubt and the multiplicity of theories, have created an urgent demand which it alone can satisfy.

Again, it is necessary to state clearly and emphatically the genuine teachings of Theosophy, as given by the Founder of the Theosophical Society, H. P. Blavatsky, and her successors, William Q. Judge, and Katherine Tingley. For, as H. P. Blavatsky predicted, there are persons who have sought to pervert these teachings and turn them into a source of profit to themselves and their own selfish and ambitious schemes. The true teachings do not lend themselves to such purposes; their ideals are of the purest and most unselfish. Hence these persons have sought to promulgate under the name of Theosophy a perverted form of the teachings, from which Brotherliness and other pure motives are omitted, and which contains doctrines which H. P. Blavatsky showed to be maleficent and destructive. Instead of having for their basis self-sacrifice, self-purification, and the elevation of the human race, these teachings too often pander to ambition, vanity, and curiosity.

The writers of these Manuals have no personal grievance against any such calumniators. Inspired by a profound love of the sublime teachings of Theosophy, they have made it their life-work to bring the benefits which they have thereby received within the reach of as many people as possible.

Theosophy strikes unfamiliar ground in modern civilization, because it does not come under any particular one of the familiar headings of Religion, Science, Philosophy, etc., into which our age has divided its speculative activities. It dates back to a period in the history of humanity when such distinctions did not exist, but there was one Gnosis or Knowledge embracing all. Religion and Science, as we have them today, are but imperfect growths springing from the remnants of that great ancient system, the Wisdom-Religion, which included all that we now know as religion and science, and much more. Hence Theosophy will not appeal to the same motives as religion and science. It will not offer any cheap and easy salvation or put a premium upon mental inactivity and Spiritual Selfishness. Neither can it accommodate itself to the rules laid down by various schools of modern thought as to what constitutes proof and what does not. But it can and does appeal to the Reason. The truth of doctrines such as Theosophy maintains, can only be estimated by their ability to solve problems and by their harmony with other truths which we know to be true. But in addition to this we have the testimony of the ages, which has been too long neglected by modern scholarship, but which is now being revealed by archaeologists and scholars, as H. P. Blavatsky prophesied that it would in this century.

It may perhaps be as well also to remind those who would criticize, that the state of modern opinion is scarcely such as to warrant anybody in assuming the attitude of a judge. It would be quite proper for a Theosophist, instead of answering questions or attempting to give proofs, to demand that his questioners should first state their own case, and to be himself the questioner. The result would certainly show that Theosophy, to say the very least, stands on an equal footing with any other view, since there is no certain knowledge, no satisfying explanation, to be found anywhere.

Since the days when the wave of materialism swept over the world, obliterating the traces of the Ancient Wisdom-Religion and replacing it by theological dogmatism, our religions have had nothing to offer us in the way of a philosophical explanation of the laws of Being as revealed in Man and in Nature. Instead we have only had bare statements and dogmatic assertions. The higher nature of man is represented by such vague words as Spirit and Soul, which have little or no meaning for the majority. The laws of the Universe are briefly summed up under the term "God," and all further consideration of them shut off. Then came a reaction against the dogmatism of religion, and man pinned his faith to knowledge gained by study and reflection, limiting his researches, however, to the outer world as presented by the senses, and fearing to trench upon the ground which dogmatic theology had rendered the field of so much contention. The result of this has been that neither in religions nor sciences, have we any teaching about the higher nature of man or the deeper mysteries of the

Universe. This is a field which is left entirely unexplored, or is at best the subject of tentative and unguided conjectures.

Until, therefore, religious teachers have something definite, consistent, and satisfactory to offer, and until science can give us something better than mere confessions of nescience or impudent denials with regard to everything beyond its own domain, Theosophy can afford to assume the role of questioner rather than that of questioned, and does not owe anybody any explanations whatever. It is sufficient to state its tenets and let them vindicate themselves by their greater reasonableness; and any further explanation that may be offered is offered rather from good will than from any obligation.

Theosophy undertakes to explain that which other systems leave unexplained, and is, on its own special ground, without a competitor. It can issue a challenge to theology, science, and other modern systems, to surpass it in giving a rational explanation of the facts of life.

Again, there are some questions which it is beyond the reach of the human mind, in *its present stage of development*, to answer; and it would scarcely be just to arraign Theosophy for not answering these.

Judgment should in all cases be preceded by careful study. There are always those who will impatiently rush to questions which a further study would have rendered unnecessary; and it is safe to say that the majority of "objections" raised to Theosophical teachings are such as could have been solved by the objector himself, had he been a genuine student. In the ordinary courses of education, scholars are required and are further study will explain what in the beginning cannot be made clear. In the same spirit an earnest student of Theosophy will be wise enough to hold many of his difficulties in reserve, until, by further investigation, he has gained better acquaintance with his subject. In the case of those who are not willing to adopt these wise and patient methods of study, it may be reasonably questioned whether they are the more anxious to learn or to disprove.

Above all it is sought to make these Manuals such that they shall appeal to the heart and not *merely* to the head; that they shall be of practical service to the reader in the problems of his daily life, and not mere intellectual exercises. For there have been in past days books written by persons more distinguished for a certain grade of mental nimbleness than for heartfelt devotion to the cause of truth; and these have appealed only to those people who love intricate philosophical problems better than practical work. But as H. P. Blavatsky so frequently urged, the message of Theosophy is for suffering humanity; and the Great Teachers, whose sole purpose is to bring to humanity the Light of Truth and the saving grace of real Brotherhood can have no interest in catering for the mental curiosity of merely a few well-to-do individuals. Even soulless men, said H. P. Blavatsky, can be brilliantly intellectual; but for those who are in earnest in their desire to reach the higher life intellectual fireworks alone will have

little attraction. We intend, therefore, to keep the practical aspect of the teachings always to the front, and to show, as far as possible, that they are what they claim to be — the gospel of a new hope and salvation for humanity.

These Booklets are not all the product of a single pen, but are written by different Students at the International Headquarters of the UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD AND THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY at Point Loma, California. Each writer has contributed his own quota to the series.

For further explanations on Theosophy generally, the reader is referred to the Book List published elsewhere in this volume {not included in this edition} and to the other Manuals of this series, which treat of Theosophy and the various Theosophical teachings.

{For more recent versions of some of these Manuals, further explanations on theosophy generally, and a list of all books published and online by Theosophical University Press, the reader is referred the current THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY website: theosociety.org.}

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Elementary Theosophy

A Student

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ELEMENTARY THEOSOPHY

Everyone knows that the great religions of the world *differ* from each other; and also that in respect to the path of life in which they tell men to walk, they resemble each other. They present also many other resemblances and identities.

It has not yet occurred to our scholars that there may be one great religion of which all these are parts.

Nations have always differed in their characteristics, the difference being sometimes due to the region in which they dwelt, sometimes to other causes. One people would be imaginative, another philosophical, another simple; one pastoral, another nomadic; one peaceful; another active and warlike. One dwells amid smiling plains, another by the rock-ribbed sea.

If we were to tell some story of science, say about atoms and molecules, to the classes of a school, we should not use the same language to the little children as to the elders. To every class we should tell the story differently. If we were wise we should illustrate it from the games and stories that the children already knew. To the very little ones we might make the atoms talk and play, and so we might teach chemistry in the guise of a fairy tale. To the children that were older we might picture the atoms as marbles and balls; to artistic children we might dwell most on the colors and sounds resulting from the movements and groupings of atoms and molecules. And to the higher classes we should begin to introduce some of the abstruse mathematics which are concerned in these questions. We might put the case so differently to the highest and lowest classes that anyone who heard us talking to both might not guess that we were talking about the same things. Yet we should be, and if the children, on going home, tried to tell their parents in their own words what they had heard, the unlikeness would become still greater, for they would be adding and leaving out.

The word Theosophy is a blend of two Greek words. Together they mean divine wisdom, and also wisdom concerning divine things. There is a similar Sanskrit compound, *Brahma-vidyâ*, properly meaning the same things.

Theosophy itself is that complete story of the world and man, of which a part has been told to every people, a part suited to their needs and development and peculiarities, and told in language appropriate to their understanding.

But however simply it had to be told, there were always some among every people whose comprehension ran beyond that of their fellows, and who had prepared themselves to follow the path of life more steadfastly. To such, more was told; and so we find everywhere this fact of two doctrines, one for the multitude and one for the few — that latter, for certain reasons mentioned elsewhere, always told under pledge of secrecy.

Jesus Christ, for example, said that to the multitude he spoke in simple parables — like the fairy-stories of our illustration; but that to the elect he spoke fully the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven — like the abstruse mathematics of our illustration.

Sometime in the near future, scholars will be compelled by the force of their own facts to recognize the common container and source of the world's great religions. Their researches would immediately be easier and more fruitful if they would but take its existence as a hypothesis only. Prosecuting their studies in its light they would soon be rewarded by seeing emerge from the confusion the majestic outlines of the religion-philosophy now known as Theosophy. But those who wish to understand it need not wait till then, nor need they proceed by that method.

WHO ARE WE?

The first question answered by Theosophy, a question upon which all else depends, is: *Who am I?* If the answer: *You are yourself*, seems silly, that is only at first glance.

Nearly everyone thinks of himself as identical with the body. Is this the case? If it is, any talk about the soul, or immortality, is necessarily absurd.

We use the body; command it; work with it and train it, all as we will. With it we see, hear, touch, taste, and smell, employing each sense just as we choose. It is obviously an *instrument* at our disposal, a wonderfully complicated tool.

Can it then be the man? Can a player be identical with his instrument, a carpenter with his hammer? Yet we habitually blind ourselves to the difference by saying *I am ill*, or growing old, forgetting that so far as we know, it is the body only, not the man, which is subject to these changes.

If then the man, the soul, is not identical with the body, it will be natural to ask what becomes of him when, as we say, he is unconscious, or asleep, or dead; when in old age his memory is gone, his mind childish once more, his limbs stiff or paralyzed. Surely we must admit that in these cases the man himself must have changed.

From this point of view it does look as if the man and his body were one and the same, since he seems to change with its changes. Let us go a step or two further and then come back.

All the waking hours we are conscious of a stream of thoughts. We cannot stop the stream, but we can generally direct it where we will. We can cause our thought to occupy itself with whatever we choose. We can stop thinking of any one thing and think of any other. It is not always easy, for the mind seems to be a living thing with wishes of its own; but it is always possible.

So for two reasons it seems clear that the mind is not the man. First because, like a restive horse it often opposes the wishes of its owner; and secondly, because the man can, if he uses will enough, turn it where he will as a carpenter turns a chisel. Yet again we must ask what becomes of the man when his mind becomes delirious in fever or childish in old age.

And then there are the feelings, emotions. These too go on all day. We are by turns happy or miserable, hopeful or despairing, irritated or calm, compassionate or resentful. But these too we can control, especially if we have practiced doing so. We can refuse to be miserable or ruffled; we can compel ourselves to be hopeful, compassionate, considerate. Feelings also have a life and persistency of their own and may object to being controlled. But as, with practice, we can do it, it seems that they also cannot be the man.

Having thus noted that mind and emotion are, or ought to be, both under control of the man, the soul, through his will, we note next that there is a limit to this control. Both need a healthy body for their perfect health, and if the body is fevered or very old, mind and feeling are likely to be dim and feeble, or even quite distorted, despite every effort of the will. We have no warrant for saying that the *man* necessarily varies with variations in his body; but we must say that to a very great extent the mind and emotions do. So far as they do not, it is because they are sustained and guided by the will.

This leads to the next point. However ill or old the body may be, however unresponsive to the man's will, and however dimmed may be the mind and feelings, the will itself and the man who uses it may be quite unchanged. We sometimes see that up to the very moment of death, the man may be using his will in its full strength. The results may be small; the stiffening lips may refuse to utter more than a few words, perhaps of love and encouragement to those about; but it is evident that whatever else is dying, the man and the will are not. Even at the very moment of death the eye may still be speaking its message. The man, the soul, and its will, are passing on in full consciousness; and the last gleam we get of that consciousness is often one of unchanged, un-lessened love for those remaining behind.

So we have arrived at some answer to our question: *What, or who, am I?* Let us call "I" the soul, and read our answer thus: The soul, the I, the self, is that conscious power which dwells during life in the body, amidst the bodily feelings, amidst the emotions, capable of dominating them; using the mind and capable of dominating it; having for its instrument of control the will. So far as we can see, neither the soul, nor its will, nor its degree of love for those it leaves behind, are necessarily affected by illness or by death.

BODY AND SOUL

If now we turn to Paul's description of man as a compound of body, soul, and spirit, we can more easily understand what he meant.

By *soul* he seems to have meant the same as we do — the *man* himself with his will and power of choice; by *body*, not only the casement of flesh, but all the impulses arising from it which tend to pull the man downward; and by *spirit*, the divine part.

The body — made up of millions of little living cells congregated into various organs, which should all work harmoniously together — is an animal, the highest of all the animals. It is the highest because of the development of its brain; and because of that it is a fit tenement for the soul, the man himself. Thus the soul contacts, in the body, the highest sort of matter-life. In order that it may do that, that it may have that experience, is, according to Theosophy, one of the reasons why it enters the body and shares the body's life from birth to death.

In order to understand its entry, let us imagine a countryman suddenly set down for the first time in the midst of a thronging city. People are hurrying in every direction; there are a thousand sounds at once, voices, the feet of horses, the roar of vehicles.

Accustomed to the quiet of the country, the man would be dazed by so much activity; he would hardly know himself. His usual current of thoughts would be broken up. It would seem to him as if he would never find his way through the maze of streets. Altogether it would be a sort of new birth for him, the confused beginning of a new life.

In the eyes of a new-born infant we can sometimes see signs of a similar bewilderment. The soul is just then beginning to enter the little body. The body is alive with the intense life of all its millions of active cells and organs. Besides all the growth and activity that is going on in the body itself, the senses are opening and stirring and bringing in all the new sights and sounds of the outer world. Is it not natural that in all this rush of new experiences, the soul should forget itself and the world it has just left?

To return to the illustration. After a while, beginning to understand his new surroundings, the man would begin to take pleasure in them and be absorbed in them. Laying aside all his old country habits and thoughts, he would enter thoroughly into the new life of the city. He would become accommodated to its ways and dive into the rushing stream of its business and activities. His nature might seem to change altogether and in a few years he might have lost all trace and almost all memory of having lived the quiet life of the country.

And so again with the soul. During the first few years of its new life, after the first confusion has worn away, it becomes thoroughly absorbed in the life of the body. Its pleasures are those of the body; its aims are

mostly to get more of these pleasures; its thoughts and feelings are all occupied with the world of which its body is a part. It thinks of the body as itself and of itself as the body. The higher life it had before birth is quite forgotten, and as it grows older into manhood or womanhood and the strain of our modern competitive life begins to be felt, its absorption into the world becomes more complete. All its ambitions may be directed to getting things for the body's comfort and luxury. Its forgetfulness of the other life may be so complete as to lead to disbelief in it altogether, to materialism. At best, the memory of the other life is so vague that there are no details, no clear picture. It is so vague that we do not know that it *is* memory and call it faith. And for a reason which the man therefore cannot give to himself, but which is really this faith-memory, he accepts the accounts of the higher life which someone of the various religious creeds gives him. But curiously enough, though all the creeds speak of the soul *entering* a higher life after death, some of them say nothing of the soul *leaving* the same higher life at birth.

We can see now why the body is sometimes spoken of as the enemy of the soul. It tends to drown the soul's memories, the soul's knowledge of itself. It often paralyzes the will, substituting for the will some passion of its own — for example, to get money or position. Such people are really slaves, not masters; though they only know their slavery when they try to free themselves, when they try to use their will to conquer the master passion. We must remember that though the body is an animal, it is an animal which has become humanized through the presence of a human soul in its midst. The soul lights up in it a higher intelligence than it could ever have gotten as a simple animal, and so it has thoughts and aims which are not possible to any of the simpler creatures below man. If the soul yields to it constantly, never asserting its will, letting itself be carried upon every wind of passion, the man may reach a point at which he gives not a single sign of being a soul at all. Some of these people are mere sensualists, the utter slaves of some degrading passion. But they may be highly intelligent, cruel, selfish and ambitious, without the slightest care for the welfare of any other person. The animal has won the battle of that life, and after death the soul's key to its own proper world is too rusty for use.

It is by resisting passions, by resisting selfishness, and cultivating compassion and brotherliness, by constant aspirations, and by trying to live the life of the higher nature, that the soul comes while in the body to a knowledge of itself and its immortality.

BODY, SOUL AND SPIRIT

Why, then, if entry into the body means so much loss to the soul, even if only temporary, does it come there at all?

The answer given by Theosophy is — that it may gain higher life, and that it may give higher life. It is divine, but it has to recognize that while in the flesh; and there is always a fuller divinity possible to the very highest man.

Theosophy sees life everywhere; nowhere anything dead. It may at once be asked — is not a human body dead when the soul has left it for another world?

If we had eyes that could see, we should find that the body was as much alive as ever, but with a different kind of life. The little busy souls of the millions of cells, which, while the man was present, served him — left the body with him, or very soon after. Their place is taken by throngs of lower lives, germs, in their way just as busy. Part of each cell goes to form their minute living bodies; the rest separates into molecules of water, various gases, and salts. But the molecules too are alive. They behave like a drill corps when the sergeant dismisses it. The men no longer make a corps, and each goes his own way. One will perhaps join a party going swimming; another may go to a music class. When the bath and the class are over, the men again separate and group together in new combinations. At the end of the day they may seem just the same as at the beginning; but as a matter of fact they are not. Each has profited a little by the drill, the music, and the swim.

So with the living particles of Nature's vast life, the particles that we call molecules of water, air, salt, iron, and so on. They pass from one combination to another, sometimes forming part of a plant, sometimes of an animal, sometimes of a human body, the ocean, or a stone. Age after age they are awakening to fuller consciousness, learning, even though if we watched them for ages we might not notice any change.

What are they learning? *The power to combine into higher groups.* Science knows that from the birth of our planet until now, life has been rising. The orders and species have been progressing to higher forms. This was because the molecules were learning how to combine. At last they could combine and recombine so as to make the body of man; and then man, the soul, came and dwelt among them. It was at last a fit tabernacle.

So, however completely at death the molecules scatter, they can now always be brought together again to make a human form. What Nature has been teaching them is the power to combine into higher and more perfectly harmonious forms, forms of which all the parts work together to a higher end.

And that very same thing she is teaching man. Man, according to Theosophy, reincarnates again and again on Earth, living life after life, not one only. We are grouped again and again in all kinds of ways. Among savages there are small groups, the family and the tribe. Tribes make nations; nations disappear, and others come up on to the stage of history. A nation is like a body; the various groups, made of men who follow

various occupations, who are joined for various ends, or who live together in towns and cities, are the organs of the body. Each man is a separate cell. Men leave one nation at death and perhaps enter another, making part of all sorts of families and groups as they go along.

What we are slowly learning is the power to hold together, the power to work for each other and for the whole of which we are a part, whether a guild, a family, a city, or a nation; the power of divine comradeship of men and groups and nations to make one vast harmonious organization, the body of humanity. Then a further avenue of progress leading to heights we cannot conceive of, will be open before us.

Behind us are the animals, moving manward, getting the human touch age after age, to be the humanity that shall follow us when we have learned our lesson and gone on — perhaps to another planet, the “child” of this one, says Theosophy. Behind them, the plants, some of them — like the sensitive plant for instance — already showing the tendency upward to the animal.

So we can see that we are in the body for several purposes.

First, that in it and through it we may touch Nature, and learn the wise use of her forces.

Second, that we may teach, and help Nature in *her* teaching. Among the cells, the little lives, of our bodies, we are like a master in his class. In controlling our impulses, in resisting deeds that make for moral and physical disease, in living in every way the highest and purest life we can, we are training the lower lives that clothe us on the one hand; and training ourselves on the other. In training his pupils, the master trains himself; and whilst they learn from him, he learns much from them.

Thirdly, we are here that we may learn oneness, the higher comradeship, that quality which, spreading all over the Earth, will one day open a new door to us, leading to a height of happiness and power that has always been the ideal before the eyes of humanity’s helpers and Teachers.

REINCARNATION

Elsewhere we have considered incarnation. It now remains to say a little of *re*-incarnation.

Is one life enough to learn all that there is to do and to learn on Earth? Are we perfect characters? Have we made life on Earth all it might be, learned to live in harmony with each other, developed all the faculties possible to us, learned all about the life of the matter of which the planet is composed? If not, does it not seem likely that the causes which brought us here once may bring us again, and again, until we have done these things? Law and inclination will work together and supplement each other. For those who die hating, there is the Law that they shall return in order to learn to love. Those who die loving, will wish to return to those they love.

Would one who loves all humanity and pities it in its pains and struggles onward, willingly leave it forever while he knew there was help he could render?

What right have we earned to some other heaven while we have not made this life the heaven it might be? Nearly all of us have done injuries and given pain at some time. If we consider that, should we not wish to come again to pour at least as much good into the stream of human life as we poured evil; to meet those that we once pained, and by loving deed take away the pain — even if time should have covered it over and hidden the wound? Sudden unexplained impulses to do kind actions to people we have never met (in this life) before, may sometimes be unconscious desire to pay some debt of old unkindness.

We are not without other suggestions of previous life. Some people we seem to recognize at once, liking or disliking, as we say by instinct. May it not be the mere *resuming* of an old like or dislike? In that sense it is a real memory of a past life, though all details are forgotten. We have many more of such memories, memories that in such cases are forces, not details. We are born with marked characters, tastes, aptitudes, powers, in this or that direction. Where did we get them? Where did the infant Mozart learn music? Is it heredity? But how when these things have no counterpart in the parents? They are surely a species of memory. Clearer memory we have not because we have not the old brain. The brain, the *first* fact-storer, is new. The soul, the real and *final* fact-storer, has its memory overlaid by the throng of impressions and sensations that life and the living body bring. At death we have often heard — and Theosophy teaches — that every detail of the closing or closed life comes up from the brain before the gaze of the departing soul. It registers in its own memory all that are of value to it and they become eternal. But at its birth it does not fill the new brain with them. The tablets of the brain are wanted for other things. It merely brings into the brain and body the general effect, some general memories, as we have noted.

When we have grown stronger in life, when birth does *not* bring bewilderment, when we shall have learned not to be the prey of the body but its strong and quiet master, then we shall have also learned to bring back to our own attention, at need, whatever clear memories of the past will be useful. But so far, the presence of such detailed memories would be confusing and painful, diverting our attention from more important work. Whatever we acquired in the last life, of unselfishness, of will, of power of concentration, of power of thought and observation, of power of self-control — that we bring undiminished for use in this life; and it is enough. Anything more, if in part useful, would have its usefulness outweighed by its painfulness and confusion. We should be tempted to dwell with bygone memories instead of with present duties.

It will be natural to say: Have I then to be an infant and an old man again and again, with childish faculties and pleasure in the one case, and fading faculties and second childishness in the other?

Are we entitled to promotion to another lesson till we have learned well the one in hand? We have not yet learned to be an infant properly, or an old man or woman properly. These are lessons of life still unlearned. The soul of each of us has yet to learn, at and after birth, to stand apart from the infant body in which it will incarnate; and, while watching and protecting and guiding and developing that, to keep up its own work and self-conscious being. For the soul has work of its own. As the infant body and mind pass to childhood and manhood, the soul will consciously blend itself more and more; until at last, still holding itself as a soul, it will have wholly incarnated. But at present it cannot do that in the case of ordinary humanity. As it detaches itself from its own world, from its "Father in Secret," it loses itself in the body. With most of us it remains almost lost till death again frees it, without ever having recognized itself as a soul.

But when we have learned infancy, we shall find one of our joys in overshadowing and training the young life with which in due course we shall blend our soul-life to make the perfect man; and in helping the vivid little lives that make up the infant body, to move a step onward in their progress. Those that enter and compose the body later are less plastic.

And so with old age. We have not learned it. There should be no loss of faculty; the mind should become deeper and wiser with the gathering years. Certainly faculties whose use applies mainly to the earlier years and the life-work of middle manhood, will be voluntarily left in disuse to make way for others, just as when a man becomes the head of a business he spends no more time in, say bookkeeping or typewriting. He attends to higher matters.

Life should of course be spiritual all through, but old age should be specially so. Genius and wisdom should go on ripening to the very end. (Genius belongs of course to the spiritual nature, and the word spiritual is here throughout used in a sense much wider than the ordinary. It applies to all of man's highest faculties.) A clearer vision of truth is possible to old age than to the years when physical activities run high.

At last comes a moment when the body as a whole is worn out; the lives that compose it have to return to Nature to be re-energized. Without disease, without failure of any special organ in advance of any of the rest, the body should be laid aside. Death in that ideal form will be without pain, perfectly peaceful, rapid, and not attended by any break in the consciousness of the soul.

And in due course the soul will begin once more to give its attention to birth. No more than death, will birth mean any break in the thread of consciousness. Gradually the soul will pour all its acquired wisdom and

thought-stores into the new brain and proceed with its growth and work absolutely unhindered.

But this ideal program, which we have to realize and which will mean such rapid growth, is not achieved yet. We have much to learn. Nevertheless now, if we give our bodies right exercise daily, and if we keep a spiritual ideal of conduct and thought always in view, we need fear neither old age nor death. The one will not mean second childhood nor the other any wrench of pain.

KARMA

A MAN'S DEEDS COME BACK TO HIM; THAT WHICH A MAN SOWS, THAT SHALL HE ALSO REAP; CAST THY BREAD UPON THE WATERS AND IT SHALL COME BACK AFTER MANY DAYS,— are three sayings which contain a law belonging as sister to the law of Reincarnation. To Theosophists it is known as *Karma*. The punishment aspect of it the Greeks called *Nemesis*; but that is only half of it.

It belongs to the law of Reincarnation because there is not time in any one life for all the deeds a man does therein to come back to him. They come back to him because they are his.

Whenever we do anything at all, purposefully, we do three things, though we ordinarily think of one only. Consider, for example, theft. (a) The thing visibly done is the taking of someone else's property. (b) Invisibly, a change of character for the worse is made; this shows itself in the fact that whatever is done once is easier to do the second time. (c) The third thing, also invisible, is that the world's atmosphere, in which we all share, in which our minds live as our bodies live in the common air, is poisoned. An evil wave has been sent into it. This wave, in however slight degree, does act on and affect the minds of all other men. The world is hard enough, cold enough, selfish enough as it is; this wave worsens it. The minds of men become by it, in however slight degree, more suspicious, more grasping, harder. They feel, though without noticing it, an increase in what we might call the thief element. Of course the wave sent out by one single act of theft is very slight. But when we multiply it by millions every year, we can understand why the world is as it is. Each of the millions has broken the harmony that should have been, the harmony between men in act and thought, which must some time come about.

A whole life may be spent in undetected and unpunished theft. *But it was all registered*; the successive acts were written deeper and deeper on the man's character; and they sent successive waves into the world's atmosphere. To that atmosphere, which he helped to make, with that character, which he entirely made, the man comes back. The echo of his own past deeds returns to him, finding an exactly answering echo in his nature. All the world tendencies, the effects of all the deeds ever done by

man, come flooding in upon him, as they do on all of us. Some find *no* echo in his character — he may, for example, have no tendency to murder. He will be tempted only by those that do have their echo in his character.

All is now ready for the opportunity. When that comes, what will happen? What is likely to happen? He falls under the load of impulse he built into himself.

The “luck” not to be found out (if it can be called luck) which he enjoyed before, some time or other now fails — perhaps on the very first occasion. Then there is a calamity, disgrace. By that he may learn to reform, or many such may be necessary, extending perhaps over more than one life. They go on happening until at last he is strong enough to receive out of the world’s atmosphere his own current, find its echo in his own nature, *and yet refuse to yield*. When there is no longer that echo, the battle is finally won there. The man has fought and neutralized that much evil; he has cleared the world’s atmosphere of that much of the stain which he made in his thefts.

This is one aspect of the law of Karma, the coming back of evil deeds. The law cannot “forgive” anything, for that would be to leave our characters still weak. True forgiveness is done by man himself when he turns so strongly to his higher nature that he becomes at one with it. After that he can face the echoes of his own deeds without fear; they find no answer in his own nature.

There are many other aspects, for the law is really an explanation of life. Good deeds come back as certainly as bad ones. He who does a good deed sweetens the world’s atmosphere and his own character. The current comes back as an urge to repeat them, finds an echo in his character, and goes back to others with the benediction of some new good deed. The world is bettered, its burdens eased a little. The man has the inner joy and peace of harmony with his divine Nature; just as, by the other kind of action, he has unrest within and without. Ill deeds bring inner unrest and outer pain; good deeds, inner peace and outer harmony. With both hands this law helps us on to our greater destiny, to the real life to come.

But Karma goes even deeper; it replies to defects of character which are *not* seen to injure others. We shall understand if we remember that its aim is to develop, to restore us to our proper and highest nature. It meets our weaknesses with tonics, and tonics are sometimes bitter. Wiser eyes than those of ordinary men are needed to follow its work in individual cases; but the general principles are easy enough for a child to grasp. Some men meet seemingly unmerited disgrace. Where is the justice of it? Others close their lives in the prolonged pain of some slow malady. Where here is justice? In man’s own former thoughts and deeds. It is Nature’s response to character.

We must try to take Nature’s long view if we would understand her work in its beneficence. In such cases as we have supposed, there must be

a failure somewhere needing correction, some flaw in character needing strengthening. Some characters only bring forth their finest flower after great pain. The pain is transient, the flower eternal; and it was the flower that Nature wanted to secure. Perhaps there was a latent love of others' good opinion, which, uncured, remained a weakness and might have led on to all kinds of evil, hypocrisy, ambition, vanity. The weed is now uprooted. But in the last life it may have been very luxuriant — leading, it may be, to some marked sin or crime. Karma carried that over to the next page of her ledger, the next life. But the possibilities in details are endless.

Physical pain, again, often calls forth the most magnificent endurance, strengthening the will in some cases as nothing else can. In such a case it could be crudely described as punishment for the lack of endurance and patience; or, more correctly, as a difficult bit of Nature's beneficent training. A good deal of the work of Karma is to call our attention to failings of which we were before unconscious, and to give us the opportunity to correct them.

So the Theosophist sees in the workings of Karma a law which is *wholly* beneficent, which "punishes" and "rewards" for one sole purpose — the evocation of the Soul. It works behind and through every event of our lives. Nor are its ways inscrutable. If we watched all that happened to us from day to day and from year to year, noted what duties came up to be done, what pains and pleasures came into our path, what accidents befell us — if we watched instead of complaining, we should find that at every turn we were being offered opportunity for growth of will, of mind, of character. If outer life is monotonous, there is the opportunity to light up the outer life with the radiance of the inner life, with the companionship of the divine. If outer life is painful, it is the opportunity to develop will and endurance; and if we stop the fierce wish to escape pain and procure pleasure, putting that much force into compassionate deed and thought, we should find our minds grow steadily clearer in comprehension of this law and its purpose. There are no accidents. *Whatever happens we have ourselves brought about in this or some other life.* We have done, or left undone, and the effects of both constitute our environment and the stream of events.

Our deeds of yesterday are the parents of the events of today, and events are the mask of opportunity. They press on us from without, as our divine will does from within — both in the same direction. Karma waits at our side and when we have acted or not acted, she adjusts the effect so as to teach and train us. We have freewill; the future is absolutely in our hands. Karma, if we so choose, will show us her face as friend; it is always inner peace for those who walk with her. She is always the friend of those who make themselves the friends of humanity, who develop every faculty and talent and strength of their nature that they may serve humanity the better.

THE SEVEN IN HUMANS AND NATURE

When, as children, we begin our study of science, we are told that matter exists in three states — solid, liquid and gaseous. That does very well as a first step. In the same way the student of Theosophy will begin by Paul's division of human nature into body, soul and spirit.

But in both cases, as soon as we come close to the subject, we find that the *three* will not do, will not carry us far beyond the threshold of our study. Human nature, and Nature without, are alike *sevenfold*. The number seven runs across the pattern in every direction. Science knows of many sevens, but she has not yet learned to regard seven as a sort of abstract map by means of which she could walk much faster in every field of investigation. For ages, Theosophy has known it to be one of the keys to which the Universe is tuned. Let us study it first in the Nature which is outside us.

The finest particles of ordinary matter are called molecules. Sometimes these fly free from each other; that we call the *gaseous* state of matter.

But short of that entire freedom there is the *liquid* state, where the molecules move readily around each other, but remain in closer contact.

And thirdly there is the *solid* state. But of this there are two divisions, the *crystalline* and the *colloid* or gelatinous. And again, of the colloid there are two conditions, *living* and *not living*. The flesh of man and animals and the growing tissues of plants are composed of living colloid.

In all these states matter is molecular, exists as molecules. But under certain conditions the molecules break up into the still smaller particles called atoms. We then have atomic matter, said to constitute one of the sets of "rays" emitted by radium.

And again, the atoms themselves may break up into the still finer particles called corpuscles or electrons. These constitute still another set of "rays."

So from *this* point of view the seven states of matter are:

(1) Corpuscular

[Strictly speaking, the word "corpuscular" is better applied to what modern science now calls "atomic," and *vice versa*. But the terms are now crystallized into a set usage and are adopted for convenience as above.]

(2) Atomic

(3) Gaseous

(4) Liquid

(5) Living Colloid

(6) Inanimate Colloid

(7) Crystalline

Molecular

But the seven runs across Nature in another way. A famous Russian chemist found that if all the elements known to chemistry were arranged one after another in the order of their (atomic) weights, beginning with the lightest, the eighth, fifteenth, twenty-second, and so on, had similar properties to the first; the ninth, sixteenth, and so on, to the second. Thus it became clear that there was a natural arrangement of all the chemical elements into seven great families.

The seven notes of the musical scale, and the seven colors of the prismatic scale, are of course familiar to everyone.

In respect to motion, the American mathematician Southwell, dealing with the nebular theory, has also worked out a natural seven which he thus states:

If two masses are moving in the same plane and at the same mean distance from the sun and are situated at an angular distance greater than 60° and less than 180° from each other, as viewed from the sun, their mutual perturbations will cause them to approach each other until the distance becomes equal to 60° .

But if they are nearer than 60° to each other,

their mutual perturbations will cause them to recede from each other until their distance apart becomes equal to 60° ; and they will always remain in a condition of stable equilibrium at that distance apart, and will revolve around the sun forever free from mutual disturbance.

Sixty degrees is of course a sixth of a circle, which with the controlling center occupied by the Sun, gives the seven.

Theosophy goes further than any of this. To the higher students it is shown that that one form of matter which, as we have seen, exists in seven states, is itself the seventh of a greater series. And that that white light (white to our vision) which breaks up into our seven colors, is itself a member of a set of seven lights, none really "white," but standing to ultimate light as one of our spectrum colors stands to the light we call white.

But here we are of course far beyond the realm of present human senses. Yet in the course of special training, and much more slowly, yet inevitably, for us all in the normal course of our evolution, all these scales will become evident to us.

Theosophy also concurs with the proverb which gives man seven senses, two of which in most people are almost inactive, dealing with finer forms and essences. Some idea of the sixth of these may be gained from a study of the life of the woman known as the Seeress of Prevorst. In her however it was abnormally and prematurely unveiled by a peculiar form of ill-health.

Man as a part of greater Nature must of course exhibit the seven in many ways. Most obvious of the seven is of course his body, technically called the *sthûla-śarîra*. But within it is another, made of altogether subtler matter, the astral model body or *linga-śarîra*. And it is because of the presence of this other, which is as it were a sort of architect's plan, that the millions of separate cells are able to arrange themselves in harmony, to form coherent organs, and to assume separate forms for the discharge of separate kinds of work. It is this which translates latent life, omnipresent in space, into life or *prâna*, adapted for the use of the cells. Shortly after death its remains are occasionally visible as the "spook" of so many ghost stories.

Here then we have three of the human principles — the visible body, the subtler "architect's plan" body, and the vital force. The last, Theosophy, disagreeing on this point with current physiology, teaches to be a form of energy peculiar to itself.

Let us note now, for the fourth principle, that by "body" Paul meant the *animal desires* of the body, or *kâma-rûpa*. These, in too many cases, dominate the man. But if he would be really man, would really show himself to be a soul, he must reverse that. It is through *thought* that he begins to establish himself as a man. Mind or *Manas*, is the fifth of the human principles. Animals show the first traces of it, but they cannot even begin that inquiry which seeks an answer to the question, *What am I?* They are living units, and inwardly indestructible; but they are not yet *self-conscious* souls.

The sixth principle or *buddhi*, is the crown of mind, that department of man's conscious nature from which come the inspirations of genius. Towards it ascend in their highest moments the musician, the poet, the artist. It is the soul in its own essentially spiritual nature. What it knows and feels when it is there, what it sees of divine truth, it must as far as possible bring down to the mind for expression on Earth. Much is necessarily lost on the way. We all know that there are things which we feel but to which we can give no expression.

Lastly, the highest of the seven is Spirit or Âtman, that which sustains all the rest and is their life; that which may be felt and known in the heart, but whose being is inexpressible in any kind of language. All the religious wars and quarrels that have ever rent humanity have come from attempts to dogmatize in words and terms about this indescribable presence and sustainer. "Theosophy," says H. P. Blavatsky, "as a whole, is based absolutely on the ubiquitous presence of God, the Absolute Deity; and if It itself is not speculated upon, as being too sacred and yet incomprehensible as a Unit to the finite intellect, yet the entire philosophy is based upon Its divine Powers as being the source of all that lives and breathes and has its existence." Man, however, is not limited to his "finite intellect,"

the fifth of his seven. He can know with another faculty which to intellect is unknowable, that which by language is inexpressible.

The path to this knowledge lies through aspiration renewed from day to day, meditation, duty, compassion towards all that lives, self-mastery, and study.

THE MEANING OF DEATH

What then is death according to Theosophy? It is not at all the horror that the world has made it. It is the passing of the soul into its own nature, for rest. In life it has permitted itself to become, as it were, of the nature of the body. If it has had joys, it has had pains that far outweigh, pains of body and pains of mind. It needs rest from all these and from struggle. Though it came from the Divine and is divine, in the case of the great majority of men it has never yet recognized that. It goes to the temporary rest and “sleep” of death with all its purer Earth memories clustering around it; and of these it fashions its unclouded and beautiful dream. The Divine Law shows itself at its tenderest, to the dead.

But the “sleep” does not come at once. After the eyes have closed for the last time, after pulse and breath have stopped, life lingers long. And in those first hours, while the brain is yielding up its stores, and the soul is watching every detail of the now closed life pass again before it, there should be silence and peace in the death chamber. Loving thought — yes, that helps. But passionately expressed and selfish grief is felt by the soul as a disturbance, hindering its work. For as memory is unpicked to its last fiber, the soul is learning, noting in the clear light where it failed, where it sinned, where it achieved victory in the hard life-battle with the thronging lower impulses. Not till this is done, till the wheat has been garnered, is that life really over. But at last there is the change. A sleep begins whose dreams are unclouded by anything evil, anything painful. The soul is no longer conjoined with the source of evil; it rests in the pure divine light.

That is why death is in Nature’s program — that the soul may rest and progress; and whilst it rests it is out of touch, mercifully, with life on Earth. It can neither be reached by word or thought. Nor can it break its rest to communicate with those on Earth.

Nevertheless there *is* one line of communication both ways. The pure current of love from those on Earth does reach it, touches and enters the dream and makes it more living. And in return its love for those it left behind touches them, strengthens them in the battle of life, helps them in their highest efforts for right, purifies them. Except for this current, *which is deeper than thought, deeper than word*, there is no communication possible. How otherwise could the soul rest?

But the rest is over at last; the divine light has given new energy for another life. The dream fades; the soul is drawn again to Earth to take up

its work. It comes once more among those with whom in other lives it has been associated. We pass from birth to birth, resuming old ties, making new ones, suffering, rejoicing, and through all growing. This great human family is ever getting closer and closer. As a man will find some old acquaintance unexpectedly in passing through some foreign city, so, it may be, there is already hardly a spot on Earth where of us could incarnate and not find some he had known in other lives. There are many hates still to wear out between man and man; every one of us has much to overcome in his own nature. But we move. We can see that life will not always be as now. Sometime there will be comradeship universal and all men will have awakened to their divinity. They will feel in their hearts the constant presence of that Light to which they have given so many names, to which they have ascribed such diverse qualities, which sometimes they have figured as but a man, a personality drawn large; sometimes as a blind force, sometimes, alas! as an avenging fiend. It will be the more really a presence to them, the more really an ever active inspiration, the more they understand that *in its fulness* it is beyond human imagining and description. They will be content to worship at the point where thought ceases, from that worship gaining perception of the reason and goal of human life. From it came man's soul; to it returns that soul, yet never more to lose in it the individuality that is the thread of each man's series of existences. Once a living soul, always a living soul. Once we were omniscient because we were parts of its omniscience. It called us forth, to win each for himself omni-science. Yet the very word omniscience, for us, is forever relative. When we have learned one nature, which is its robe, and tasted to the full the beauty of that knowledge, another and higher and richer will be ready before our eyes.

Unhappiness and pain were no part of the program. We made them; *un-fellowhood* of each to each made them. It is only we that can end them. When man has learned to turn to his fellow with friendliness and compassion, with the will to give instead of to take, unhappiness is ended. And when he has learned himself, unwisdom and darkness are ended.

THE SOURCE OF THEOSOPHICAL TEACHING

It follows from all the foregoing that there must be, somewhere on Earth, men who have fully awakened as souls; who, when they incarnate, are not dazed by the new animal life; who, when they die, carry on the unbroken thread of consciousness; who, life after life, have therefore been able to add wisdom to wisdom.

This is true, and there have been such men since the very beginnings of life on this planet. In this Lodge of men, always slowly growing in numbers, Theosophy has been handed on from age to age, from century to century. Its members, reincarnating in particular times and places accord-

ing to human need, have founded all the great world-religions — aspects of Theosophy specially adapted to those times and places. This is not the only work they have done, and do, to further the world's progress; but it is the one with which we are now particularly concerned.

Nor is the whole of their work done by themselves in person. Many of those who have in every age, including our own, worked strenuously for humanity's enlightenment and welfare, have been their Messengers and pupils. The names of some of these — rarely declaring themselves as such — have been on every tongue and are prominently written on the pages of history. The work of others, quite as necessary and effective, has been beyond the recognition of the historian.

Upon one of these Messengers, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, devolved the task of introducing Theosophy anew and under that name to the Western world. Christianity, the Theosophy of Jesus, was fast disappearing. That Great Teacher, one of the Lodge, had sounded the keynote of Theosophy two thousand years before. At first the world paid little attention. When at last it did so the greater part of the Teacher's words were lost. Of *all* his teaching but a very fragment remains, and this fragment, sufficient in its purity as a guide to the perfect life, was soon overlaid by the dust of fierce controversies which have never ceased, adulterated here and there by the fancy of successive copyists, and obscured by multitudes of cruel or meaningless dogmas. A new presentation, in new language and adapted to the thought of today, was urgently needed by men. The Christian ranks contained, as always, many pure and lofty souls full of the spirit of unselfish sacrifice. But dogma was and is driving away thousands, and the tide of materialism was rapidly rising.

She began her work in 1875, and before her death in 1891 her heroic and untiring labors had placed the Theosophical Movement beyond the possibility of failure. Enemies of every kind, men who saw in her teachings a menace to selfishness, to ambition, to dogma, gathered thick about her. She had to face open and hidden attack, slanders, libels and calumnies of every variety. The world will learn a great lesson when the history of these, now being written, is published; when all the threads are traced to their source.

At her death, the successor she designated, William Q. Judge, took up the work, becoming then the target for the same hostility. For twenty years previously, largely under her directions, he had sustained the Movement in America. This great labor, and the exclusive Leadership of the Movement throughout the world which devolved upon him at her death, finally wrecked his health, and in 1896, working to the last, he died.

The successor whom he in his turn had appointed, Katherine Tingley, then assumed the Leadership which she still holds. {There *have* been more Leaders since this was written.} She has been recognized by every

member of the Theosophical Society throughout the world as a real teacher and wise leader. So profound in fact was this recognition that at a series of congresses of the Society held in America and various other countries in 1898 it was resolved with practical unanimity to place the entire guidance of the work absolutely under her direction, and to accept as her successor whomsoever she might appoint. The Theosophical Society at the same time was merged into the larger body of the UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD AND THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, the full and complete title being THE UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD AND THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY. {Today it is again the THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, with International Headquarters in Pasadena, California. See theosociety.org.}

Theosophy by that name, secure from admixture with any lower currents, is thus henceforth assured to the world; and as the world moves on to peace and oneness, more and more of the Ancient Wisdom can be given to it. In the meantime, within the Organization, there will always be some few prepared for those higher teachings which it would as yet be useless and even dangerous to sow broadcast.

2

The Seven Human Principles

A Student

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INTRODUCTION

The reader is asked to bear in mind that the teaching of the Seven human principles is a most sacred tenet of the Ancient Wisdom-Religion, and should be approached with the seriousness of mind with which one enters upon a serious question. For this is no attempt to offer interesting speculations for the edification of intellectual curiosity. It is a reverent effort to present an outline of teachings which have behind them the sanction of the accumulated wisdom of the ages.

Lastly, it must be borne in mind that a teaching like this cannot be presented in the complete and systematic form of a scientific treatise. Any attempt to reduce it to such a form would result in depriving it of its vital essence and converting it into a dogma. Obviously true knowledge can come only in proportion as we progress on the path of self-development. Theosophical teachings cover such a vast domain that, for the most part, all that can be done is to indicate a number of starting-points from which the intuition and further study of the inquirer may set out; and far-reaching side issues are contacted at every turn, which it would be impossible to attempt to follow up within any reasonable limits of time and space.

THE SEPTENATE IN NATURE

If it be asked, “Why seven?” the answer is that the number Seven is the most important one in the Wisdom-Religion. It is one of the key numbers by which are revealed and explained the mysteries that underlie all Nature. In the Wisdom-Religion it is taught that number and numbers underlie all the processes of creation. This numerical key is at once most important and most profound. There is nothing arbitrary about the use of the number seven as applied to the study of human nature. The septenate is universal throughout Nature; and it would be possible to illustrate this fact by a large number of instances. But for the present we must be content to assume the fact, and to refer the inquirer elsewhere for further information. It should also never be forgotten that no school of modern thought has anything more definite and reasonable to offer as a substitute.

In some Eastern books one may meet with other divisions than the septenary one — fivefold or fourfold, for instance. But these are either abbreviations, or else corruptions of the original teaching. Sometimes, too, one meets with threefold or twofold divisions, but these are merely convenient abbreviations for special purposes.

WHAT DO MODERN VIEWS TELL US ABOUT OUR HUMAN NATURE?

As shown in the Preface, modern authority and modern speculation are in a state of hopeless confusion and nescience on the subjects of which

Theosophy chiefly treats, and have therefore no title to assume an attitude of criticism. Let us ask what is the state of the modern teachings as to our human nature.

The analysis of Human nature, in our modern conceptions is represented roughly by a threefold division — Body, Mind, and Soul or Spirit; but our notions about these are extremely hazy. Science has made an elaborate study of the structure and functions of the body, but is much handicapped in its understanding thereof by a lack of knowledge of the principles which come next in order to the body. As to the mind, this word denotes roughly the personal thinking ego and its thoughts, emotions, and volitions. There are various systems of psychology which deal with this, but here again the want of knowledge concerning the other principles has caused great confusion. The “Soul” or “Spirit” is an even more vague conception. It stands for what in religion is regarded as the immortal part of man. Very little is known of its nature, and it is for the most part supposed to function after the death of the body. Dogmatic religion discouraged the intellectual study of such questions; and science, having been introduced in a spirit of reaction against dogmatic religion, has scrupulously avoided pushing its investigations any further than the material world. Consequently we have been left without any adequate conceptions of our human nature; and the most important parts of human nature are investigated neither by religion nor by science.

But in the past before the wave of materialism swept over the world, bringing with it the destruction of the Ancient Mystic Teachings and their replacement by religious dogmatism, there was a Sacred Science which embraced all that we now call science and religion and much more besides. Our present religions, philosophies and sciences are but detached fragments of that great knowledge, or new growths arising from its remains. This ancient system, which is referred to in Theosophical works as the Wisdom-Religion, the Secret Doctrine, and the Esoteric Philosophy, was once known all over the world. H. P. Blavatsky tells us, referring to the pages of history for her proofs, that at the close of the classical period most virulent and determined efforts were made to stamp out all traces of this Ancient Wisdom and to place in its stead dogmatic religion. But in spite of these efforts there have remained enough proofs, in the numerous monumental and documentary records of antiquity, to prove the truth of what is claimed about the Wisdom-Religion. In addition to these archaeological proofs, there have always been in the world Initiates who have made it their care to preserve the sacred knowledge; and although, in the dark cycle spoken of, these Adepts withdrew from their public teaching, yet they have always preserved the knowledge in secret, ready to be brought out again when humanity shall have passed through the dark valley of materialism and be upon the ascending arc towards spirituality. H. P. Blavatsky, W. Q. Judge and Katherine Tingley, the Leaders of the

Theosophical Society, have given out so much of these Ancient Teachings as it was possible and expedient to give out.

One of the Ancient Teachings thus outlined is that of the SEVEN HUMAN PRINCIPLES.

In order to make our explanations clearer, it will be necessary to touch briefly upon the question of evolution as dealt with by Theosophy. A fuller account may be found elsewhere in Theosophical literature.

EVOLUTION

Evolution means the growth and gradual perfecting of forms through the agency of the universal Life-Spirit which is striving to manifest itself through them. Everything in the Universe, from the smallest mineral atom up to man, is thus evolving; for everything is, in one degree or another, a manifestation of the Eternal Spirit. The modern evolutionists have glimpsed a small part of this truth, but their theories are imperfect and misleading. In the first place they have merely studied the *effects* of evolution, tracing throughout the kingdoms of Nature a sequence and progression of organisms; but they have neglected to tell us anything about the *Cause* of evolution — that is, about the Intelligence and Will that are working in these forms to bring about their growth. Those who deny that there is any such indwelling Spirit are guilty of a logical absurdity which it is impossible to account for by any other hypothesis than that their thinking faculties have been impaired. There are others who see the absurdity of saying that an inert substance can raise itself to perfection without there being, inside or outside of it, some life or mind or spirit to work upon it; and who say that “God” is the agency who performs this function. They are much nearer the truth; but there is no need thus to leap at one bound from visible matter to the supreme deity. “God,” in their explanation, stands for a vast host of powers and beings and worlds unknown to science, which nevertheless have to be studied. Further, as is shown elsewhere, the word “God” introduces all sorts of theological dogmas with which Theosophy has nothing to do.

Again, modern evolutionists have confined their studies to the visible planes of Nature; but, as will be shown, not only the bodies but the minds and souls of creatures are subject to evolution.

In every physical atom there is a spark of the Eternal Life imprisoned, and this causes physical matter to become gradually perfected through long ages until it becomes sufficiently plastic and efficient to fit it for the reception of higher forms of life. In the vegetable kingdom also there is the vegetable “Monad” striving to perfect vegetable forms; and so in the mineral kingdom.

Man himself is the product of several different lines of evolution. The matter in his physical body has been perfected through incalculable ages of evolution in lower forms.

His physical body itself is the culminating point (so far) of a long line of evolution in the animal kingdom. But it is great error to suppose that an animal can evolve into a man, or Thinker, as some evolutionists say.

There comes a point in the evolution of the animal kingdom when progress can go no further *in that cycle* without the entry of something else. The animal soul is unable to develop the self-consciousness and power of choice that are characteristic of Man. This “something else” is the Mānasaputras of “Sons of Mind,” of which the following may here be briefly stated.

Mānasaputras means the sons of mind or mind-born sons; it is a name given to our higher Egos before they incarnated in humanity. {In theosophy, humans have two egos, the higher and the lower; both centers of “I-am-ship.” The Individuality and the Personality, respectively.} They incarnated in the Third Root Race. All our Egos are thinking and rational entities who had lived in the precedent lifecycle (*Manvantara*), and whose destiny it was to incarnate in the Man of this life-cycle. As H. P. Blavatsky says:

Try to imagine a “Spirit,” a celestial Being... divine in its essential nature, yet not pure enough to be *one with the ALL*, and consequently having to purify its nature so that it may finally reach that goal.... In its very essence it is THOUGHT, and is therefore called in its plurality *Mānasaputras*, or “Sons of the (Universal) mind.” This *individualized* “Thought” is what we Theosophists call the *real* human Ego, the thinking Entity imprisoned in a case of flesh and bones. This is surely a Spiritual Entity, not *Matter*, and such Entities are the incarnating EGOS, informing the bundle of animal matter called mankind, and whose names are *mānasa*, or “Minds.”

[*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 180.]

This is a most important point. It disposes of the doctrine of the descent of Man from anthropoid apes. Anthropoid apes were no more able to evolve *unaided* in the past than they are now. They are degraded descendants of one of the early human races who sinned against Nature, as explained elsewhere in Theosophical writings. It puts a gulf between the simple animal and man. It shows that, in addition to the evolution of forms upwards, there was a descent of something from above; and that we have a divine heredity as well as a terrestrial one. It throws light on scriptural passages about the inbreathing of the divine spirit.

THE SEPTENARY DIVISION

The septenary division may be given as follows:

THE LOWER QUATERNARY

1. Physical body, or *Sthûla-śarîra*.
2. Astral Body, or *Linga-śarîra*.
3. Vitality, or *Prâna*.
4. Animal Soul, or *Kâma-rûpa*.

THE HIGHER TRIAD

5. Human Soul, or *Manas*.
6. Spiritual Soul, or *Buddhi*.
7. Spirit, or Âtman.

The names italicized above are the Sanskrit terms. In the impoverished state of our language, so far as a vocabulary to express this class of ideas is concerned, Theosophists may surely claim the privilege accorded to other systems, of adopting a special terminology; but as little tax as possible will be laid on the reader in this respect.

To simplify now the comprehension of this scheme, it will be best to consider man first as a trinity.

It is impossible to consider Man as being any less than threefold. There is a conscious chooser, oscillating between good and evil. This familiar fact is expressed in Theosophy by saying that the soul is threefold; the three divisions are called:

Spiritual Soul;
Human Soul;
Animal Soul.

This analysis sums up the views of all the greatest philosophers and teachers; it is a cardinal tenet of the Wisdom-Religion, as is shown by H. P. Blavatsky — who quotes the teachings of Plato, of the Neo-Platonists, and of the Egyptians, on this point. The Soul was, according to them, triple, and esoterically sevenfold. One part was divine and immortal, another mortal, animal and passional; and between the two stood another which hovered between good and evil, and possessed the power of choice. These are denominated respectively the Spiritual Soul, the Animal Soul and the Human Soul. The Human Soul is the personality of Man, and represents the pivotal point in his nature. It is destined to ally itself finally with its divine counterpart, the Spiritual Soul, and thus to overcome the animal soul and turn it into an obedient servant. But first it has to pass through a long process of error and delusion, lasting through many

incarnations, during which it is enslaved by the passions and gradually learns and masters them. This process is what is symbolized the world over by the allegories and myths that tell of the hero passing through numerous adventures in quest of the truth, or seeking his true bride and being deceived by enchantresses, or rescuing princesses and killing dragons, or having tasks set him; and so on. This threefold nature of the human character is matter of familiar experience to everyone; does it not constitute the great drama of life, full of the awful and the sublime? Whence our aspirations that impel us to noble unselfish actions and yearning for the beautiful, the true, and the right? Whence again our impulses to selfishness, anger, and indifference? These two incentives must spring from some source within us, and there must also be a chooser who chooses between the two. Any philosophy which tries to explain things with any less than these three can lead only to confusion. Paul in his epistle to the Corinthians (I Cor., xv. 40 *et seq.*) explains the distinction between the divine and the mortal natures of man, but his terms have, partly by translation and partly by use, acquired other meanings. In James iii. 15, the same thing is described.

Neither theology nor science reverences the immortal part of man. For theology confines its activity solely to the after-life and does not represent it as having any particular part to play during Earth-life; and as to its nature and attributes, we are left entirely in the dark.

Among scientists, there are those who are content merely to admit their complete ignorance on the subject, and those who deny their own immortality.

The seven principles may be divided into two parts:

The Higher Triad;

The Lower Quaternary.

It may be mentioned, in passing, that the number 4 prevails in the material world, and the number 3 in the spiritual; a subject which is included in the study of the symbology of the Ancient Wisdom-Religion. The Higher Triad is Âtman, Buddhi and Manas, and it alone is immortal; the lower quaternary, consisting of the remaining principles, constitutes the mortal part of our nature.

THE LOWER QUATERNARY

FOUR is the number which rules in the lower or terrestrial world, as THREE is the number of spirit. The four elements are a well-known conception of ancient and medieval science and philosophy. These elements were designated by the names Fire, Air, Water and Earth.

These words were not used in their present sense however. They answer to some extent to our notions of solidity, liquidity, gaseity and heat or luminosity; but they have a more extended range of meaning than that. The quadrangular shape, the four cardinal points of the compass, the four seasons, the cross, are some of the quaternaries. It would be too much of a digression to enter more fully into this branch here. Suffice it to say that the phenomena of Nature cannot be rationally explained unless we postulate these four principles.

In man these are: physical body, astral double, life-principle and animal soul. The life-principle builds up the physical atoms according to the pattern of the astral body, guided and impelled by the instinctual mind of the animal soul. Science has studied the visible form and visible functions of mineral, plant, animal and man; but has suffered from a lack of knowledge of the other principles. These will now be treated of separately.

THE PHYSICAL BODY

Since the Theosophical teachings were first given out, modern science has made considerable progress in the direction of regarding the physical body as Theosophy does. That is, the idea of its being an inert mechanism, set in motion by some vital force, or by mechanical and chemical forces, has given place to the idea that the body is composed of an immense number of individual "lives," each of which has an independent existence in addition to its corporate existence as part of the body, and which are similar to the microorganisms found in water and other places. A minute study of the bodily structures reveals this fact; for these structures are seen to be composed of minute units which science calls "cells"; and each cell is endowed with a nucleus, protoplasm, and other parts and functions which make it an independent living organism. In disease some of the cells set up an activity which is hostile to the general harmony of the whole body, and diseased tissue results. An extreme case of this is death.

In Theosophy less importance is given to the body. To begin with, it is not regarded as the producer of life or thought, but as the result of them. Life is a universal principle, and the body is built up by its operation. It is impossible to explain much about the body without referring to the other principles; for to do so would be to deal with effects only, leaving the causes unexplained. For instance, the "cell" is not a permanent thing. Every atom in the cell is constantly on the move, some leaving it and other new ones coming in; so that the composition of the cell is never the same, and in the space of a few years the matter of the entire body has completely changed. Hence the form of the body and its component structures cannot inhere in the atoms themselves, but must be preserved elsewhere.

It would be erroneous to say that the minute lives of which the body is composed make up, in their totality, the greater life of the body as a whole. For the body, if left to itself, begins to fall to pieces. In sleep, when the greater part of the controlling influence is withdrawn, there is much more rapid degeneration. The elements of the body are kept in order by the life-principle directed by the intelligence. The body of itself is like an irresponsible automaton. During sleep it assumes attitudes and makes movements that we do not permit when awake.

THE ASTRAL BODY OR LINGA-ŚARÎRA

The term “astral body” is somewhat vague in meaning, owing to two reasons. First, the poverty of the English language in terms adequate to convey such unfamiliar ideas obliged early writers on Theosophy to use the term in more than one sense. Secondly, some have dragged this, as also other terms, in the mud by using it to express their own peculiar delusions. This latter reason has caused the term “astral body” to have rather a quack sound. But it is one of the objects of the present writing to restore some of these misused words to their original dignity.

While there is no word which can adequately express the nature of this second Principle, perhaps the one that expresses it best is “model-body.” This word answers to the Sanskrit term *linga śarîra*. Other words are “double” and “design-body.”

When we describe the nature and properties of the astral double, it will be seen that it fills a gap in modern speculation, and supplies a missing link for the lack of which science has been much at fault.

The model-body must here be considered chiefly in connection with man; but it is of universal application, and every organism in the Universe, whether animal, vegetable or mineral, has its own.

It is material, yet the matter of which it is composed is not the matter with which we are familiar in the physical world. It cannot be perceived by the gross physical senses, and has none of the attributes by which matter is defined as such in physics. But it can be perceived by finer senses, and is therefore matter according to an extended but similar definition. It is an older and more evolved kind of matter, having undergone a longer process of evolution and being therefore more highly endowed with properties. For even matter is composed of life-atoms which enshrine a spark of the universal spirit and mind. We must remember that physical science has had to postulate the existence of a species of matter to which it has given the name of ether. Just as physical forms are made of physical matter so the astral forms are made of this astral matter. There is an astral world corresponding with the physical world and interrelated with it in a peculiar manner; but to discuss that would lead us too far from the present object. It is however extremely interesting to note that, since the founders of the

Theosophical Society wrote, modern science has been compelled to admit the existence of finer grades of matter answering exactly to what was described. For instance, in view of the recent discoveries in electro-atomic physics, the statements of W. Q. Judge, made in 1893, are interesting, and the circumstance may serve as a hint to the wise to attach a greater importance to other statements made by the Theosophical Leaders. He says:

The astral body is made of matter of very fine texture as compared with the visible body, and has a great tensile strength,... And not only has it this immense strength, but it at the same time possesses an elasticity permitting its extension to a considerable distance. It is flexible, plastic, extensible and strong. *The matter of which it is composed is electrical and magnetic in its essence.*

The model-body forms the link between mind and body. Its most characteristic property is its extreme adaptability, elasticity and plasticity, which causes it to take any shape which is impressed upon it by thought. It is prior to physical matter, as mind is prior to *it*. Everything in the physical world exists beforehand in the astral world, in plan. This explains the phenomena of growth, reproduction and all the organic processes by which organisms are created with certain forms and adapted to certain purposes. The acorn contains the future oak-tree modeled entire in astral matter, and the life-atoms merely build up the physical tree on the already existing model. This it is that determines whether a seed shall yield an oak or a rose. For want of this knowledge, science has resorted to many strange hypotheses which will not stand the test of logic. Without the astral model, we must attribute all its properties to the physical atoms themselves, thus seeking for causes among the effects. But a logical mind will see that an organism cannot grow according to a plan unless the plan previously exists somewhere.

In man the model-body exists closely blended with the physical body, which it sustains. It is this that keeps the physical body in shape. The vitality has an energetic power, and the astral body has a formative power. Both of these factors are essential. Without the model-body there would be nothing to keep the life-forces in place or to prevent them from producing monstrous and excessive growths. It may be compared to a piece of cloth having a design traced on it, which is *afterwards* worked in in colored silks, or to an invisible photographic impression afterwards brought out by chemicals. The body grows from the embryo upwards according to the design of the model.

The astral body explains the fact of birthmarks due to sudden shock received by the mother. Such a shock affects powerfully the imagination of the mother, and the astral double of the future child is impressed with

the picture in her imagination. In the case of amputations, the patient often feels sensations apparently emanating from the severed limb; for in this case the astral double has not been severed. In some animals the severed limb can grow again on the old model.

The astral body cannot, in the case of ordinary people, go more than a few feet from the physical body, which it does during sleep or reverie. But those who have passed through long and arduous processes of development, involving a purification of the whole nature, moral as well as physical, and far beyond the reach of the ordinary man, can project the astral body to a distance and use it as a means of acting consciously apart from the body. Needless to say this has nothing to do with the ridiculous claims of the so-called “occultists,” who talk too glibly about the astral body and their pretended “powers.”

It is in the double that the real organs of the outer sense organs are located. It has also nerves, arteries, etc., corresponding to those in the physical man. The physical eye, ear and nerve papillae contain only the outer mechanism of the senses, by which the impressions are conveyed to the double. In it are also stored up the subconscious perception and latent memory which afford such a problem to hypnotists.

On the death of the physical body, the astral double is released. The immortal man, the Higher Triad, passes to the state known as Devachan, and the astral double continues for a time to survive the physical man and to exist as a “shell.” It is this shell that is attracted to the medium at spiritualistic séances. As it contains all the memories connected with personal existence which the man has stored up during life, it can repeat these like a parrot.

It remains near the deserted physical body nearly all the time until that is completely dissipated, for it has to go through its own process of dying. It may become visible under certain conditions. It is the spook of the spiritualistic séance-rooms, and is there made to masquerade as the real spirit of this or that individual. Attracted by the thoughts of the medium and the sitters, it vaguely flutters where they are, and then is galvanized into a factitious life by a whole host of elemental forces and by the active astral body of the medium who is holding the séance or of any other medium in the audience. From it (as from a photograph) are then reflected into the medium’s brain all the boasted evidences which spiritualists claim go to prove identity of deceased friend or relative. These evidences are accepted as proof that the spirit of the deceased is present, because neither mediums nor sitters are acquainted with the laws governing their own nature, nor with the constitution, power and function of astral matter and astral man.

This quotation is from W. Q. Judge, who then goes on to explain the phenomena of materialization. This may be caused by the astral body of the medium, which detaches itself during trance and assumes the form of

the thought-images impressed upon it by the sitters. This explains how it is that sometimes, when the materialized form has been handled by unbelievers, the physical body of the medium has been found similarly affected. Such an occurrence does not prove fraud, as any injury or mark inflicted on the medium's astral body would be reproduced afterwards on the physical body. Again the materialization may be the actual shell of the departed, made visible and tangible by an alteration of the conditions of the matter of which it is composed. Again the spook may be due to the fact that an unseen mass of electrical and magnetic matter is collected, and upon it is reflected out of the astral light a picture of any required dead or living person.

Thus the phenomenal practices of Spiritualism are most rash and ignorant dabbling in matters not understood. The spook is entirely devoid of conscience, since it is at best but the shadow of the animal man, minus his intelligent and moral part. It obtains a prolongation of its ghoulish life at the expense of medium and sitters, whom it gradually but surely contaminates by its contact. These séances are in fact a species of *Necromancy* (divination by corpses). That such practices were well known to past sages is proved by the fact that Iamblichus and others of his school warn their disciples most strongly against these spooks.

Many phenomena will occur to the reader which can be readily explained by the astral body; but it will not be profitable to go into these here, the present object not being to interest people in such things, but to aid them in understanding their own nature. The importance of guarding our thoughts is emphasized when we consider that every thought produces an instant impress upon the plastic double, and that thoughts habitually repeated will in time mold the physical body. We also see that, through the agency of the double, the mind is enabled to act on the body purposively. But here the caution must be added, that as our ordinary intelligence is by no means competent to judge what is best for the body, any attempt to interfere with natural processes, along the lines of self-healing or self-culture (so-called) is sure to result harmfully. The selfishness of the motive would blind our eyes to our true interests and cause us to bungle the experiment, producing disease or some physical infirmity in the end. We should let our body alone, except so far as the ordinary rules of medicine and hygiene are concerned, and use our will for purifying our minds from selfishness and passion. Then the astral body and the physical body can be trusted to take care of themselves.

THE LIFE PRINCIPLE

Life has been spoken of as a "force." But what is meant by a force? We do not know anything of forces except through their manifestation. We can perceive living or moving matter, and we can say that force or life

is present there. But, if we try to separate the force from all matter, or even to imagine it as so separated, we must fail. The truth is that our mind, by its very nature as a mind, can conceive of nothing so elementary as force without matter, or matter without force. No philosophy has been able to resolve things into less than a trinity of fundamentals, called by various names into which we need not enter. What, therefore, Life may be in its ultimate essence, we cannot say, further than to predicate that it is a ray of the eternal and universal Existence. All the life which we know or can conceive must be embodied in some form or other, whether in physical matter or one of the higher grades of matter. Thus the question whether life is a force or matter really involves a distinction without a difference, since we can discover nowhere any matter that is not alive, nor any force that is not embodied. Similarly the question whether light is a body or not, is equally vague. We can reduce it to something which is neither force nor matter in one sense, and yet in another sense is both. If light is a vibration in a medium, then what is the vibration without the medium, or the medium without the vibration? The most we can say of light, electricity, the vital force, and so on, is that they appear to our cognition as matter in motion. All the Universe is pervaded with this mysterious Spirit-Matter, which is the manifestation of the One Unknowable.

In considering the Life-principle in man, therefore, we are considering only a particular manifestation of a universal principle.

The Life-principle is not produced by the body. It is prior to the body; it fashions the body. Life is everywhere, and we live in an ocean of it. Our body is but a special organ for dealing with it.

Science in examining the bacilli, bacteria, and other minute organisms in the body, which have been thought to be the causes of disease, is beginning to realize that some of these organisms are essential to the health of the body, and further that the whole body is actually made up of them. Some of these microorganisms are constructive, building up tissues, and others are destructive, destroying tissues. This is merely a confirmation of Theosophical teachings, and Theosophy adds that these microorganisms are in their turn composed of still more minute lives. So it is also with the vegetable kingdom, and even with the mineral kingdom. Every smallest rudiment of matter must be made up of living atoms; for the "dead" atom is a figment of the "scientific imagination," and has been shown, by not a few logical critics of current scientific philosophy, to be a logical absurdity. But what distinguishes the animal from the vegetable, and the vegetable from the mineral, is the higher overshadowing life which governs and regulates the smaller life-atoms that compose the body. Without this overshadowing life, the body decays, for the separate life-atoms then begin to fall apart and build themselves into lower orders of existence, until finally they are absorbed into the air and the soil, or built up into other living organisms. Thus, in addition to the life of the matter

composing his body, man has a Life-principle peculiar to his own particular order of being. It acts in conjunction with the *Linga-śarîra* to keep the integrity of his human shape.

The real ultimate source of life is Âtman, the Universal Spirit; and it streams down through our being, like sunlight, reflecting itself in various vehicles or bodies. Thus, in the higher mind it manifests itself as direct knowledge or intuition, and as enthusiasm for the noble and true; in the ordinary mind it manifests itself as reason or ratiocinative thought; lower still it is animal energy. Everywhere it gives force and activity. The Sanskrit term for this Universal Life is *Jîva*; in its lower manifestation as the Life-principle it is called *Prâna*.

THE ANIMAL SOUL, KÂMA-RÛPA

Kâma, desire, is in its fullest sense a universal principle; and, though both the Sanskrit word and its English equivalent are usually identified only with their lowest aspect, yet abstract Desire is really the great impelling force in the Universe. But desire can be anything, from the most impersonal unselfish aspiration for harmony and the good of all, down to the basest animal lust. In its higher sense, it would be better rendered “aspiration” or “devotion.”

Desire, like life, manifests itself on all planes; and when it manifests itself in the lower nature of man, it takes the form of selfish passion. This is what is usually meant in speaking of Kâma or desire. The word *rûpa* means body; and the principle of Kâma, acting in conjunction with the *linga śarîra*, forms a “desire-body” or animal soul — the fourth principle in our list.

Hence the desires of the incarnated man are located, for the most part, in his animal nature and tend to pull him down and promote the selfish and destructive instincts. These instincts he possesses in common with the other kingdoms of Nature. They are clearly manifest in the beast, and even the plant and the stone have them in lesser degrees, where they appear as instinct, preference, attraction, affinity, or by whatever name we may choose to designate what is essentially one and the same force.

But in man there is the Mind, which comes as the messenger of a higher life, linking him with the immortal and spiritual part of his nature. This at once intensifies and (eventually) purifies desire. In so far as the mind becomes the slave of passion, so does it become intensified; until what was, in the unreflecting animal, a harmless instinct, becomes a calculated selfishness. This is why the desires of man are so destructive; they contain the vivifying force of Mind, which renders them insatiable. It has often been asked, “Why has man the power to enjoy to his own detriment?” The answer is that, misusing the divine power of Mind, he exalts his passions into a *god*, thus worshiping his own enemy.

It is the destiny of man to have his passions purified by their association in his mind with the higher ideals and aspirations. The contrast produced between the baseness, narrowness and destructiveness of his lower nature, and the beauty and nobility of the higher, causes him to feel revulsion and to purge out the baser elements.

The forces of passion, if manfully resisted turn themselves into stepping stones by which we mount to greater heights; but, if indulged, they drag us still further down. There is no worse delusion than that we can do any good by indulging our passions, or that we can tire out desire by feeding it. Desire, like fire, grows ever fiercer the more it is fed; and though there may be periods of satiety produced by temporary exhaustion, these are but the preludes to a still fiercer outbreak. Desire is overcome by turning our minds from it and fixing our interests on work which is unselfish and impersonal. The holiest desire, if such it can be called, is the aspiration to lose the sense of separateness in the common life of humanity; and this is destined ultimately to survive all lesser desires, since it alone is immortal.

In the mass of people, who are still drifting along in the middle ways between the higher and the lower, unawakened, ignorant of their nature and destiny, the desires and the better aspirations are both fostered and the life is a more or less unsatisfactory compromise. Perhaps they reach the gates of death without ever meeting a serious crisis or being called on to choose definitely between two paths. But, as birth succeeds birth, the desires grow stronger and stronger, as do also the aspirations towards good; until there comes a time when it is no longer possible to make a compromise. Many people have reached this stage; and they find themselves unable to rest content with the ordinary life of the world, but must either plunge into excess or make a final break with the selfish nature. The eternal Life in them has waxed so strong that it can only be fed by vivid experience. Before them lie the way of desire, leading straight down to destruction, and the way of renunciation of desire, leading to eternal life. After much affliction and self-questioning, they realize that the path of personal gratification leads nowhere; that desires grow the more they are fed, and can never be satiated; and that to follow them means a degrading bondage in a cage that goes round and round like a squirrel's wheel. What is the permanent center in life, around which all these changing scenes revolve? It is not in the personal self. It is in the immortal Self. Desire has to be replaced by Love — using this word in the highest sense as meaning a dispassionate solicitude for the welfare of all. This is simply the gospel of Christ and of all other Great Teachers and philosophers; there is a higher Life for those who overcome the delusions of selfishness. But the original teachings of Christ have been lost sight of, and we have little more than exhortations without the explanations.

Theosophy recalls the ancient knowledge about human nature which makes these exhortations clear and shows their rationale.

After death, the *linga śarîra* and the principle of desire leave the physical body in company and coalesce. This makes a shape which survives the body for a greater or lesser period, according to the strength of the desires; but finally it also disintegrates and dies. It is this which is attracted to *séance*-rooms, where it is mistaken for the “spirit” of the departed. But it is entirely devoid of conscience, as the higher Triad has departed to Devachan. It receives vitality at the expense of the medium and sitters, and so its existence is prolonged. Such spooks are shunned by all reasonable people and very much dreaded by many races, who have rites and processes for driving them away. They are known as “devils,” “evil-spirits,” “bhûts,” etc. To have dealings with them is sorcery a very desperate expedient indeed on the part of those who desire peculiar powers, as such commerce must end disastrously for the sorcerer. Only Western nations have, in their ignorance, encouraged these spooks in good faith.

The immense importance of this subject in connection with funerary customs cannot be exaggerated. We find that all ancient peoples and the degraded descendants of ancient races, whom we call savages, have recognized and do recognize the necessity for some sort of what we might call “psychical sanitation” at the time of death. Always there are rites for the “laying” of the spook. Ancient science knew that this *Kâma-rûpa* would be liberated at the death of the body, and that it should be let alone and allowed to die out. The process of dying is a very solemn and sacred one. There should be perfect stillness and harmony around the supposed corpse while the Soul is slowly liberating itself from the inmost recesses of the body; and the body needs protection against the attacks of any *Kâma-rûpic* entity that might seek to enter its open gates.

As W. Q. Judge says:

This *Kâma-rûpa* spook is also the enemy of our civilization... our civilization which permits us to execute men for crimes committed, and thus throw out into the ether the mass of passion and desire free from the weight of the body and liable at any moment to be attracted to any sensitive person. Being thus attracted the deplorable images of crimes committed, and also the picture of the execution and all the accompanying curses and wishes for revenge are implanted in living persons, who, not seeing the evil, are unable to throw it off. Thus crimes and new ideas of crimes are willfully propagated every day by those countries where capital punishment prevails.

As the nervous system of people grows more sensitive, under the influence of our civilization, the fact of such obsessions becomes more apparent. We frequently hear of crimes done under sudden impulse by persons whose usual character is the very opposite. There is a whole realm

of sanitary science here left untouched. We have rules of hygiene and sanitation, but they do not touch this burning question of contamination by the desire-forces that are floating about in the atmosphere.

Anyone giving way to anger, lust, and other passions, habitually, is opening a doorway for the entrance of he knows not what, and is liable to a loss of control and balance.

THE HIGHER TRIAD

ÂTMAN-BUDDHI-MANAS

These three principles together constitute the real Man, the immortal Man. Âtman is, strictly speaking, not a principle of man.

It is no individual property of any man, but is the divine essence which has no body, no form, which is imponderable, invisible, and indivisible.... It only overshadows the mortal; that which enters into him and pervades the whole body being but its omnipresent rays or light, radiated through Buddhi, its vehicle and direct emanation. — H. P. Blavatsky

It is only in conjunction with Buddhi that it becomes the Higher Self of man; otherwise it is universal Spirit.

Âtmâ is neither your Spirit nor mine, but like sunlight shines on all. It is the universally diffused *Divine Principle*, and is inseparable from its one and absolute *Meta-spirit*, as the sunbeam is inseparable from sunlight.

— H. P. Blavatsky

The *spirit* of St. Paul may be taken for our purposes to be the Sanskrit *Âtman*. Spirit is universal, indivisible, and common to all. In other words, there are not many spirits, one for each man, but solely one spirit which shines upon all men alike, finding as many souls — roughly speaking — as there are beings in the world. In man the spirit has a more complete instrument or assemblage of tools with which to work. This spiritual identity is the basis of the philosophy. — W. Q. Judge

This universal spirit, or Âtman, is the source of all Life. What is its nature, as a unit or One, prior to the manifestation of the worlds, is a question that transcends our utmost powers of conception. But, when the worlds are manifested, the One Spirit becomes a duality — Spirit and Matter — and the interaction of these two causes life and creation and multiplication. In the higher nature of man, the first vehicle of Âtman is Buddhi or the Spiritual Soul, and these two together constitute the embodied spiritual Life of man. They are like the rays of the Sun, Buddhi corresponding to the rays, and Âtman to the invisible essence of light

which these rays manifest or carry. Hence, when Buddhi is spoken of, we must understand that it means Buddhi and Âtman together.

Âtmâ-Buddhi is the spiritual “Monad” of Man — that which was linked to the animal nature by the incoming of the Mânasaputras or Sons of Mind, who endowed man with the Manas, thus enabling the Monad to manifest itself in him, and rendering him omniscient, omnipotent, and immortal. This same Monad is also present in all the forms of nature; but imprisoned and unable to manifest itself. In them it is merely a latent spark — the source of life, but with most of its potentialities still unrevealed. It is through the possession of Manas that the Monad can manifest itself fully in Man. This can only happen when he reaches perfection; but meanwhile the Monad endows man with faculties higher than those of the other kingdoms, and more and more grand in proportion as the nature becomes purer and more elevated.

MANAS

The most important and interesting of all the seven principles is Manas, because it is the critical or turning point in our nature, and that which marks the superiority of Man over the lower orders. The word Manas is best translated as the “Thinker.” It is the real Man.

There is but one *real* man, enduring through the cycle of life and immortal in essence if not in form, and this is *Manas*, the Mind-man or embodied Consciousness. — H. P. Blavatsky

Manas is a differentiation from Mahat, the universal Mind; Mahat, the universal principle, is the source of Manas, the human principle.

The most important fact about Manas is that its nature is dual. As H. P. Blavatsky says, speaking of the incarnating Egos:

Once imprisoned, or incarnate, their essence becomes dual; that is to say, the *rays* of the eternal divine Mind, considered as individual entities, assume a twofold attribute, (*a*) their *essential* inherent characteristic, heaven-aspiring mind or higher Manas, and (*b*) the human quality of thinking, or animal cogitation, rationalized owing to the superiority of the human brain, the *Kâma*-tending or lower Manas. One gravitates toward Buddhi, the other tends downward, to the seat of passions and animal desires.

We thus see that there are in man two selves (so to say): the lower self, an illusion produced by the union of Manas with Kâma, the passions; the Higher Self, the real Self, formed from the union of Manas with Buddhi the Spiritual Soul. Yet even the lower mind is superior to that of animals, because the human brain has been perfected by its contact with Manas.

But above this mind there is a still higher mind — the Manas illuminated by Buddhi.

In studying Theosophy, one must dismiss from the mind any tinge of that modern way of thinking by which it is sought to derive mind from matter and make mental action a result of physiological processes. Apart from the fact that the mind is capable of functions which could not be represented by any mechanical formula, such a theory reduces mind to a mere abstraction. But mind is an entity and it is prior to matter. It is capable of existing independently of matter (at least of anything we call “matter”). But it is equally incorrect to say that the mind is immaterial, which would be reducing it to a mere abstraction. All we can say about mind is that it is some very refined kind of conscious matter in motion, and the moving is what we know as “thought.” We are aware of the presence of this entity about us, around the head, all over the body. The body is a result of it; the body obeys and can be changed by it. We can also feel that this mind may have various tinges or degrees of refinement, from gross and animal up to refined and spiritual, according as we direct it towards the low or the high.

Manas is the Knower, Thinker, Perceiver.

The course of evolution had developed the lower principles and produced at last the form of a man with a brain of better and deeper capacity than that of any other animal. But this man in form was not man in mind, and needed the fifth principle, the thinking perceiving one, to differentiate him from the animal kingdom and to confer the power of becoming self-conscious. — W. Q. Judge.

Manas acts as the link between the divine and the animal nature. Through it the course of evolution is enabled to proceed. “It was given to the mindless monads by others who had gone through all this process ages upon ages before.”

Following are some quotations from H. P. Blavatsky on this subject.

What is it that reincarnates in your belief?

The spiritual thinking Ego, the permanent principle in man, or that which is the seat of Manas. It is not Âtman, or even Âtman-Buddhi, regarded as the dual monad, which is the individual or divine man, but Manas; for *Âtman* is the universal ALL, and becomes the Higher Self of man only in conjunction with Buddhi, its vehicle, which links IT to the individuality or divine man. [*The Key to Theosophy*, p 120.]

MAHAT, or the “Universal Mind,” is the source of Manas. The latter is Mahat, *i.e.*, mind, in man.... It is, according to our philosophy, the *Mānasa-putras*, or “Sons of the Universal Mind,” who *created*, or rather produced, the *thinking* man, “*manu*,” by incarnating in the *third* Race mankind in our Round. It is Manas, therefore, which is the real incarnating and permanent

Spiritual Ego, the INDIVIDUALITY, and our various and numberless personalities only its external masks.

Manas... when inseparably united to the first two, is called the SPIRITUAL EGO.... This is the real Individuality, or the divine man. It is this Ego which — having originally incarnated in the *senseless* human form animated by, but unconscious of, the presence in itself of the dual monad, since it had no consciousness — made of that human-like form a *real man*. It is this Ego, this “Causal Body,” which overshadows every personality into which Karma forces it to incarnate. It is this Ego which is held liable for all the sins committed through and in every new body or personality — the evanescent masks which hide the true Individual through the long series of rebirths.

[*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 134]

Thus *Manas* not only endows the lower mind, making it far superior to that of even the highest animals, but connects it directly with the highest planes of Cosmic Intelligence and renders man’s future possibilities infinitely greater than his present attainments.

Manas is the reincarnating Being, who carries the fruition of all the different lives lived. In *Manas* is stored the memory of all this experience, together with the results and values thereof. From this it follows that anyone who has the *Manas* fully developed remembers all this; and also that, as most of us do not remember it, we have not the *Manas* fully developed. Memory is a faculty which can exist in very varying degrees of cultivation, as we all know. Most people do not trouble to cultivate the memory, particularly in these days of universal reading and writing. We allow things to pass from the mind and make few efforts to recall them. But it should be borne in mind that the word “memory” includes two functions — that of storing up, and that of bringing back or *recollecting*; and an inability to recollect does not necessarily imply that the memory is not there. It may be there, and we unable to bring it back; the muscles of the mind are too weak. It would be possible to train the memory so as to preserve an accessible record of all the ordinary events of life. It is possible to go still further and train the memory until it shows us the events of past lives. But it will be readily understood that this latter feat involves a vast amount of other kinds of training also. Those more distant memories were recorded by a mind that did not function through our present brain. Those memories are associated with the lives of *personalities* entirely different from our present personality. Those memories were imprinted in stretches of time from which we are separated by the gulf of one or more physical deaths. Nevertheless the memories are there.

Thus the real character of the immortal man is recorded in the *Manas* (its higher aspect).

The *Manas* perceives the impressions presented to it by the senses. If the connection between the *Manas* and the brain is broken, there is no such perception, unless with a person who can separate his astral body from the

physical. The senses alone cannot cognize objects, and the mind can be made to perceive objects without the aid of the senses, as happens when a hypnotist gives a suggestion to his subject; what the subject perceives is only a thought in the mind of the operator. This idea is, however, but an adumbration of the true powers of Manas, which include not only the creation of astral models, but also the power of clothing them in physical matter.

DIVINE MAGIC

Ancient Divine Magic is concerned with the knowledge of the right use of man's faculties for the purpose of attaining wisdom and emancipation from the delusions caused by his union with the flesh. The real gospel of the Christ, which became lost to the world and replaced by dogma in the early centuries, taught the most sacred mysteries regarding the true nature of man. There were and always have been teachings for the public, veiled in allegory, and teachings for those admitted to the Schools of the Mysteries. The "Christos" is the Buddhi-Manas. Manas is the "Son of God," who sacrifices himself and descends on Earth in order to raise up the lower principles.

He takes on the "sins" of the personalities which are formed by the successive incarnations, and suffers for those sins. Finally, he is reunited to Âtman-Buddhi — to his "Father" — and redeems the man.

The mystic union of Manas with Buddhi is the theme of many a misunderstood allegory and such has been the profanation to which such allegories have been subjected that one can hardly speak of them at all.

In THOUGHT man possesses a power of unlimited scope. It is a divine power and its possession makes man a God, capable of any height of attainment. Yet how he neglects and abuses his power! For the most part he allows his mind to be the playground of wandering ideas and fancies that drift in from he knows not where, and of passions and emotions that rise up from his lower nature. Even worse is happening in our day. For there has arisen a school known as the "New Thought," {a religious movement in the late 19th century resurging the 'ancient thought' of a variety of religions,} which attempts to use the powers of will and thought for the purpose of "self-development" — that is, development of the *personality*. With this kind of thing which represents a revival of a feeble kind of black magic, the Science of Divine Magic so reverently spoken of by H. P. Blavatsky can have nothing to do. For Divine Magic the first necessity is an entire subordination of self-interest and a determination to live only for the truth and for the welfare of humanity. The presence of a selfish desire, even of the kind often regarded as innocent, is enough to bring into play the lower forces of our nature and to exclude the spiritual

forces. We cannot approach the Higher Self except by relegating the lower self to its place of subordination. Man may at best succeed in degrading a few of his powers, to his own undoing, but he cannot drag down the God and harness It to his chariot of selfishness. The powers of Manas are great indeed — for those pure enough to be able to avail themselves thereof.

As it was in consequence of the growing selfishness and violence of the world that the sacred Mysteries were withdrawn, so it can only be by the spread of a new spirit of Oneness that they can be restored. Hence this is the first object of the UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD AND THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

3

Karma

A Student

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WHAT WE MEAN BY THE “DOCTRINE OF KARMA”

When Theosophists speak of the doctrine of Karma, they usually mean the doctrine that as we have sown, so shall we reap; and what we reap, that have we also sown. In other words, our fate and fortune are the consequences of our own acts and we incur reward or penalty according to our exact merits. There is no arbitrary interference of a divine dispensation, nor is anything left to mere “chance.” This doctrine is not comprehensible without the accompanying doctrine of Reincarnation, because many of the experiences which we meet with are the result of things we did in past lives, and many of the things we do now will not yield their effects until a future life. When we speak of a person’s “Karma,” and say (for instance) that his Karma is good or bad, we mean — not exactly his luck and not exactly his merit — but something between the two.

Thus the doctrine of Karma is simply a more fully stated form of the scientific doctrine of the “Conservation of Energy,” a doctrine which, as scientific men tell us, holds that there is an exact relation between cause and effect in the workings of Nature. But the doctrine of Karma extends this principle to the realm of moral, mental and spiritual forces, and in fact to the whole of life, making it a universal Law.

It may seem almost a truism when stated clearly; yet most people fail to recognize the Law, and the chief reason is that they are prevented by their religious and scientific ideas from perceiving its truth. We cannot understand Karma unless we admit the Soul’s eternal existence throughout a long succession of Earth-lives; for a single Earth-life is but a minute fragment of a man’s life and not enough to “show the pattern.” And since neither religion nor science teaches us anything about Reincarnation, but both represent man’s life on Earth as lasting less than a century, it is impossible to make the notion of absolute justice fit in with them.

RELIGION AND KARMA

The absence of the doctrine of Karma from ordinary religious teaching causes a grave discrepancy — the difficulty of reconciling our conviction of the justice of the Higher Law with the facts of life as we find them.

This difficulty is responsible for innumerable mental conflicts, for sermons and essays innumerable, for disputes, schisms, secessions, creations of new sects, and lapses into “infidelity.” It is practically the whole of religious thought in a nutshell, for nearly all questions turn on this difficulty in some form or other. It is, in short, the conflict between our intuition (the Divine voice from within) and our intellect, and arises from the fact that the latter is not developed proportionately but is hampered by ignorance and strange fallacies. There is no real conflict between intuition

and intellect, between faith and reason; the conflict is between true faith and false reason. The justice of the Law ought to be not only felt in the heart but perceived by the mind; and it would be so if we only had a comprehensible science of human life such as Theosophy affords.

There is no need to enlarge upon the subject of the incompatibility between our conceptions of life and our conviction of divine justice; the topic is only too familiar. We all know that on the theory that man lives only one Earth-life, the good go unrewarded and the wicked prosper; that people suffer experiences for which there seems neither rhyme nor reason; and that the Deity seems to be totally indifferent. Some have given up religion altogether and profess not to believe in the existence of Deity, and others have sought various ways of explaining the discrepancy; while still others dismiss it as far as possible from their minds. Some say that we cannot expect to understand “God’s ways and purposes, but that he knows what is best.” Some try to prove that the good are rewarded interiorly in some way and the wicked are punished in their consciences. Some say that all inequalities will be adjusted in heaven. But at best these explanations are very inadequate, and what they achieve is to show the sublime power of faith against the obstacles of ignorance and superstition.

We have been told again and again that it is “presumptuous to reason about God’s purposes and that our poor human intelligence cannot hope to understand them.” Nevertheless knowledge and science have progressed, and we slowly recognize that the laws of Nature are but the voice of Deity, and that we need not be afraid of finding out anything we ought not to know, for Deity’s wisdom is infinite, surpassing all human knowledge. Our progress in science has enabled us to understand Life better than we did before. In the same way we should surely endeavor to understand its laws in the moral world and to extend our knowledge as far as possible; and we ought to realize that the more we find out, the more it will exalt our conception of Deity. True science has nothing impious or irreverent in it. Our intellects are god-given and we should use them for what they are meant for — for sounding the truth.

When we find that ordinary theories of human life are altogether at variance with the true religion of our Souls — with the Divine revelation from within — we ought to realize that there is something the matter with those theories. And when we find that the doctrine of Karma, and its twin-doctrine of Reincarnation, explain these discrepancies and reconcile the facts of Nature with our faith in Divine justice, we ought to treat that doctrine with respect, as worthy of consideration.

The idea that the inequalities of this life are adjusted in heaven is more consoling than logical. This is a point that has been discussed under the head of “Reincarnation,” where it was pointed out that under such a theory our life on Earth becomes meaningless, being an utterly insignificant episode in the midst of an eternity of spiritual existence. We are sent here

to learn lessons and snatched away before we have hardly begun, leaving behind many unfulfilled hopes, unachieved purposes, uncorrected mistakes, and future lessons. There is nothing more glaringly inconsistent than this notion of a single unique Earth-life lost in an infinite ocean of Soul-life. Though it is consoling to read the incomparable words that tell us that "Thy sun shall no more go down," and "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes," these words acquire a more sublime meaning when understood as the promise of spiritual liberation and of the blessed state of the perfected Man, than when taken as the description of a heaven to which the few elect shall go to be eternally recompensed for what they may have done during the few short years of Earth-life.

The doctrine of Karma teaches that there is a perfect relation between cause and effect in the sphere of human acts and experiences, as in the sphere of natural science. In other words it teaches that perfect justice rules in human affairs, and that experience is proportioned to merit. No man can possibly suffer or enjoy consequences which he has not merited by his own actions; and everything which we reap, that have we also sown. But the doctrine of Karma does more than merely assert this principle. It demonstrates how it is true. Our intuition and sense of the fitness of things tells us that the Power which rules must be just. The alternative is to suppose that that Power is capricious; a supposition which is equally untenable whether we conceive of that Power as Deity or as any "scientific" equivalent for Deity. Theologians and scientists agree in attributing to their respective deities perfect justice and impartiality, the contrary hypothesis being untenable as affording no basis for philosophy. Thus, whether ruled by "God," or by some equally mysterious and all-powerful agency called "chance" or "destiny," we are equally in the hands of Law, just, impartial, unerring.

But how to show the just workings of this omnipresent Law — that is the difficulty. Difficult, however, only so long as we have an untrue theory of life; for the false must necessarily be out of key with the true.

The acceptance of the doctrine of Reincarnation is an essential condition for the understanding of Karma. For the period occupied by a single life-time is so short in comparison with the career of the Soul, which is the real Man, that it does not suffice for a tracing out of the sequence of cause and effect. Many of the experiences which we undergo in this life are the result of things we have done in our past lives, and many of the things we are doing now will not take effect until a future life. For as a day is but a single link in the chain of our life from birth to death, so is that life itself but a link in the greater chain of the Soul's life.

The difficulty of reconciling our innate conviction that the Universe is governed by just and impartial law, with the facts of life as they appear to our limited view, has been the great stumbling block of philosophy and religious speculation. Deeply religious natures have been content to trust

and rest in the faith that all will be made clear in a future life. But more thoughtful minds have sought a more satisfactory explanation. But, ingenious as some of these explanations are, the attempt is useless without Reincarnation; for it is simply not true that justice is done within the space of a single life. But the knowledge of the fact of Reincarnation makes all simple. The doctrines of Reincarnation and Karma complete and explain each other. On the one hand, the principle of causation demands that we shall live again on Earth; for we create during one life causes which cannot be worked out in any other way except in another Earth-life. A man dies full of unrealized longings for certain experiences peculiar to life on Earth, and these intense desires will draw him back to the field of their fruition. He goes away with many things begun that must be finished, and many purposes planned but not carried out. His life is only the preface to a necessary sequel — one chapter out of many in the great story. On the other hand Reincarnation explains Karma. The two truths are mutually consistent; and further, they are consistent with the other teachings of Theosophy and the remaining facts of experience. Thus does the truth vindicate itself by its consistency and wholeness.

The notion that perfect justice rules the world is one from which we cannot escape. It may be called a primary axiom of philosophy. No philosophy can be made on the opposite hypothesis; for the statement that all is chaos and haphazard is nonsense. We may accept such a statement, if we like, but we cannot build a philosophy on it; for all reasoning proceeds on rules and all thought has definite laws. We cannot do a sum on the hypothesis that 2 and 2 make 4 or 5 or 10 fortuitously. Thus, whether we call the source of eternal Law, God, or Nature, or Eternal Justice, or the Conservation of Energy, we are equally compelled to postulate that it is *law* and not chaos.

Ever since, thirty years ago, H. P. Blavatsky asserted as one of the fundamental principles of the Theosophical Society the existence of the spiritual powers of Man, there has been in our modern world a rapid tendency to get the Christian religion out of its old dogmatic grooves and back to the original lines of its Founder; to enlarge our conceptions both of God and of Man. We used to hear that the authority of churches and of authoritative interpretations of the scriptures were the last court of appeal, and that any science which contradicted these was wrong and pernicious. Now the cry is rather, "Let us study Life and Nature in every possible way and endeavor to comprehend God's plan. No knowledge which science can give us can possibly transcend the limits of that knowledge which is man's right, nor can any study of Nature lead us away from its divine author." Formerly we used to hear that the promptings of our own inner consciousness were unreliable and even sinful; but now we tend rather to recognize them as among the many channels through which the Eternal reveals itself.

Let us then, in the spirit of this larger view of religion, try to understand eternal justice better. It is the theological God, and the various narrow conceptions of Deity that have so confused our ideas as to the relation between Deity and Man, and given rise to the contrariety between science and faith. The idea of the Eternal has been belittled by attributing to it all kinds of human limitations and infirmities. As said by H. P. Blavatsky:

INQUIRER. Do you believe in God?

THEOSOPHIST. That depends upon what you mean by the term.

INQUIRER. I mean the God of the Christians, the Father of Jesus, and the Creator: the Biblical God of Moses, in short.

THEOSOPHIST. In such a God we do not believe. We reject the idea of a personal, or an extracosmic and anthropomorphic God, who is but the gigantic shadow of a *man*, and not even of man at his best. The God of theology, we say — and prove it — is a bundle of contradictions and a logical impossibility.

INQUIRER. Then you are atheists?

THEOSOPHIST. Not that we know of, and not unless the epithet of “Atheist” is to be applied to all those who disbelieve in an anthropomorphic God. We believe in a Universal Divine Principle, the root of ALL, from which all proceeds, and within which all shall be absorbed at the end of the great cycle of Being....

Our DEITY is neither in a paradise, nor in a particular tree, building or mountain; it is everywhere, in every atom of the visible as of the invisible Cosmos; in, over, and around every invisible atom and divisible molecule; for IT is the mysterious power of evolution and involution, the omnipresent, omnipotent, and even omniscient creative potentiality.

— *The Key to Theo-sophy*, ch. v.

It is clear that the God of the Universe cannot be limited by those human attributes of personality, etc., which so limit man’s knowledge and power. Such a conception of Deity is inconsistent with the notion of omnipotence. Yet there are those who, in their superficial reasoning, imagine that by depriving Deity of personality, we thereby *reduce* him. But there is no question of reducing the Deity to the level of those beings which have not yet developed personality; that would be mere savage Nature-worship or fetish-worship. Deity is *beyond* and *above* personality.

NOTE ON THE WORD “LAW”

Attention is drawn to the fact that the word “law” is commonly used in two different senses, which are often confounded with each other. It may mean (1) an edict, command, or ordinance; (2) a principle, rule, or prevalent order of things. The former is the expression of some will which has to be obeyed; the latter is a formulation of known facts. Thus the law of Moses

is not similar to the law of inverse squares, nor are the laws of harmony things which must be obeyed under penalty of legal proceedings. These distinctions may seem trivial when thus presented, but they are not so when slipshod methods of thought cause them to be forgotten, as is sometimes done by inexperienced reasoners, who, having clothed their thoughts in words, afterwards forget that some of the words have two meanings and pick them up again by the wrong end as it were. For instance, when we observe that two bodies always attract each other with a force varying directly as the product of their masses and inversely as square of their distance apart, we call this fact the “law of gravitation”; but when we go and deliberately aver that this law of gravitation (which we have just invented) is capable of actually pulling down an apple off a tree upon the head of a subsessile philosopher, we are guilty of the above mentioned blunder; because the dry fact is that no general principle, however neatly put, can pull down anything, any more than the laws of thought can compel a man to think. The implication is that what pulled down that apple was some mysterious force whose workings are known as the law of gravitation; but to say that the law did the work is like saying that a man walks by the force of ambulation.

In the expression “Law of Karma,” the word “law” would seem to be used in both senses, sometimes the one, sometimes the other; but we must not mix them up. We can use the word to mean an abstraction, a generalization, of our merit and demerit, or of our experiences; or we can use it to denote an actual dynamic force which acts upon us and brings about the experiences. For there are Beings who are the agents of Karma and Man himself is one of them.

SCIENCE AND KARMA

Modern science is proud of its generalizations. One of these is the Law of Conservation of Energy. The Law of Karma may be regarded as an extension, a very great extension, in fact a completion of this.

The Law, as enunciated by modern science, states that the sum-total of energy in a closed system remains constant throughout any changes of form that energy may undergo; and, more broadly, that the sum-total of energy in the Universe is always the same. No energy can be lost. When it disappears in one form, it reappears in another. The quantity of mechanical energy used up in friction generates an equivalent of heat-energy. A given quantity of electricity will decompose a given quantity of copper-sulphate and yield a given quantity of copper. The quantity of copper which will be obtained can be exactly calculated, and any incidental escape of energy can also be calculated and allowed for. It is known to chemists that compounds contain a varying amount of potential energy locked up in them; and that this energy, which is often enormous, is set free when the

compounds are decomposed. In other cases energy is absorbed. Of late years this science of thermo-chemistry has been extended by the discovery of new facts which lead to the conviction that the atoms themselves are compounds of still smaller rudiments, and contain in their turn an enormous quantity of potential energy. It is by virtue of this energy that they are so stable; and it is by virtue of the same energy that they may become so potent if we can decompose them. Needless to say, it is radium that is chiefly referred to here.

Of course reasonable and sincere scientists are not disturbed at finding that their scheme of the conservation of energy is liable to extension at any moment. That is what one naturally expects of a provisional hypothesis. Nevertheless prejudice often contends with reason and renders innovations, however true, unwelcome. Hence there are some who have not welcomed the vast vista which the phenomena of radium have opened out. We are here confronted with an apparently illimitable source of energy, and the only item which figures on the other side of our balance-sheet against this prodigal expenditure is the almost imperceptible wasting of a minute particle.

But this is a very small circumstance when we take into account all the things that science has omitted altogether from its calculations. What of mental energy and the power of a human will? Are not these also forces? If we are to take into account the dynamic value of a human thought, we must indeed measure it in terms whose magnitude and variability are altogether in a different scale from that of the grosser forces. And if we are not to take these things into our calculations, then our calculations are indeed limited and inadequate.

True science declares that not only the gross physical plane which we can see, and those subtler but still physical forces whose effects we can measure, but the whole universe of life, with all its forces, mental, psychic and spiritual, must come under exact law and be subject to the same eternal rule of cause and effect. Otherwise there is chaos, or the arbitrary will of an imperfect Deity.

There are not a few cases in which the workings of the law of Karma can be directly traced, even by our (at present) limited intelligence. We can understand, for instance, how early years spent in sensual excess will impair the organism and bring on paralysis in old age. No one nowadays would think of attributing the stroke to the will of an avenging deity; yet such was at one time the belief. True we may still admit that the punishment is by the "decree of Deity," since Deity represents eternal Law and Justice; but this admission does not prevent us from recognizing the part which our own folly has played in the affair. In brief, we recognize that the acts of man call into play Divine Law; that both God and man may be, in different senses, the cause of the punishment; and that though we invoke God, we must at the same time put our own shoulder to the wheel.

In addition to the effects whose cause we can trace, there are effects whose cause we cannot (in the present state of our knowledge) yet trace. But is there any sound reason for placing these effects in a different category? Does not logic declare that they also are due to the operation of eternal justice? Take the case of a man born lame. We cannot trace the connection between his affliction and his (*presumptive*) fault. We do not know of Reincarnation, so our speculations are shut off effectually. But if we could see that man's past, in his preceding lives, we should probably be able to recognize the cause of his affliction, its justice and its needfulness for the Soul's experience.

In the case of a bodily disease, such as that just cited, we can often trace out the chain of causation, because it inheres in the visible body which our science can study. Yet even here we fail, because sometimes the beginnings of the chain were in a past life. People are born with hereditary predispositions to disease; and, though we can trace the cause so far as heredity is concerned, we do not discern the moral connection or perceive how the man's affliction depends on his own past acts. We do not know of Reincarnation, and so our investigations are brought to a final stop.

In the case of other kinds of fate, such as sudden financial ruin, accident, or untimely death, it is harder to trace a connection, because we have no science which has investigated the phenomena of those inner planes where the invisible forces act. We still have to take refuge in the phrase, "visitation of Providence," or what amounts to the same thing, "chance." Luck and fate are counters which denote the gaps in our knowledge, like the *X* in an equation.

But it will be easy to understand why we fail to discern the *rationale* of fate and fortune, if we reflect what tremendous gaps there are in our knowledge. What do we know of thought? We can trace a few of its effects when they operate through our own bodily mechanism and produce visible action, or when they act on our nervous system and produce physiological changes. But thought has a power which acts outside of the body. A thought is a most powerful center of force, and once created it passes away from us and continues to exist, in company with countless other thoughts, in a kind of "space" which is entirely different from the so-called "three-dimensional" space of our sense perceptions. This thought-world is however an objective reality; and we all live in it, breathe it and stumble blindly about in it with our undeveloped inner senses. What about the dynamics of this thought-world? Ay, there is the gap in our knowledge. We are, to use a metaphor of H. P. Blavatsky's, spinning webs of destiny around us like a spider spins his web. We are each hour, each minute, accumulating stores of energy in the thought-world, which, by a law as exact and reasonable as that of physical elasticity, will sooner or later react on ourselves.

Let us consider how a so-called “fortuitous” event takes place. What is chance, anyhow? If I toss a coin, what determines whether it will turn up heads or tails? Obviously there must be a chain of mechanical causes — the movements of the muscles and nerves, etc.; and behind that must be mental causes, since the mind moves the body. If it is not my conscious intelligence that directs the issue, then it must be some unconscious element in my mind or nervous system. We cannot pause to follow out this thought further, but it leads to the mysteries of the lost science of divination. Our fate is perhaps determined by the “chance” direction we take on the streets or the “casual” meeting of an acquaintance. But what determines which road we shall go? A mental caprice. And what determined that mental caprice? All is law; there is a chain, though we may not see it; chance is a word that means nothing.

Sometimes we get up in the morning and everything goes wrong. It is because of our mental state. Normally our safety is secured by a thousand little unconscious and half-conscious acts and instincts. But, if our senses are dulled and our nerves jangled, our instincts fail us, our reflexes get tangled, and we bump our head and upset our lamp. Or, again, we may have created such an unpleasant atmosphere around us by our thoughts that other people feel it and shun us or instinctively assail us. Here the effect can be traced to the cause. On the larger scale it is the same. In short, life is full of causes of which we do not know the effects, and effects of which we do not know the causes. On such a basis will you presume to deny the doctrine of Karma? Better study a little first.

In short, Theosophy does not admit of such a thing as chance or accident. Nothing can happen without a cause; though the cause may be invisible.

It is further evident that there are several threads of Karma in the skein of human life. An event may have a physical cause and a moral cause also. Therefore it is absurd to debate whether a thing is brought about by a moral cause or a physical cause, because it is usually brought about by both. We attribute diseases and calamities to physical causes, and other races have attributed them to the visitation of the Gods; but, clearly, whether caused by the Gods or not, they must have a physical cause also; and conversely, an epidemic, although brought about by carelessness in sanitation, may and must also be a moral retribution.

The place where our survey of life breaks down most seriously is at the beginning and the end of a life-time. None of our popular teachings tell us anything about birth and death. Since a man reaps in one life the consequences of what he has sown in previous lives, it is clear that there must be some explanation as to how the influence is carried over from one incarnation to the other. If anyone feels inclined to shrink at the difficulty of the explanation, let him remember that ordinary life is full of similar difficulties which science does not attempt to explain, yet with which we

are so familiar that we take them for granted. Why, then, balk at a difficulty which is no greater, merely because it is less familiar?

A good illustration for our present purpose is that of the plant and its seed. In that seed (or around it or somewhere in connection with it there must be stored up the germ of everything which the future plant will possess. But what can science tell us about this mystery? Will the microscope disclose the conditions which determine the future character of the plant? Wherein or how are those characteristics contained? We can only whisper, “Molecules,” and speculate whether the mere collocation of imaginary particles in an ideal space has anything about it of a causal or determinative power. The fact is that the real seed is invisible, and the entire plant exists complete in all its parts in a finer kind of matter called astral matter before it does so physically.

And so with man, it is useless to try to trace a physical connection between one incarnation and another. Since the Reincarnating Ego is the only part of man which survives the interval, the causes must inhere in that. These causes are in the germ state; they are latent, like the contents of the plant-seed.

SKANDHAS

For the purpose of explaining to some extent how the attributes of one Earth-life are carried over to the next, it will be convenient to use a term employed in the Buddhistic philosophy — the term *Skandhas*. Skandhas may be defined as the “attributes” with which the essential Man is clothed, and which go to make up his character and personality. In the Buddhist teaching there are five of these Skandas: *rûpa*, form or body, material qualities; *vedâna*, sensation; *sañña*, abstract ideas; *samkhâra*, tendencies of mind; *viññâna*, mental powers. Of these we are formed; by them we are conscious of existence, and through them communicate with the world about us. — (*The Key to Theosophy*, ch. viii.)

When the Ego enters Devachan, it takes with it only the finest aroma of the Skandhas, the cream of the experiences which it has acquired during life — only the most spiritual essence of those experiences. All the grosser part disappears, with or after the physical death. The bodily skandhas decay, later on the astral skandhas; and so with each set, the kâmic skandhas dying out in *Kâma-loka*. But, though these attributes of the personality disappear from the field of action, they do not utterly perish. They pass into the latent or germ state, thus to abide until the re-entry of the Reincarnating Ego into Earth-life, when they attach themselves to it and thus become the agents of recompense and retribution. In short the simile of the seed applies. It is sufficient for our present purpose to point out that there is actually a concatenation of cause and effect bridging the

grave and bringing about unerringly exact consequences on all planes, physical, psychic, mental, etc.

The mysteries of the process by which an Ego, about to reincarnate, selects, or is assigned by the agents of Law, the physical vehicle which he is to inhabit, are too deep for our present capacity. But let no dull mechanical conceptions of the “scientific” brain mar the contemplation of a subject so solemn and sacred. Not in the realm of “blind forces” moves the Ego, nor does the immortal Self of man obey molecular attraction and fortuity. In the realms whither our Souls pass after death, dwell Intelligences as far superior to those of mortal man as is their radiant vesture to his dull clay. Karma is no mere mechanical law of action and reaction; it uses minds and wills as its agents, minds and wills of all grades, from those of men who blindly obey its mandates, up to those of Great Souls who willingly acquiesce in its sublime equity.

THE WORKING OF THE LAW

But, though we cannot reduce Karma to the level of a mere physico-mechanical process, neither can we on the other hand leave it an empty abstraction. There must be agents by which are performed the operations that unite cause to effect. And here it is necessary to call attention to a fallacy of modern science. This fallacy is that which postulates in the Universe two kinds of force, intelligent or living, and unintelligent or dead. The former kind is supposed to rule in the animated kingdoms of Nature and the latter kind in the mineral kingdom. But according to logic and Theosophy there can be no such thing as a blind force, and even some scientists themselves have analyzed the conceptions of modern physics and proved that such a thing is a logical absurdity. (See *Concepts of Modern Physics*, by the late Judge Stallo, who analyzes the meanings of the words “force,” “matter,” “atom,” etc.)

Even the humblest actions of the particles of matter, the lowliest chemical reactions and the play of electrical phenomena are brought about by the action of Mind and Will of some sort; and, furthermore, this Mind and Will must belong to some Being or Beings. The trinity of Self, Mind and Will is the unresolvable unit of our intellectual conceptions; we must postulate them either directly or in veiled form, and beyond it we cannot analyze. Of course this does not deny that there are also mechanical agencies, but it merely states that such mechanical agencies are the secondary causes, minds being the primary causes. Just as our own body is a mechanism actuated by a mind, so is every other body in the Universe. It will thus be seen that modern science has a vast gap to fill, in not accounting for the conscious element in Nature; and into this gap would probably fit many of those conceptions of which we read in ancient beliefs and which recognized the existence of Nature-Spirits, Elementals, Gods,

Devas, Gnomes, Genii, Nymphs, and so on. Degraded as these conceptions often are, into mere popular superstitions, they are nevertheless a survival of what was once a luminous and exact Science of Nature.

In short Theosophy postulates an innumerable host of Beings other than Man and the animals, existing on various planes of space invisible to the physical eye, and graduated from those which fulfil the lowliest functions up to those which preside over the destinies of planets. Such Beings are the agents of Karma — a fact which was surely recognized by antiquity and which is still believed in, though in superstitious manner, by the peasantry and some foreign peoples. For examples we might turn to an almost inexhaustible number of sources. Take Puck and the fairies, for instance; what are they but the agents for carrying out minor operations of adjustment in Nature? Mere fairy-tales and comedies now, perhaps; but not always so. So with the Fates and Furies of classical mythology and with innumerable Gods in the Pantheons of Eastern religions.

Such beings are the agents of Karma, fulfilling upon Man the destinies which he invites and courts by his acts and thoughts. They act according to the laws of their being, and Man, by acting upon them, causes them to react upon him. As Nature-Spirits are dealt with elsewhere, we merely give the following quotation from H. P. Blavatsky:

... the “four Mahârâjahs” or great Kings of the Dhyân-Chohans, the Devas who preside, each over one of the four cardinal points. They are the Regents or Angels who rule over the Cosmical Forces of North, South, East and West, Forces having each a distinct occult property. These BEINGS are also connected with Karma, as the latter needs physical and material agents to carry out her decrees, such as the four kinds of winds, for instance, professedly admitted by Science to have their respective evil and beneficent influences upon the health of Mankind and every living thing.... It is not the “Rector” or “Mahârâjah” who punishes or rewards, with or without God’s permission or order, but man himself — his deeds or Karma, attracting individually and collectively (as in the case of whole nations sometimes), every kind of evil and calamity. We produce CAUSES and these awaken the corresponding powers in the sidereal world; which powers are magnetically and irresistibly attracted to — and react upon — those who produced these causes; whether such persons are practically the evil-doers, or simply Thinkers who brood mischief. Thought is matter, we are taught by modern Science; and “every particle of the existing matter must be a register of all that has happened.” — *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, part I, stanza 5.

INEQUALITIES IN KARMA, AND HOW ADJUSTED

It has been stated by the Teachers of Theosophy that no human incarnation is exactly adapted in every detail and degree to the merits or requirements of the Ego; — a statement which, at first sight, might seem

to contradict the general statement of Karma. But Karma provides that justice shall be done in the long run. If perfect balance were maintained in every detail and every moment, there would be nothing left to be adjusted. It is quite in accordance with the workings of Nature that there should be temporary deviations from harmony, to be subsequently restored. In the material world there is never perfect adjustment or completeness. It is a world of adjustments and compromises. Elsewhere it is pointed out that one of the results achieved by the Soul's sojourn in that state is the adjustment of inequalities of fate met with during life.

HOW WE DISTURB THE BALANCE OF NATURE

One way of explaining the Law of Karma is to state that man, by his actions, disturbs the harmony and balance of life; and that the life, in its effort to regain harmony, brings a reaction upon him. This is quite in accordance with scientific conceptions of the balance of forces. It would be stated somewhat as follows. The sum-total of energy within a closed system is always the same, and every displacement within that system causes a displacement of equal and opposite effect in the other parts of the system. Every act of man rebounds like a stone that is thrown; and in the long run the man will prove to be his own target.

We can also say that an action is by its very nature as such, dual, consisting of an outgoing and a return, or of equal and opposite phases like a wave in physics; but that in our short-sighted philosophy, we discern only one half of the action. Many actions pass through their entire phase in a very short space of time, so that their duality is apparent; as in a quarrel, for instance, the twofold character of which is proverbial. If we put our finger into the fire and are burnt, the double character of the event is obvious; cause and effect are united. But very often there is between the two an interval of time so long that we fail to discern the connection; and, when it is added that this interval may even include the gulf of death, the failure to trace the connection becomes still more comprehensible.

THE LIMITATIONS OF OUR MINDS

PERSONALITY. PERSONAL DEITY

If we are to understand the ways of eternal justice we must be prepared to shake off the fetters of our minds; and when we consider the influences under which those minds have been developed, we shall scarcely fail to admit *a priori* that there must be many such fetters. Spinoza says that the reason why men live in such a state of puzzlement and discontent is that they regard everything from the standpoint of personal interest and allow their passions and imaginations to become mixed up

with their perceptions and to give everything false color and perspective. It is therefore necessary, says he, to eliminate carefully such disturbing factors from our mind, as a scientific observer eliminates all sources of error from his instruments. Now what are the chief preconceptions to which we are liable?

First let us consider some of the narrow ideas which we have unconsciously imbibed from centuries of dogmatic religious teachings. There is the notion of the personal God. This notion gives rise to the ideas of caprice, anger, favor and similar personal emotions assignable to a great personality. To this notion of a personal God who can be incensed or appeased, we have added as a natural corollary the idea of a subservient Man, "born in sin," unworthy and incompetent, dependent for all good upon divine favor. These ideas tinge the mind and cause it to take narrow and mean views. Take, for instance, the way in which we regard our fortune. We call it good or bad according as it pleases or displeases our feelings, according as it meets the approval or disapproval of our little wills and judgments; and we say that we are the "subjects of God's anger or pleasure" accordingly. In brief we take a view of reward and punishment which is not very wise and far-seeing. It cannot be denied that religious teachings have favored this view, for do they not hold up continually before our eyes the picture of a Deity angered or appeased? Whenever great minds have taken a broader view, it has been in spite of dogmatic teaching and not infrequently in the teeth of persecution.

It is now time that we should free our minds from these elementary notions, by which the ideas of God and of human life are associated with fear and abjection, as in the case of savages. These notions arise from the lower nature of man, which is mean and narrow; they are not consistent with the dignity that should belong to a divinely inspired being such as man is.

It is the part of a suspicious and surly nature to quarrel with its lot and imagine that it is being punished when it is not. It is not dignified to cry out whenever anything happens that is not quite in accordance with our wishes, and to cringe before providence in a spirit of supplication. The general division of fortune into good and bad is made on very narrow principles. Wealth is considered to be good fortune and poverty bad; but from a higher point of view this may or may not be true. Again, it is possible that bodily affliction may be a greater blessing than health in certain cases. The higher our point of view the more tolerant become our ideas of fate and fortune, until we arrive at the conclusion that everything which can happen to us may be for the good of the Soul.

But still more important is the attitude we take in regard to our responsibility. If we consider ourselves the victims of external powers, we having no control over our destiny, then it is no wonder if we fall into an attitude of supplication and often feel ourselves ill-used, or grow

indifferent to life's duties. But, once let the idea prevail that we are masters of our destiny, and the whole attitude of mind changes. We can say with Faust:

Du, stolzes Herz, du hast es ja gewollt!

“’Tis thou, proud heart, ’tis thou hast willed it so!”

The so-called misfortunes which beset us are those which we have incurred by our own Will, for the education of our character; as one who is in training sets himself difficult tasks to accomplish. To quarrel with our fate is to be disloyal to our own Soul; it is to become forgetful of our real destiny. Let us learn to look upon ourselves as knights braving the dangers in search of Truth, like those heroes of the sacred myths who slew dragons and overcame enchantresses in order to win the Princess. In short, let us revive the ideals of Chivalry, which taught manly dignity and womanly self-respect, and which have been largely supplanted by that debasing attitude of mind according to which we are “miserable sinners,” whose duty is to go through this life in humble submission until we are released from it to go to selfish bliss. Chivalry upheld the true Freedom — the freedom of the human Soul — and taught men to regard all situations as opportunities, and all so-called misfortunes as chances for showing courage and for learning something. We have become sordid and commercial in our ideas, even of religion. There is too much petty calculation of chances and weighing of profit and loss; we are too anxious about the fate of what we call our souls. There has been a tradition which associated piety with worldly prosperity and exalted selfish thrift into a cardinal virtue; and, however useful this may have been on occasion, it has been carried too far.

Hence the words “punishment” and “reward” acquire new meanings. The word punishment as implying a visitation of anger or revenge, should be banished from our dictionary. Retribution is but the natural outcome of mistaken acts, and it should be regarded as a just and merciful provision by which we are enabled to learn better. A man with an easy life may be a feeble character who has not yet merited more strengthening treatment; while a man who has a difficult life may be one who has earned the right to be taught.

One could of course dilate to any extent on such subjects; but the present purpose is to show the bearing of the doctrine of Karma on them. The doctrine of Karma simply brings our intellectual convictions into harmony with our moral convictions; replacing those theological errors which have been such stumbling blocks. We *feel* that man is master of his own destiny; Karma enables us to *see* it.

Personality has acquired altogether too great a prominence in our civilization. It colors all our views. Personal salvation occupies too large

a place, and we each aim at a personal and exclusive relationship with God. According to Zoroastrianism, personal attainment was considered, not as being for the benefit of the possessor, but as an addition to the sum-total of good of the world. And truly our personality is a little thing, compared with the greatness of the world — compared with the greatness of the true Self. Looking at humanity in its crowds, how can we imagine that its multitudinous petty personalities are all so important! Dependent on this exaggeration of the personality is an exaggerated attachment to Earth-life and an exaggerated fear of death. We are not sufficiently conscious of our immortality. Nor are we sufficiently conscious of our solidarity. There are many social souls whom the world does not deem very worthy, who may be much nearer the Light than many a pious and respected character, because they are not cankered with the blight of self-righteousness. As a learned divine sings:

Give me an heart that beats
In all its pulses with the common heart
Of human kind, which the same things make glad
The same make sorry! Give me grace enough
Even in their first beginnings to detect
The endeavors which the proud heart still is making
To cut itself from off the common root,
To set itself upon a private base,
To have wherein to glory of its own,
Beside the common glory of the kind!
Each such attempt in all its hateful pride
And meanness, give me to detect and loathe,—
A man, and claiming brotherhood with men!
— *Trench*

And we are apt to carry this personal attitude of mind into our reflections on the subject of Karma. The question of our own personal merits and demerits looms too large before the eye. But, though perfect justice is done to each unit of humanity, it might be better if we were less anxious about our own particular case. The comradeship with our fellows which is so necessary and so precious to us involves us in a system of give and take, as to the exact adjustments of which it is not the part of a generous nature to inquire too closely. We throw in our lot with others for better or worse, and get our fair share of the good and bad luck plus the inestimable advantage of comradeship. There have been times in the world's history when the personality was not so emphasized as it is with us; when people were more conscious of being part of the Universe; when they felt so secure in their larger life that they fretted less about their smaller. But this is the age of individualism say rather of personalism even in religion, even in prayer, even in aspiration. Hence Karma will, one fears,

appeal to many in the light of a personal solace, whereas one would rather offer it as a broad general doctrine affecting the lives of humanity in the mass.

The very inadequate idea of godhead derived from narrow religious teachings also hampers us in our conceptions of Karma. For, having endowed God with many of the limitations which go to make up a personality, including caprice, we are obliged to reduce our notions of eternal justice to a somewhat similar human standard. Hence enter the notions of favor and propitiation, which are more proper to savages worshipping a tribal fetish than to advanced people believing in eternal justice.

NATIONAL AND RACIAL KARMA

What has been said about the undue emphasis given to the personality in modern civilization is well illustrated by the teachings as to national or racial Karma. In *The Key to Theosophy*, by H. P. Blavatsky, we find the following:

INQUIRER. — But surely all these evils which seem to fall upon the masses somewhat indiscriminately are not actual merited and INDIVIDUAL Karma?

THEOSOPHIST. — No, they cannot be so strictly defined in their effects as to show that each individual environment, and the particular conditions of life in which each person finds himself, are nothing more than the retributive Karma which the individual has generated in a previous life. We must not lose sight of the fact that every atom is subject to the general law governing the whole body to which it belongs, and here we come upon the wider track of the karmic law. Do you not perceive that the aggregate of individual Karma becomes that of the nation to which those individuals belong and, further, that the sum total of National Karma is that of the World? The evils that you speak of are not peculiar to the individual or even to the Nation; they are more or less universal; and it is upon this broad line of Human interdependence that the law of Karma finds its legitimate and equitable issue.

INQUIRER. — Do I then understand that the law of Karma is not necessarily an individual law?

THEOSOPHIST. — That is just what I mean. It is impossible that Karma could readjust the balance of power in the world's life and progress unless it had a broad and general line of action. It is held as a truth among Theosophists that the interdependence of Humanity is the cause of what is called Distributive Karma, and it is this law which affords the solution to the great question of collective suffering and its relief. It is an occult law, moreover, that no man can rise superior to his individual failings without lifting, be it ever so little, the whole body of which he is an integral part. In the same way no one can sin, or suffer the effects of sin, alone. In reality

there is no such thing as “Separateness”; and the nearest approach to that selfish state which the laws of life permit is in the intent or motive.

Thus the laws of association forbid anyone from living separately, and individual fate is interblended and interwoven with collective fate in a way that resembles that in which atoms are interrelated. We share both the good and the ill fortune of others with whom we are associated.

KARMA AND FREEWILL

FATALISM

Curious conundrums are sometimes propounded on this question, owing to obscurity of reasoning; but they can be readily solved by more mature thought. For instance, people may argue, “Since all events are indissolubly joined to their previous causes, what is the use of making any effort?” This is the delusion of fatalism. It ignores the fact that owing to the Divine part of our nature, we have a center which stands outside of the karmic chain and by which we are able to act independently and set new causes in motion. Besides this, there is a logical fallacy involved, as the following instance will show. Suppose a man should fall off a ladder, ought you to abstain from catching him upon the ground that that would be interfering with the law of gravitation? Clearly you cannot interfere with the law of gravitation, which will go on acting, whatever you may do; and equally clearly you *can* help the man. In the same way it is your duty to do your duty and there is no fear that you will thereby interfere with the law of Karma. You yourself are an agent of Karma, and it may be a part of that man’s Karma that he should be helped. It is in your power to be that helper or not. The doctrine of fatalism, in fact, means nothing, and cuts both ways. If it leaves us free to let things alone, it leaves us equally free to act. It is our duty to help others all we can, and if it is not their Karma to be helped, the Law will take care of that. Besides, as said before, the humane motive of a man is an extraneous power inasmuch as it proceeds from a higher source, and therefore it can add to the total of good in the Universe.

KARMA IN ANTIQUITY

Nemesis was a conception of the ancient Greeks, which represents Karma in its retributive aspect. Their dramas depicted the consequences of rebellion against the moral law. The agents by which this retribution was brought about were called the “Furies,” Eumenides or Erinnyes, female deities of grim aspect, with black and bloody garments and serpents instead of hair. They had a burning torch in one hand and a whip of

scorpions in the other. It is noteworthy however that, after they had ceased to persecute Orestes, they became changed in character and were called the Eumenides, which means the “benevolent.”

The Fates or Parcae represented another similar conception, being three sisters who determined all destiny and to whose decrees even Jupiter himself was held by many to be subject.

The Norns were the ministers of destiny in the Scandinavian mythology. Of them it is said:

the Norns shall order all,
And yet, without thy helping
Shall no whit of their will befall.

For even the freest will is conditioned by obligations of some kind, however high those obligations may be; and the Norns represent the sum-total of destiny.

In Buddhism the teaching is most pronounced. In *The Light of Asia*, by Sir Edwin Arnold, we read:

KARMA — all that total of a soul
Which is the things it did, the thoughts it had,
The “self” it wove with woof of viewless time
Crossed on the warp invisible of acts.

Before beginning and without an end,
As space eternal and as surety sure,
Is fixed a power divine which moves to good,
Only its laws endure.

It will not be condemned of anyone.
Who thwarts it loses, and who serves it gains;
The hidden good it pays with peace and bliss,
The hidden ill with pains.

It seeth everywhere and marketh all;
Do right — it recompenseth! Do one wrong —
The equal retribution must be made,
Though Dharma [The Law] tarry long.

It knows not wrath nor pardon; utter-true
Its measures mete, its faultless balance weighs;
Times are as naught, tomorrow it will judge,
Or after many days.

By this the slayer’s knife did stab himself;
The unjust judge hath lost his own defender;
The false tongue dooms its lie; the creeping thief
And spoiler rob, to render.

Such is the law which moves to righteousness,
Which none at last can turn aside or stay;
The heart of it is love, the end of it
Is peace and consummation sweet. Obey!

The books say well, my brothers! Each man's life
The outcome of his former living is;
The bygone wrongs bring forth sorrows and woes,
The bygone right breeds bliss.
That which ye sow ye reap. Se yonder fields!
The sesamum was sesamum, the corn
Was corn. The silence and the darkness knew;
So is a man's fate born.

He cometh, reaper of the things he sowed,
Sesamum, corn, so much cast in past birth;
And so much wed and poison stuff, which mar
Him and the aching earth.

If he shall labor rightly, rooting these,
And planting wholesome seedlings where they grew,
Fruitful and fair and clean the ground shall be,
And rich the harvest due.

The Eastern word Kismet is a charm to reconcile one to one's justly incurred lot, but not an excuse for inaction as it is so often made to be.

Following are some quotations illustrating the convictions of various writers as to Karma.

We are our own children. — *Pythagoras*.

Nothing can work me damage but myself. — *St. Bernard*.

We make our fortunes and we call them fate. — *B. Disraeli*.

Men must reap the things they sow.
Force from force must ever flow. — *Shelley*.

Our acts our angels are, or good or ill,
Our fatal shadows that walk with us still.
— *Beaumont and Fletcher*.

The soul contains in itself the event that shall presently befall it, for the event is only the actualizing of its thoughts. — *Emerson*.

Not from birth does one become a slave; not from birth does one become a saint; but by conduct alone. — *Gautama the Buddha*.

Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.

— *Solomon*.

Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not. — *Paul*.

Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. — *Jesus*.

THE VOICE OF CONSCIENCE

THE VITAL IMPORTANCE OF A FAITH IN THE MORAL LAW

In conclusion we must emphasize the vital need, which there is at the present day, for a renewed faith in the Moral Law. Although religion ought to inculcate this faith, religion as we have it today no longer does so, nor does any other belief which we have. It will be useless to contest this accusation in face of the undeniable facts; if we are to judge our religion and our philosophies by their fruits, we must bring them in as defaulters.

The ideals of conduct upon which men act prove that they do not realize the existence of the Moral Law, or at any rate they do not realize it strongly enough to influence their conduct. They act as though in the belief that it is possible to benefit oneself by courses which involve injustice to one's fellows. Hence we have the reign of what is called "individualism" but were better called "personalism." In commerce this means that one man or one corporation strives after its own individual welfare, disregarding or willfully sacrificing the interests of others. The result upon commerce as a whole is most disastrous; for whereas with all the inventions of modern science it ought to be possible for everyone to live in comfort with very little labor, the average prosperity is very low and a large proportion of the population spend their days in toil. The wastage and friction of commerce, pursued on such wrong lines, is very great; but we scarcely realize it from want of anything better to contrast it with. The growth of disease and insanity, the problem of how to educate and manage our children, the problem of the poor, and all the other problems which agitate us today, are evidences of the lack of law and order in our life.

The "fear of God" is no longer effectual; it is not real enough; and when it does produce an effect this effect is not the right kind. It conduces rather to the establishment of a private and personal relation with the Deity, with a view to personal salvation beyond the grave; whereas it

should incite us to reliance on the dignity of our own Divine nature and to efforts to render *this* life a heaven.

In such expressions as Providence, the Moral Law, Divine Justice, God's Will, Nature, and the like, we recognize the Law of Karma; we recognize that, as eternal Life pervades Nature, so an eternal spiritual Life pervades the realms of consciousness, adjusting all needs and deserts. As the indestructible Life in Nature preserves the balance, destroying what is useless, recreating what is useful, and being in short a divine law of justice in the lower kingdoms; so the Moral Law adjusts things in the moral or spiritual world, destroying the evil and regenerating the good. We are conscious that a murderer offends against this Moral Law and that retribution will fall on him sooner or later. The difference between ourselves and other races is that we, with our crude unphilosophical theology, speak of the direct personal intervention of God — the Power that formed the universe of stars; while the other religions have preferred to imagine the Supreme Deity as manifesting his justice and power through a host of celestial Beings. But the difference between Monotheism and Polytheism is largely one of names.

It is maintained that all modern civilization is indebted to the influence of Hebraic and Christian religion for its strong sense of the Moral Law. It is true that the Wisdom of the Past has descended to us largely through the medium of these two religions; but it may well be asked whether they have not cramped our conceptions of Eternal Justice. We shall find in Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, the Vedanta, and the other ancient religions, the same ideas of Eternal Justice and Moral Law, but uncramped by the idea of the personal Deity. This idea has introduced the notion of *fear*. We talk of the "fear of God." When the absurd theological notions of godhead cause us to reject our belief in God, we may — possibly — lapse into disbelief in the Moral Law. We need, therefore, a way of recognizing the Law without the theological conceptions.

We need a living sense of the Moral Law and of Eternal Justice, detached from narrow theological conceptions. When we reject the absurdities of some theological teachings, we need not reject the Moral Law too. When we cease to "fear God," we need not give ourselves over to license, as if there were no Law. What we need is a consciousness, a direct feeling or perception, of the Moral Law, strong enough to act as an incentive to justice and a deterrent from injustice, as real as the laws of health. No man needs a church or pulpit to tell him that it is wrong to soak himself in whiskey; he feels that he is defying the laws of health and they will be revenged upon him. It ought to be so with the Moral Law. When a man thinks of swindling you for his own immediate pecuniary gain, he ought to feel that he is injuring *himself*; it ought to hurt him to do it. But he is ignorant and stupid; he is a fool. He has not the sense of solidarity. He has the impression that he possesses real private interests apart from

the interests of his kind, which is a delusion. Experience demonstrates to us over and over again that it is a delusion, yet we are so enslaved by our impulses and so purblind to our real interests that we continue to blunder.

To develop in human society this consciousness of the *Moral Law as a fact in Nature*, independently of religious sanction, what is necessary? We must develop the sense of solidarity, the sense of the unity of life. "Separateness" is a delusion; men are united like the branches of one tree, and disunion means decay. When we do injustice we pollute the fount of our own life. This is a fact which daily experience teaches us, and it is to the shame of religion that instead of confirming and explaining it, it throws every difficulty in the way of our recognizing it. For our Western religion as falsely understood fosters the idea of separate personality, separate souls and separate salvation, and makes Man a radically evil Being. It removes the Moral Law from its state of immanence in human nature and transfers it to the Deity.

Now what is meant by the "sense of solidarity?" Not a mere intellectual acceptance of the principle, for that can do no more good than sermons. We need to be conscious of some fact in our nature that corresponds to this principle; we need to be aware of our unity with each other. Such a consciousness comes gradually as a result of studying the Theosophical teachings as to our human nature and constantly striving to live up to them. We come to regard the impulses of personal desire as extraneous forces, parasitic to the real life; and to look for the dawn of a deeper consciousness in which the sense of solidarity shall be more palpable. Thus we acquire such a strong sense of the existence of the Soul that we are conscious of a feeling of resistance whenever we are impelled to act contrary to its Law. In short the *Conscience* awakes. One in whom this sense is aroused no longer feels alone and apart. He feels that he cannot act in secret; he shares in common with others an interior Life — the Soul-Life; and this is so sacred, so important to his happiness, that he feels he cannot violate it. Therefore he will not act unjustly, though he knows he may escape detection in the ordinary sense. For he feels that the omnipresent eye of the Soul knows and that his comrades will, in their inner consciousness, also know. The sense of guilt, the sense that he has violated the unspoken oath of a sacred society and so cut himself off from the ties of brotherhood, will restrain him effectually.

Would it not be a blessed thing if we could awaken such a conscience, such a prescience of brotherhood, among humanity at large; so that each and all would feel themselves linked in a sacred society which they dared not violate; and so that this conscience rested, not on the fear of an avenging Deity, of anxiety for one's salvation, or on a maudlin religious sentimentalism, but on an actual knowledge of one's Divinity and of the oneness of humanity in Soul and Heart?

The establishment of a belief in Karma means all this and more. It means the revival of lost knowledge and the anchoring of morality upon a basis of experienced facts instead of leaving it dependent upon dogmatic or so-called “scientific” sanctions.

4

Reincarnation

A Student

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INTRODUCTORY

When an unfamiliar doctrine is presented to the world, one often hears the cry, Where are the proofs? It is not easy to guess what is meant by such a question, and one can only infer that it indicates a certain confusion of mind on the part of the questioner. It is probably the result of a habit which our minds have acquired in consequence of too much worship of the inductive method used, or claimed to be used, by modern science. But a great teaching concerned with the destinies of the human race may not be susceptible of the same kind of proof as a scientific theory. Nor again can it be proved like a problem in geometry.

Men do not usually in practice arrive at a conviction of the truth of a proposition either by inductive or deductive reasoning; they judge by its consistency, its ability to explain facts, and its general air of being in harmony with other things which we know to be true. When a teaching is offered the question is not, How did you get it; by the inductive or the deductive method? — but, Is it true? Will it explain my problems? Is it in harmony with other things? And surely, the world is sick of theorizing and is only too ready to accept a teaching that will answer this test!

In this way the teaching of Reincarnation must be judged. It is, from the nature of the case, impossible to produce direct sensory evidence or testimony to the truth of such a doctrine; nor would a conviction resting upon such evidence alone be of much depth or value. We have not heard that the faith in immortality has benefited much by spiritualistic séances, or that the ideals of man have been elevated thereby; and the words of Jesus, “Neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead,” apply in this case.

The truth of Reincarnation must be judged by its reasonableness, its harmony with other things, and its ability to explain the facts of life and to solve problems which no other theory can solve.

Further it is advisable to be warned against the impatience and hastiness of our mental habits in this superficial age; habits so incompatible with the care and patience required by a student of the deeper mysteries of life. Proof can never be given at the outset of a study; the pupil must be content to wait until he has faithfully followed the beginnings of the way, and trust that the conviction will come to him as he proceeds. Faith is necessary in all enterprises — not blind faith, but that faith which is the assurance of knowledge to come. It is this internal conviction of the truth of a doctrine that encourages us to proceed to that point where the conviction may become certainty.

Again, those who propound objections to Reincarnation usually overlook the fact that most of their objections apply with much greater force to the theories already held as to man’s destiny. What “scientific” proof have we of the Christian doctrine of heaven and hell? Could no

objections be raised as to the justice, the reasonableness or the mercifulness of some of the beliefs professed in the religious world? What has science to offer in the way of a theory of man's destiny? Here are a few questions out of many which it would be well to have answered first, before proceeding further. It is usual in courts of justice to make the complainant first state his own case and prove the defendant's guilt, rather than to require the defendant to prove his own innocence; if the complainant has no case, judgment goes for the defendant by default. If this procedure should be adopted in the case of Reincarnation, it would certainly not be necessary for its advocates to plead anything in its defense. All they would have to do would be to request their assailants to state their own doctrines and to give satisfactory answers to any questions which might be proposed. What theory of the after-life is willing to come forward and stand such a test? So let it be understood that an explanation of the evidences for Reincarnation is in reality a *concession* on the part of its advocates. They feel that while so many contradictory and unsatisfactory theories and so many doubts on the subject of the after-life exist in the world, they have a perfect right to present their theory without any explanation whatever and still stand on (at least) an equal footing with others.

Let those then, we would say, who purpose to call in question the truth of Reincarnation, first go carefully over the ground of existing theories, making quite sure what position they themselves intend to maintain in opposition to Reincarnation. Even if the result is inconclusive, it may very likely clear up the mind on some points that have hitherto been obscure.

Another point which should really be insisted on is that in a case like the present, judgment should be preceded by most careful study. In approaching a Theosophical teaching, one is called upon to take a serious view of things, and the usual hasty, slipshod methods of forming an opinion will not do. As a rule we find people ready to discuss a new subject on the smallest possible acquaintance or on no acquaintance at all; the result being that endless time and breath are wasted in useless talk, the greater part of which would have been saved if the talkers had thought first and spoken afterwards. If we never criticized anything until we had made ourselves thoroughly familiar with it, how little argument we should indulge in! By far the greater part of the questions asked and objections raised by inquirers about Reincarnation are such as a little study would have solved. Hence the advocate of Reincarnation must needs for the most part confine himself to referring the inquirers to what has been written or to their own reflections. All teachers know how distressing it is to have pupils interrupt the lecture in order to ask questions which would be answered in due time without the asking. Such conduct evinces uncontrollable impatience and a lack of confidence in the teacher; who, as

a matter of probability, knows better than the pupil what objections are likely to occur. A modest questioner should realize that it is extremely improbable that he (unless a very wise man indeed) will think of any objection that has not also occurred to other minds. Hence he may expect to find that his questions have mostly been anticipated.

But such remarks as the above will be entirely superfluous in the case of the intelligent and well-balanced reader. For him it will be only necessary that the doctrine of Reincarnation be clearly set forth and the principal points in its favor indicated.

In treating of Reincarnation it will be necessary to presume some acquaintance on the reader's part with the teachings as to the Seven human principles, and also with Theosophical teachings generally, especially those which tell of Evolution.

The Evolution of Man is but a part of the general scheme of cosmic evolution, and the teachings of Theosophy form such a consistent whole that they are interwoven at every point and cannot be adequately treated one by one. For the same reason it is futile to attempt to judge of any one teaching, such as that of Reincarnation, by itself and apart from the other teachings. The doctrine of Reincarnation is possibly inconsistent with the conventional views put forward by modern religion, science and philosophy; hence it cannot be made to square with them, except in so far as they are true; and any failure to effect such a reconciliation should be set down to the discredit of *conventional* views — not to that of Reincarnation.

WHAT REINCARNATION IS

The doctrine of Reincarnation teaches that the eternal Soul of man — that is, the real Man — lives many successive lives on this Earth, occupying every time a human form, and continually progressing toward perfection. It must be carefully distinguished from a certain teaching which often goes by the name of *Metempsychosis* or *Transmigration* and which holds that men incarnate in animal forms; for certain persons hostile to Theosophy have attempted to make people believe that Theosophy teaches this latter doctrine.

There is a natural tendency to think that the doctrine of Reincarnation means that our personality — Mr. Smith or Mrs. Jones — appears again and again on Earth; and from this idea arises the common objection that we have no memory of earlier lives. It must therefore be remarked that in the Theosophical teachings a broad distinction is made between the “personality” and the “individuality.” The personality is regarded as an illusion, in a sense like that in which a dream is an illusion. This illusion is due to the fact that in our present imperfect state of development we mistake the mere attributes of the Self for the Self itself. But our per-

sonality is a bundle of changing moods, ideas and sentiments, and is not permanent. There is however a permanent factor in it, and this permanent factor gives us the feeling of separate individual existence and an intuition that at bottom we are immortal and eternal. This feeling of individuality proceeds from the Ego, the real eternal Self within. We cannot define it, because, in attempting to do so, we must strip it of all that we recognize as characterizing a mortal man. We must analyze our interior consciousness down to the point where there seems to the brain-mind to be nothing left.

Thus the Self is eternal, while all the attributes with which it is invested during Earth-life are impermanent. Consequently that which survives throughout the incarnations is a part of our Being so recondite that we should not recognize it as ourself; for all that we call "ourself" disappears at death. We might compare the eternal Self and its successive vestures with a string of beads; or better, with an actor who plays many parts. Macbeth knows nothing about Hamlet, but Irving knows about both and about himself as well. We are like actors so engrossed with our parts that we have temporarily lost sight of our real off-the-stage identity.

It cannot be too strongly insisted upon that the purpose of life and its successive incarnations is that the Soul — the real man — may profit. To our present ideas this may perhaps seem as if the Soul were *somebody else*, and we had no interest in the matter; but the Soul is to be sought within, for it is our veritable *Self*, though it cannot manifest itself as such until we have purified and clarified our nature from all illusive and extraneous elements. The mystery of the relation between the immortal Self and the personality is one that can only be solved by much study and experience. Our religions say nothing of it, but the Buddhistic philosophy (not necessarily any modern Buddhist sect) goes deeply into the metaphysics of the subject, and so do many other ancient philosophies.

The duration of the interval between two successive lives is a question upon which but little information has been given by the Theosophical Teachers. Obviously there are many things which it is either impossible or imprudent to disclose to the world at present. The length of the Devachanic period must depend on the nature of the experiences which the Ego has to pass through in that state; and it may be short or measured by centuries.

THE PURPOSE OF REINCARNATION

The purpose of Reincarnation is that a perfect Man may be produced. We shall understand better if we consider the processes of Life and Evolution *as a whole*, and not as applied to the case of Man particularly. Life consists of a twofold process, of which modern science studies only one half; the processes of Involution and Evolution. Science studies only the *evolution* of forms or organisms upwards from the lower types to the

higher. But obviously there can be no such evolution without the operation of a vital or spiritual force, which, descending *from above*, enters these forms and causes them to expand and develop. This latter process is called Involution. To take an analogy from physical science,— consider a piece of ice. It turns to water and then to gas, and the gas may be heated and made to glow with light. But there is no energy in the ice which will accomplish this change unaided. There needs to be an infusion of something which the scientists have called “heat.” In the same way nothing will evolve unless something enters it from a higher plane. Animals will remain animals; and savages, savages.

Applying this principle now to the case of Man, we see that his development requires the interaction of the same pair of forces. In order that his body, his mind and his character may develop and grow upwards, there must be a descent of an informing Spirit from above. And here our analogy from physics will help us again. When the ice is turned into water and the water into steam, in both cases heat disappears from its manifested form and becomes latent. The *raising* of matter from a lower state to a higher was accompanied by a *lowering* of the heat principle from a higher temperature to a lower. In the same way the immortal Spirit which informs Man *descends* and, by lowering itself, raises him. Herein is the *sacrifice* which the Christ makes for Man.

This leads immediately to the question,— What is it that reincarnates?

WHAT IS IT THAT REINCARNATES?

Clearly our human nature must for this purpose be regarded as dual — a reincarnating entity, and entities in which the former incarnates, or which are produced by its incarnation. The incarnating entity is that immortal Spirit which is the cause of man’s evolution, and the entities in which it incarnates are the successive personalities which arise from its contact with Earth-life. The reincarnating entity is immortal, and is the real Man, for whose purposes the reincarnations are experienced; but the successive personalities are transitory and unreal.

We must not, however, expect to be able to define the truth about such a teaching in narrow and simple terms; for, like all questions concerning Nature and life, it is complex and vast. We can only speak in approximate terms. A reference to the teachings as to the Seven human principles will be advisable. For the moment we may recall that the “Higher Triad” is composed of the three principles Âtman, Buddhi, and Manas (more correctly the higher part of Manas). H. P. Blavatsky says that that which incarnates is the Manas joined to Buddhi and Âtman. It is

The spiritual thinking Ego, the permanent principle in man, or that which is the seat of Manas. It is not Âtman, or even Âtman-Buddhi, regarded as the dual monad, that is the individual or divine man; but Manas. For Âtman is the Universal All. and becomes the Higher Self of man only in conjunction with Buddhi, its vehicle, which links it to the individuality or divine man.

And again:

Manas... is the real Individuality, or the divine man. It is this Ego which, having originally incarnated in the senseless human form... made of that human form *a real man*. It is this Ego, this "Causal Body," which overshadows every personality into which Karma forces it to reincarnate.

— *The Key to Theosophy*, ch. viii.

And William Q. Judge says:

Manas, Buddhi and Âtman, who are the real man... are attracted back to earth for reincarnation. They are the immortal part of us; they, in fact, and no other, are we.

It will be convenient, for present purposes, to call the incarnating entity the Ego; also, in Theosophy, the term Individuality is often applied to the real man, in contradistinction to the term personality, which is applied to the transitory self of a single Earth-life.

The above teaching implies that we are not aware of our real Life, but are living in a kind of dream or illusion, during which we become so wrapped up in our thoughts and imaginations that we acquire a sort of false personality, like a person in a nightmare. So the saying, *Vita est somnium*, {Life is a dream.} is not so untrue after all. But the real Life is no dream; and it is of this Life that one speaks when he declares, "Life is Joy!" For verily Life, in its purity and reality, is synonymous with joy, and it is only when we stand in the shadow of our own personality that the glorious tide fails us and we are sad.

The error by which we mistake the mere accidents and attributes of the Self for the Self itself, is one that is explained in Eastern philosophies, but we shall scarcely find words in our own unphilosophical language to expound it adequately.

We know, however, by experience, that the personality is constantly changing, even within the limits of a single life; and that however much the grouping of ideas and beliefs may vary, the sense of individuality persists throughout all and we still call it "ourselves." The sense of individuality is the only thing that does not change; it is the center, and it arises from the Ego.

The personal ends and aims which we set before ourselves are continually thwarted — alas! is it not the theme of the disillusioned mortal from time immemorial? “The vanity of human wishes,” and so on! But what is the reason? It is because those ends and aims are not the purposes of the Ego; they are the whims of the lower mind. Like a wayward child, or a pig driven to market, we blunder from side to side and chase butterflies or dawdle to browse, while the Master who holds the lines as constantly pulls us up with a jerk. We have to learn to find out what is the purpose of the Ego — our own real purpose — and concur with it instead of thwarting it.

“God moves in a mysterious way” and “knows what is best for us in his inscrutable wisdom,” and so on. But he does not forbid us from trying to learn his wisdom so that it may be less inscrutable. And then this god is not an extraneous personality, but Man’s real Self. Ultimately it is our destiny to become identified with It, so that its will is our will and its knowledge our knowledge. This is the mystic union between the lower mind and its divine counterpart, the “finding of Christ.”

PROCESS OF REINCARNATION

In speaking of Evolution it was said that Âtman-Buddhi is the eternal omnipresent seed of Life in every atom of the Universe; but that while being the cause of all life, growth and evolution, It exists in all the lower kingdoms of Nature in a latent or unmanifested state. It gives rise to all the phenomena which chemist and physicist study in the mineral kingdom, and to the lower forms of instinct and intelligence which are manifested in the plant and animal kingdoms. It is only in Man that this latent spark reaches its fuller unfoldment; and that was brought about by the coming of the *Mānasaputras* or “Sons of Mind,” progressed Beings from another plane, who had been through the stages of human evolution before (in a preceding *Manvantara*). These beings endowed Man with Manas, thus enabling him to have a link with Âtman-Buddhi, giving him immortality, and the divine knowledge, and the potentiality of all divine power. Previous to this ensoulment, Man was simply a highly developed human animal, without the knowledge of good and evil and the power of choice. This is what is symbolized in the Bible and other sacred allegories. Ever after this ensoulment the history of Man is one of gradual improvement, as the power of the Higher Self gradually makes itself felt and he grows in experience and self-control. But the process is long and, like every other process in Nature, it is divided into alternating periods. These alternations are the succession of life and death. At the death of the body, the Soul lays down for a time its work (just as we lay down our work during sleep), and enters into a condition or sphere of existence in which it lives its own appropriate life as a spiritual being — a state answering to our “Heaven.”

After a period of rest in this state or *Devachan*, the hour strikes for the Ego to re-enter bodily life and a new incarnation begins. It is drawn back by the unsatisfied aspirations and unfulfilled duties and purposes of Earth-life; and entering the sphere of generation is born again with the developing embryo. But the subject here borders upon the question of man's state before and after death, which is treated elsewhere.

ARGUMENTS FOR REINCARNATION

It must be borne in mind that a doctrine is to be accepted for its truth and not for its convenience; and therefore that these arguments are not put forward to induce people to adopt Reincarnation as a comfortable belief, but to confirm the truth of the doctrine by showing how it reconciles all contradictions, explains all difficulties, and harmonizes with those facts of life which experience compels us to accept as facts.

In the first place Reincarnation is the only doctrine which reconciles the conclusions which we are forced to draw from the facts of life with the notions which we are bound to entertain as to divine law, justice, and mercy. Under all other theories these two have been irreconcilable. It has been the strenuous life-work of countless thinkers to try to present some formula which shall achieve an acceptable adjustment between our spiritual intuitions and our scientific and theological ideas, and to preserve faith in God and religion amid the unsettling tendencies of an age of inquiry. But, to do this, they have always had to leave a large part of the problem unsolved otherwise than by the general formula, "God's inscrutable Will." For instance, how can we account for the inequality of man's opportunities and circumstances on entering this life? Current theology affords no other explanation than that this is the will of Providence; but, as we are enjoined to strive to know God's will and mind, it is certainly as much a duty as a necessity that we should understand more about this particular problem. Science can tell us no more about it, and merely uses, in place of the divine will, other phrases which amount to about as much as using ABC instead of XYZ in an equation. But Reincarnation shows us that birth is not the beginning of Life, but only a point in the middle; and that we take up our life where we laid it down. Hence each man's circumstances are the outcome of his former living. Here we have at once a satisfactory explanation of a vexed problem; and a doctrine which can explain a problem that no other doctrine can explain must surely be worth further consideration. When we find that the same key unlocks many other doors as well, we shall have good reason for believing that it is the master-key. The subject of individual merit and recompense is treated more fully under its more particular heading, the doctrine of Karma.

Take next the problem of what happens to a man after death. He leaves this life with all his work unfinished and a host of unsatisfied desires and unachieved purposes. What is to become of these? Is he, after such a fragmentary day's work, to disappear forever from the Earth, where these things were begun and where alone they can be finished? Will any heaven, however blissful, afford him the opportunities for making good what he has left imperfect, for assimilating the lessons which life has taught him, for correcting mistakes, and so on? We speak not now of the old hard-and-fast doctrine of heaven and hell, for it has been sufficiently derided and denounced by others. Its injustice, improbability and absurdity are too apparent to satisfy any thinking mind. We speak merely of the various hypotheses and modified doctrines which have taken its place. But these rest on no authority, and are so many attempts to reconcile established belief with probability. Here again the doctrine of Reincarnation shows us how man returns to continue the work he has left unfinished, to repair mistakes, to learn new lessons, to achieve new heights, to become a more perfect image of his Immortal Self. And, as shown elsewhere, no one may claim enough knowledge of God's nature and will to justify him in asserting that Reincarnation is contrary to them. God is great enough to tower above all the science and philosophy that man can formulate, and we do not fear that by using our wits we shall ever dethrone him or expose his secrets. What if Reincarnation should cast down some few tribal gods or graven images of the human fancy; will that affect the majesty of the All-Father?

Our present life is neither a beginning nor an end, but a middle. All analogy helps us to this conclusion. There is a strict analogy between a day of our life and an incarnation. A day is incomplete, but causes set in motion one day and unfulfilled then may be fulfilled another day; and what we have begun before may be finished, and what we have not finished may be completed another day. Days are separated from each other by intervals during which we are in a different state of consciousness, the bodily life ebbs, and the mind passes to spheres of which we have little or no recollection when we awake, but throughout which the identity is preserved. The sleep refreshes the indwelling spirit and gives it new strength to take up its task of using the body and faculties. Have not writers of all times and places compared death to sleep? And let us remark in passing, that as sleep is pleasant beyond compare, it is absurd to fear death, the greater sleep. Children may not like to go to bed, and may be afraid of the dark; but they do not fear sleep or imagine that they will never wake up again.

All Nature is built on a plan of ebb and flow. As day succeeds day, with intervening nights, so season succeeds season, and the trees die and blossom again. The tides ebb and flow; the Moon waxes and wanes. There is not a corner of the Earth into which we may look and not find these

successive alternations. The life of man, as imagined by conventional belief, exhibits a glaring contrast with all its surroundings, and stands out as the monumental instance of fatuity and incapacity on the part of the caricature of a deity who is so irreverently supposed to have designed it. No truly scientific brain could look at a single Earth-life and not pronounce with certainty that it is but a fragment of a whole; so unmistakably are the missing parts foreshadowed in the part that is seen.

One step toward the belief in Reincarnation is the belief in the pre-existence of the Soul before birth. It has always been difficult in the minds of reasonable people to reconcile themselves with the notion that a Soul can be immortal at one end only. A line infinite in one direction but terminated in the other direction is *a line with one end* — a geometrical conception calculated to make Euclid turn in his sarcophagus! To be immortal the Soul must have pre-existed. This conviction of pre-existence, both as a sentiment and an inference, is very common among our great writers. But with any other theory than Re-incarnation, the idea of pre-existence becomes as difficult to understand as the idea of post-existence; especially in its relation with our present Earth-life. If the Soul were never on Earth before, and is not to be on Earth again, our Earth-life becomes reduced to an episode as brief as it is utterly purposeless.

SUPPOSED OBJECTIONS TO REINCARNATION

The most familiar of all the alleged objections to Reincarnation is one that occurs instantly to the most rudimentary intelligence; but people of more mature judgment realize that such an objection must surely have occurred to Theosophists before, and must therefore have an easy solution. It is the question, “Why do we not remember our past lives?” wherein is implied the conclusion that as we do not remember them, we did not have any past lives. The Theosophist will at once refuse to admit that the mere fact of not remembering a thing is proof that it never happened; and so the argument falls to the ground at once. We do not remember our past lives; therefore we either may or may not have lived before. That is the whole argument, and very little it means.

But it is by no means correct to say that we do not remember our past lives. Memory is a complicated faculty, and there is more than one kind of memory. We retain no detailed or pictorial memory of the events of our past lives, it is true; but nevertheless we possess memory of another kind. This other kind of memory exists in the form of innate ideas, instincts, proclivities, intuitions, and the like; and every man comes into the world plentifully endowed with his own peculiar combination of these. These are the memories of past births, treasured in the back of the mind, deeply ingrained in the nature, though not presenting themselves to the pictorial memory as the result of definite events. And little is it to be wondered that

we do not remember the details of our past lives; but the fault is surely our own and not anyone else's. For what attention have we ever given to the cultivation of memory? Do we not allow our minds to remain in a state of loose control, the ideas and impressions coming and going much as they please? Memory is a faculty that needs cultivation; those who have tried it know that the faculty can be cultivated to the most extraordinary degree and in fact without limit. But, as it is, we do not even remember things that happened in this life. How shall we then remember the things that happened centuries ago, and that in another body with another brain, and separated from our present life by the chasm of bodily death? Certainly it is not impossible that a man should be able to recall his past lives; but obviously he must first have learned how to sound the depths of his mind to regions beyond those to which ordinary thought extends; for the record of that past inheres, not in the cells of the present brain nor in any part of the mind which the man recognizes as forming part of his present personality, but in strata of the interior nature which lie deeper; in the consciousness of the Reincarnating Ego, which alone endures throughout the chain of lives. To bring back that memory, then, we should need to have gained a knowledge and mastery over our faculties such as no ordinary man can boast; we should need to have attained to freedom from the delusions which selfishness and desire engender in the mind, and to have curbed and bridled that froward steed, the mind, so that at will we could direct its operations. Such knowledge and power comes to one only after perfection in the study of Râja Yoga, self-mastery.

But a question will arise as to the *justice* and *expediency* of this dispensation by virtue of which we forget our past. The answer to this is simply that it would not be of service for a man to remember his past. We have as much — nay, more, in the experiences of one life, than we can readily assimilate; often we are almost overwhelmed even by that. If we had in addition the memory of countless past experiences, the confusion and the burden would be more than we could bear. Usually a man can make better headway by letting bygones be bygones and concentrating his efforts on the present duty; his reflections hinder him very much. How often do we, in this life, wish we could wipe out the past and begin again!

It is argued that it is unjust to punish a man for acts which were virtually committed by someone else; but we should remember that whatever theory of life we may hold, the same question arises. If we believe in the ordinary theories of heredity, then we suffer for our ancestors' sins. If Reincarnation is unjust in this respect, it is at least less unjust than any other explanation. Then again, as said before, the life is the Soul's, and the real Man is conscious throughout; and it rests with ourselves how far we will succeed in attaining to the knowledge of the Soul or how long we will remain in ignorance. It might also be shown that we so habitually suffer through the faults of others that a special case of

vicarious suffering would be of no account; or that our personality is so constantly changing that the man who suffers is never quite the same man as he who sinned. Again, we must not forget that recompense consists of reward as well as of penalty; and that we are not apt to be so particular as to the justice of our rewards! In short it is evident that the question only requires a little solid thought, and many solutions will occur. The forgetfulness of past lives is both fortunate and equitable — for natures still wandering in the halls of illusion. Recollection and full knowledge are attainable — *when we are worthy and fitted for them and able to take them.*

The cases in which very young children evince a memory of having lived before are very numerous; but they are usually discredited by parents and the child is snubbed. He soon learns to dismiss these pictures and the strong light of his present life blots them out. But among Theosophists, who are ready to recognize such manifestations, the cases of memory in children are by no means rare.

It is only natural that considering the vanity and weakness of humanity, there should occasionally be found persons who claim to know who they were in their past lives. The characters chosen by them are of course the great figures of history, such as Napoleon, and Mary Queen of Scots; but there are too many competing candidates for the same characters. Vanity is the greatest foe of genuine attainment; and anyone sufficiently advanced to have a genuine knowledge would certainly not air it in this way. There are many ways in which the mind can become so imbued with the character of someone else — such as by reading about him or enacting him on the stage — and the mere fact of having such an experience does not prove that it is a recollection. If the picture of our past life should come before us, we would have but poor means of recognizing it as such, of knowing whether it was our own past or someone else's, or whether it was a mere dream, or the glimpse of pictures in the records of the astral light. The possibilities of deception are almost infinite for one *not specially trained.*

Another class of objection is as follows: "I am sure I do not want to come back to this Earth again; one life is enough for me." This is very shallow; the same person perhaps, in other moments, repines over the shortness of life and shudders at the idea of being cut off in the midst of its enjoyments. Such exclamations are not the results of serious reflection; they are the utterances of passing moods. The weary toiler feels, as he goes to rest at night, that he could never face another day. The seasick passenger vows he will never undertake another voyage. The petulant child does not want to go to school. Despondent moods may last a minute, a day, a year, several years; but they are temporary. What does it take to heal them? A night's rest, a holiday, a little flattery, a cup of tea — and lo! life is a glorious thing, a heroic battle, a song of joy. Who then can estimate the recuperative effect of the greater sleep, when the Soul lays aside body,

mind, and all its burdens, till it re-enters life with the freshness of the infant?

And as to heaven, what do we know about that? There is no ideal of heaven so perfect, reasonable, just and blissful as that of Devachan, the Soul's abode after death. No ideas of harps, not even the most glowing imaginations of the most refined religious minds, can approach the reality of that bliss. And eternity? A century would outrun most of our ideas of eternity. Eternity is a mere word. People who find the teachings of Theosophy too big for them have no business to be talking about eternity. People who get tired of one Earth-life would soon tire of eternity; a modified eternity, consisting of a long while with another long while added to it, would probably suffice.

The idea of Reincarnation may excite reluctance in the hearts of those endeared to the Christian ideas of eternal bliss. But we assure them that this is only due to an inadequate conception of the doctrine of Reincarnation. A flippant way of dealing with the subject may blind our eyes to its real import and meaning; but serious reflection will convince us that there is enough in it to satisfy the most ardent aspirations and the most reverent heart.

Elsewhere describes of this state of bliss, simply remarking here that as described by H. P. Blavatsky, it exceeds the most ideal states conceived of by Christian thought. We are better off in the hands of the eternal Law than we should be if left to the fulfilment of our own hopes and notions of bliss after death.

And as to the other state — eternal punishment — it is surely unnecessary to dwell on the hideousness of that doctrine. It is entirely done away with in Theosophy, which regards the life on Earth as quite sufficient tribulation for the Soul, and can picture no worse state after death. We simply give the following quotations from H. P. Blavatsky.

The only state the Spiritual Self knows of hereafter is that of unalloyed bliss.... We believe in no hell or paradise as localities; in no objective hell-fires and worms that never die, nor in any Jerusalems with streets paved with sapphires and diamonds.... We believe in an immutable law of absolute Love, Justice, and Mercy... The same unerringly wise and just, rather than merciful, Law which inflicts upon the incarnated Ego the karmic punishment for every sin committed during the preceding life on earth, has provided for the now disembodied Entity a long lease of mental rest, and the entire oblivion of every sad event, aye, to the smallest painful thought that took place in its last life as a personality, leaving in the soul-memory nothing but the reminiscences of that which was bliss or which led to happiness.

— *The Key to Theosophy*, ch. viii.

As to the ordinary mortal, his bliss in Devachan is complete. It is an *absolute* oblivion of all that gave it pain or sorrow in the past incarnation,

and even oblivion of the fact that such things as pain and sorrow exist at all. The *Devachani* lives its intermediate cycle between two incarnations surrounded by everything it had aspired to in vain, and in the companionship of everyone it loved on earth. It has reached the fulfilment of all its soul-yearnings. And thus it lives throughout long centuries an existence of *unalloyed* happiness, which is the reward for its sufferings in earth-life. In short, it bathes in a sea of uninterrupted felicity spanned only by events of still greater felicity in degree. — *The Key to Theosophy*, ch. ix.

In other passages, which we have not space to quote, H. P. Blavatsky speaks of the conditions of man after death as eminently merciful and consoling besides being absolutely just; and speaks in strong condemnation of the terrible doctrines professed by some who call themselves followers of Christ, according to which the pains of this life are succeeded by even worse sufferings for endless time, or at best by a wholly inadequate and little coveted reward in “heaven.” The fact is that the Law treats us a very great deal better than we treat ourselves, and the decrees of Eternal Justice are infinitely wiser and kinder than those which we so falsely attribute to It.

Centuries of mental servitude and spiritual blindness under the rule of bigotry and superstition, followed by a reaction to an equally superstitious extreme of scientific skepticism, have deprived the human breast of that joy of life, that trust in eternal justice, that feeling of dignity, which are the proper attributes of a divinely inspired being such as Man is. We have acquired an altogether flippant and disparaging way of regarding teachings, which is little wonder when one considers the kind of teachings we have been fed on. Of our own religious teachings as to heaven and hell we are accustomed to make fun. We talk about the soul and its future in an airy way, when we have not the faintest conception of what is meant by any other condition of existence than our familiar daily one. Our notions as to what Deity is preparing for us in the next life are for the most part childish and petty to a degree that insults both ourselves and Deity. The idea that there can be anything in the teachings of Reincarnation to call for flippant treatment is equally regrettable. Deprived by death of our foolish delusions, we shall stand forth in our awful dignity as Souls; and no conceptions which mortal words can paint will suffice to give an idea of the bliss and holiness of that state.

REINCARNATION AND HEREDITY

It is sometimes said that our being born with ready-formed characters should not be counted as an argument for Reincarnation, because (so it is said) heredity explains that fact. But the word “heredity,” as most often used, means simply “the fact that we inherit”; that is, it is only a statement of certain phenomena, not an explanation of them. If the word is ever used,

in addition to this usage, to denote some cause or agent which may be presumed to occasion or determine the phenomena, such meaning should be most carefully distinguished from the former meaning. This distinction, however, is one that is frequently ignored, not only in this case but in many others; as, for instance, where the process of gravitation is confused with the cause of gravitation, or the phenomena of vitality with the vital principle itself. Hence, in dealing with the present question, we are dealing with a particular case of a common fallacy, the fallacy of confounding the effect with the cause, or of supposing that a concise and generalized statement of certain phenomena is equivalent to an explanation of their cause. Students of Theosophy, however, must be prepared to give up to some extent the crude and careless modes of thought tolerated among those who are in truth but the camp-followers of science, all untrained as they are in those pursuits by which the faculties of a clear and well-kept mind are brought to bear on the wide range of questions which interest educated people.

Such dabblers, knowing nothing of abstract thought and unable to reason clearly, have found a field in which they can distinguish themselves among others of their kind by a show of cleverness that demands (as they flatter themselves) no knowledge of the laws of formal logic; and they commit blunders from which a lesson or two in Jevons' *Elementary Logic* might, had they ever heard of it, have saved them.

We will not, then, waste any more time in discussing the question whether a concise and generalized statement of the facts of heredity is or is not an explanation of their cause. Assuming for the present that it is not, we shall proceed to the further question whether science does know of anything, under the name of heredity or under any other name, that can rank as a possible cause or determinant of the phenomena of heredity. And in the first place we remark that science is forced, by its declared materialistic position, to seek its causes in the same place as it finds its effects, that is on the plane of physical matter. This circumstance alone would settle the question in the negative for a Theosophist, who holds that the causes of material phenomena are not themselves material. Scientists, however, ingeniously evade the difficulty by loading the whole burden of causation upon the shoulders of *something* which is at once ideal enough to serve as a cause and material enough to "save their (materialistic) face" — something which they have conceived in the matrix of the "scientific imagination," and which, like a dutiful offspring, will obey all the laws imposed upon it by the heredity of its parents — a *provisional hypothesis*, in short, put in like a scaffolding to hold up the facts while something more permanent is being sought. This something is of course our old friend the ATOM, sometimes however in this case dressed up anew as the GERM-PLASM or the CELL. The parent transmits to his offspring a Cell, an Atom, or a Germ-plasm. Whether or not there has been discovered anything,

which in the case of parents with several children, determines the allotment of the cells, which cell to which child, we do not know; but we do not much care whether this endless chain of physical causes contains one link or a hundred so long as it fails to lead anywhere.

To dismiss the matter, it is clear that the cell or any other materialistic hypothesis is but a subterfuge for the truth, and that the real causes must be sought, postpone the search how we may, in realms beyond the physical. That is to say, that the more scientific explanations are true, the more they need the Theosophical explanation to explain them; and we can only be grateful to scientists if they succeed in filling in any of the gaps between cause and effect, and will please refrain from denying the existence of things which according to their own admission, belong to other departments; and from seeking for things, which they are not looking for, in a world where they do not expect to find them.

It is the Will of the Ego, conditioned by the requirements of Eternal Law and by the necessities created in past lives, that directs the incarnating Soul to the parentage best adapted to those requirements. It is this Will which determines to what extent the Soul shall modify its instrument or be modified by it. Cells, matrix, seed and all are instruments in the hands of the Being that is using them; and while science is studying the process and trying to believe that it works itself, Theosophists are studying the operator.

If a final word is necessary, it is to assure the genuine votaries of Science — those who sincerely and candidly follow the avowed principles of their noble cult — that the above strictures are intended for such only as the cap happens to fit; and we are sure they, the genuine votaries, will welcome anything that tends to relieve them from the burden of a disparaging association with those who purvey fraudulent imitations of their goods. We can sympathize with them.

REINCARNATION IN ANTIQUITY

Reincarnation has been well-called the favorite belief of humanity, inasmuch as it has always been, and now is, the belief of the majority. Later events and discoveries, it may here be remarked, have taught us to pay more regard to the abilities both of the ancients and of the modern Easterners than we were formerly wont to do; and we may therefore estimate their opinion as worthy of consideration. It is in fact only in later times and in Western lands that the belief in — or rather the knowledge of — Reincarnation has waned; and even this waning is but a temporary phase marking a decline of spirituality and a wave of materialism.

Hindûism and Buddhism are of course known to be inspired throughout by the teaching of Reincarnation, and it is neither necessary nor practicable to digress into quotations from these sources. But once

again the student is reminded not to misunderstand the symbolism which is often used, nor to adopt the misunderstandings of the ignorant for whom religion is always a superstition. The use of animal symbols to denote various roles or conditions of the soul is very common. We do not believe that Buddha died through a surfeit of pork, though he is said to have died from eating too much “hog’s flesh”; nor do we imagine that Jesus was ever a lamb or a vine. In the same way, when it is said that a rapacious man will become a tiger, or a gluttonous one a pig, nothing more is meant than that in his next (human) birth he will be afflicted with the corresponding propensities. There was also a teaching that after a man had died and his Soul passed to Devachan, the elements that entered into his *kâma-rûpa* or “animal soul” would, after their disintegration, enter into the structure of animals. But this is no more than saying that the particles of our body will afford food to the worms, and is no more warrant for a belief in animal transmigration than the fact about the worms is warrant for a belief that we shall be worms in our next life. Whether or not there are any grossly ignorant and superstitious people who believe such doctrines does not concern the beliefs of the intelligent, whether in the East or the West.

In ancient Egypt Reincarnation was taught, but to the multitude it was not fully given out; this accounts for the misunderstandings of those archaeologists who have mistaken the exoteric for the esoteric teachings. Here again we find also the symbolical teachings as to the destiny of the various principles of man after disintegration; for the Egyptians recognized seven principles as do the Theosophists. These teachings must not be confused with the doctrine of Reincarnation as applied to the case of the immortal Soul. The latter doctrine was fully understood, but the doctrine was taught only in the Sacred Schools and given to the multitude in veiled language.

The Egyptians communicated some of their knowledge to the Greeks, and certain great Greek philosophers were initiated by the Egyptian priests. Plato’s *Phaedrus* is a description of the career of the immortal part of man and its relation to its earthly tenements, couched in Greek modes of expression. The Neo-Platonists of Alexandria also taught Reincarnation. Plotinus says:

The soul, though of divine origin, and proceeding from the regions on high, becomes merged in the dark receptacle of the body, and being naturally a posterior god, it descends hither through a certain voluntary inclination, for the sake of power and of adorning inferior concerns. By this means it receives a knowledge of its latent powers, and exhibits a variety of operations peculiar to its nature, which by perpetually abiding in an incorporeal habit, and never proceeding into energy, would have been bestowed in vain... Through an abundance of desire the soul becomes profoundly merged into matter, and no longer totally abides with the universal soul. Yet our souls are able alternately to rise from hence, carrying back with them an

experience of what they have known and suffered in their fallen state; and whence they will learn how blessed it is to abide in the intelligible world, and by a comparison, as it were, of contraries, will more plainly perceive the excellence of a superior state. For the experience of evil produces a clearer knowledge of good. This is accomplished in our souls according to the circulations of time, in which a conversion takes place from subordinate to more exalted natures.

In the early days of the Christian era there were Schools which sought to preserve the ancient *Gnosis* and the teachings of the Sacred Mysteries throughout the rising tide of materialism and corruption. The Gnostics and the Essenes were two of these Schools. They admittedly had esoteric teachings for the initiated and exoteric teachings for the multitude. Many of the Church Fathers taught Reincarnation as a doctrine of Christianity; and it continued to be an essential part of Christian philosophy until the growth of Western influences caused it to be expunged from the canon. Justin Martyr speaks of the soul inhabiting more than one human body; but also says that very evil souls are punished by being incarnated in beasts.

Origen advocated the teaching most strongly. He says:

If our course be not marked out according to our works before this life, how is it true that it is not unjust in God that the elder should serve the younger and be hated, before he had done things deserving of servitude and of hatred?

Many other writers of the early Church also held views favorable to Reincarnation; but at the Council of Constantinople, in the year 551, the teaching was condemned and removed from the canon of the Church. Needless to point out, a teaching which upholds man's divinity and responsibility was a thorn in the side of those influences which sought to establish a system of ecclesiastical jurisdiction based on the priestly office of intercession, and on the doctrine of original sin removable by vicarious atonement.

If we ask why modern Christianity does not teach Reincarnation, the answer is that modern Christianity has been specially edited so as not to teach it. The books constituting the Bible are a selection; some of those rejected as "apocryphal" teach Reincarnation, *e.g.*, the "Book of Wisdom." St. Augustine says:

The very thing which is now called the "Christian" religion really was known to the ancients, nor was it wanting at any time from the beginnings of the human race up to the time Christ came in the flesh; from which time the true religion, which had previously existed, began to be called Christian,

and this in our days is the Christian religion, not as having been wanting in former times, but as having in later times received that name.

— (*Opera*, I, 12)

The esoteric teachings of Christ — those which he gave to his disciples — have not come down to us. If ever recorded they were suppressed and afterwards lost. We have only a few of the parables and ethical teachings which he gave to the multitude; [There are however not a few passages in the *Logia* of Jesus which point clearly to the real esoteric teachings. For instance: “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free... And the servant abideth not in the house for ever; but the Son abideth for ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.” — John, viii. 32-36.] and to these have been added gleanings from Paganism, Neo-Platonism, etc., and a pile of dogmas accumulated by the ecclesiasticism of subsequent centuries. But we have no philosophical teachings as the Eastern religions have. Hence Reincarnation is not specially taught in modern Christianity. It is this fact which, among others of a similar nature, explains why modern Christianity is so powerless in the face of present-day human problems, and why it derives strength from the natural intuition of the human heart, rather than gives strength.

REINCARNATION THE MASTER-KEY TO MODERN PROBLEMS

It is impossible to over-estimate the effect which a belief in Reincarnation is destined to produce in modern thought. We have the inner conviction of our immortality and solidarity, but our reason, instead of reinforcing this conviction, contradicts it, because that reason has been fed on such false teachings. If, on the contrary, the reason were to confirm and explain the inner voice, our faculties would combine towards the same end instead of neutralizing each other.

The vague profession of a belief in immortality is a very different thing from a conviction of it, and there are all degrees and stages between the two. The teachings of Theosophy can turn our professed beliefs into convictions strong enough to affect our ideas and conduct; and the process is one of gradual growth. Students of Theosophy, who have sought to make its teachings the guiding rules of their daily lives, gradually acquire a new way of regarding life which affects all their views and actions. A sense of the plenitude of time grows up in them and enables them to act as beings with an eternal past stretching behind them and an eternal future before. The feeling that every effort counts and that it is never too late to begin an enterprise inspires them with a new energy. Most important of all, the sentiment of hope is revived; for, while the anthology of our modern literature breathes throughout a note of despair at untimely death, faded hopes (“never to return — alas!”), and unrealized aspirations, the

Theosophist knows that all ebbings are but temporary and must be followed by renewed flows. To him death is but an episode; the fading of youthful enthusiasms is a temporary process due to physical conditions. Inspired with this conviction, he ceases more and more to be dominated by these passing conditions, and preserves eternal hope in his spirit if he cannot as yet do it in his lower principles.

When we think of the note of despair that is filling the world in consequence of lack of knowledge, we begin to realize what a knowledge of Reincarnation with its assurance of immortality may mean. The rush for wealth and luxury, the hurry and impatience of life, are founded on our pessimistic beliefs. If a man asks himself, as all must do sometimes, “What am I here for, and what *is* the object of life?” the only answers he can make are; first, to shelve the question — banish it to the back of the mind — or to try to feed his hopes and ambitions on the prospect of the theological heaven — a prospect which appeals rather to the wish for consolation and release from effort than to the noble aspiration for more service, greater victories. In both cases the answers are demeaning and calculated to narcotize the human spirit. But Reincarnation holds out the prospect — a prospect which becomes ever more certain and sure as we grow in knowledge — of renewed youth and joy, fresh opportunities, continued loving service among fellow-hearts, victory upon victory won over the frailties of human nature, and a limitless vista of Life and realization in spheres of consciousness so vast and full that we cannot form the faintest conception of them. This is truly a conception calculated to give back to humanity its forgotten vigor and banish all that feebleness and vacillation of thought so characteristic of it at present. When we have again this world-old knowledge we may regain the paradise we have lost and discover what lost elixir quickened the nerves of the mighty men of old and endowed them with such godlike vigor.

Age is but a condition of the body (and even the stiffness of age is not inevitable; in true health it would be unknown); the Soul never grows old, and the more we make its Life our own, the more do we succeed in keeping eternally young and fresh. Death is a sleep in a sense truer than the poets knew; for it is attended by a fresh awakening and renewed vigor. The loves of youth, which we so vainly regret, will be born again — but next time more purified from the cloying element of passion. The delusions die — and well it is so — but the seed remains and next time we will love more truly and less personally.

And the death of those we love? What a terrible thing for those who do not believe in immortality! What doubtful consolation for those who have only the uncertain beliefs of theology! But Theosophists feel that the real Man still lives; and that all that was best and most lovable in him dwells eternally in the realms of Soul, where there is true communion and perfect understanding. Freed from the afflictions of mortal life, that loved

Soul feels those It loves, helping them interiorly in their own struggles. [This has nothing to do with "Spiritualism." Theosophy expressly teaches that the Ego in Devachan can never appear to people on earth except under the most exceptional conditions, such as would require the presence of a real Teacher and could never occur in a séance-room. What appears or communicates in a séance-room is only a phantasm created partly of the astral substance of medium and sitters and partly (in many cases) of the *kāma-rūpa* or "spook" of deceased persons, which is a wholly irresponsible and unmoral or immoral entity. On the dangers and delusions of Spiritualism see elsewhere.]

If Reincarnation helps us in prospect, it can help us equally in retrospect. For it is no small inspiration to look back and feel that we are somebody; that our mortal clay conceals an eternal Soul vested with knowledge and power; that we are on a pilgrimage of our own choosing — masters of our destiny, not pieces of driftwood. The great purposes of Nature and Deity are our own purposes; we will them. It is only the wayward personal desires that cause us temporary aberrations from the Path we are treading. It helps us to "will our destiny," to make our will identical with the Universal Will.

There is no problem, among the many vexed ones of life, which Reincarnation will not clear up. It is a perfect master-key; and it is no new invention, but a bringing of our philosophy into line with our secret intuitions of the Truth. It is in fact a revelation; and as all real revelations must, it carries conviction with it, demonstrating itself by its own obvious verity. May this key of the Ancient Mysteries unlock many a door that bars the way of human progress!

REINCARNATION IN MODERN LITERATURE

The works of the poets and other writers show that the truth has always been felt in the heart, though hindered in expression by the overlying mass of mental disabilities and prejudices. The Higher Mind in man, whose seat is in the Heart, *knows and sees*; but it needs the help of the lower intellectual functions to interpret its knowledge into terms which can be expressed in language. When these intellectual functions instead of interpreting, throw up clouds of doubt and obscuration, the result is not a teaching but a poetical aspiration or a pious conjecture. But it speaks well for the truth of a teaching that it should have survived in this intuitive form through so much discouragement. It should be noted that the writers have used, for want of a better word, the term "Metempsychosis"; but they do not mean animal transmigration.

SELECTIONS FROM POETRY AND PROSE

EDWIN ARNOLD

Nay, but as when one layeth
His worn-out robes away,
And, taking new ones, sayth,
“These will I wear today!”
So putteth by the spirit
Lightly its garb of flesh,
And passeth to inherit
A residence afresh.

— *Song Celestial*

JOHN GREENLEAR WHITTIER

A presence strange at once and known
Walked with me as my guide,
The skirts of some forgotten life
Trailed noiseless at my side

Was it a dim-remembered dream
Or glimpse through aeons old?
The secret which the mountains kept
The river never told.

— *A Mystery*

PAUL HAMILTON HAYNE

A prescient lore
Springs from some life outlived of yore.
O swift instructive startling gleams
Of deep soul-knowledge; not as dreams
For aye ye vaguely dawn and die,
But oft with lightning certainty
Pierce through the dark oblivious brain
To make old thoughts and memories plain;
Thoughts which perchance must travel back
Across the wild bewildering track
Of countless aeons.

BAYARD TAYLOR

All outward vision yields to that within
Whereof nor creed nor canon holds the key;
We only feel that we have ever been
And evermore shall be.

The poet came to the land of the East
When spring was in the air,
The East was dressed for a wedding feast
So young she seemed and fair,
And the poet knew the land of the East,
His soul was native there.

All things to him were the visible forms
Of early and precious dreams,
Familiar visions that mocked his quest
Beside the western streams,
Or gleamed in the gold of the clouds unrolled
In the sunset's dying beams.

WALT WHITMAN

Facing West from California's shores,
Inquiring, tireless, seeking what is yet unfound,
I, a child, very old, over waves, towards the house of maternity, the land of
migrations, look afar,
Look off the shores of my Western sea, the circle almost circled:
For starting westward from Hindustan, from the vales of Kashmere,
From Asia, from the north, from the God, the sage, and the hero,
From the south, from the flowery peninsulas and the spice islands,
Long having wandered since, round the earth having wandered,
Now I face home again, very pleased and joyous.

As to you, Life, I reckon you are the leavings of many deaths.
No doubt I have died myself ten thousand times before.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

Sometimes a breath floats by me,
And odor from Dreamland sent,
Which makes the ghost seem nigh me
Of a something that came and went,
Of a life lived somewhere, I know not
In what diviner sphere;
Of mem'ries that come and go not;
Like music once heard by an ear
That cannot forget or reclaim it;
A something so shy it would shame it
To make it a show.
A something too vague, could I name it,
For others to know:
As though I had lived it and dreamed it,
As though I had acted and schemed it
Long ago.

WADDINGTON

Where wert thou, Soul, ere yet my body born
Became thy dwelling place? Didst thou on earth
Or in the clouds, await this body's birth,
Or by what chance upon that winter's morn
Didst thou this body find, a babe forlorn?
Didst thou in sorrow enter, or in mirth,
Or for a jest perchance, to try its worth
Thou tookest flesh, ne'er from it to be torn?

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

I have been here before,
But when or how I cannot tell;
I know the grass beyond the door,
The sweet keen smell,
The sighing sound, the lights around the shore.

DAVID HUME

The soul, if immortal, existed before our birth.
What is incorruptible must be ungenerable.
Metempsychosis [reincarnation] is the only system
of immortality that Philosophy can hearken to.

WORDSWORTH

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath elsewhere had its setting,
And cometh from afar.

PROFESSOR WILLIAM KNIGHT

If we could legitimately determine any question of belief by the number of its adherents, the *quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus* would apply to metempsychosis [reincarnation] more fitly than to any other. I think it is quite as likely to be revived and to come to the front again as any rival theory. {Latin phrase translation: That which always, that which everywhere, that which by all had been held to be true.}

PROFESSOR FRANCIS BOWEN

The doctrine of metempsychosis [reincarnation] may almost claim to be a natural or innate belief in the human mind, if we may judge from its wide diffusion among the nations of the earth and its prevalence throughout the historical ages.

GEORGE MACDONALD

We cannot yet have learned all that we are meant to learn through the body. How much of the teaching, even of this world, can the most diligent and most favored man have exhausted before he is called to leave it? Is all that remains lost?

EDWARD YOUNG

Look nature through; 'tis revolution all,
All change, no death. Day follows night, and night
The dying day; stars rise and set, and set and rise.
Earth takes the example. All to re-flourish fades
As in a wheel: all sinks to re-ascend;
Emblems of man who passes, not expires.

WILLIAM SHARP

None sees the slow and upward sweep
By which the soul from life-depths deep
Ascends,— unless, mayhap, when free,
With each new death we backward see
The long perspective of our race
Our multitudinous past lives trace.

ALFRED TENNYSON

Yet how should I for certain hold,
Because my memory is so cold,
That I first was in human mold?

.
It may be that no life is found,
Which only to one engine bound
Falls off, but cycles always round.

As old mythologies relate,
Some draught of Lethe might await
The slipping thro' from state to state.

.
But, if I lapsed from nobler place,
Some legend of a fallen race
Alone might hint of my disgrace;

.
Or if thro' lower lives I came —
Tho' all experience past became
Consolidate in mind and frame —

I might forget my weaker lot;
For is not our first year forgot?
The haunts of memory echo not.

· · · · ·
Moreover, something is or seems,
That touches me with mystic gleams,
Like glimpses of forgotten dreams —

Of something felt, like something here;
Of something done, I know not where;
Such as no language may declare.
— *The Two Voices*

5

Humans After Death

A Student

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There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins;
Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.
Shakespeare.

THE MYSTERY OF DEATH

“If a man die shall he live again?” How many myriad times has this question been asked since the days of Job, and how many times imperfectly answered! But in this age of transition an opportunity has been given the western world to obtain by the aid of Theosophy a more accurate view of Life, and what is called Death, than has been possible since the destruction of the Mysteries in Greece, Egypt, and western Asia.

The popular dread of death and the misconceptions concerning it arise from ignorance, the parent of evil. We are yet ignorant of our own true nature; humanity is a sealed book to itself; and no wonder, therefore, the future looks dark, uncertain, and forbidding.

We all, at least all who have begun to study their own natures impersonally, feel a certain cramping bondage in our lives, a sense of limitation. We tremble on the brink of discovering that life contains far greater possibilities than we had dared to hope for, and that we are not living up to the height of our powers. We dimly suspect that there is a Higher Principle in us that must come out and take control, and our intuitions, timid and faint though they may be, and clouded by the materialism of the age, tell us that the death of the physical body cannot be the end of all things for us. Without a future existence for the larger Man that we feel stirring in our hearts at times, human life would indeed be “a discreditable episode on one of the meanest of the planets”!

How is it that our boasted intellectual progress has left us more ignorant, hopeless and bewildered than ever in respect to this supreme question? Why do we wear gloomy looks and black clothes, and entertain hopeless grief and dread in our hearts when this natural and inevitable shadow crosses our path? Our popular theology tells us “Death is a mystery, we must hope for the best,” and that the only *proof* of the resurrection is that Jesus Christ rose from the dead and opened the gates of Paradise for the faithful! a “proof” which is no proof to the majority of people. But orthodoxy is undermined today by scientific criticism, and many of its leading exponents have abandoned what were believed to be its central features. Today the churches speak with mental reservation and quavering voices of Heaven, Hell, and the “plan of Salvation”; the ringing note of certainty is wanting, for the Huxleys and Spencers have thoroughly shaken the walls of the creeds with their trumpet blasts of criticism. Few persons honestly believe in the old orthodoxy or in any plan of salvation at all. Dispassionate study of the “Higher Criticism” and a judicious regard of the unspiritual career of Christendom during the past nineteen weary centuries have thrown back the more thoughtful and, necessarily, the masses who follow, into doubt or indifference. Acts speak louder than words and it is not to be denied that the lives of men today show that they have, in the main, lost the simple enthusiastic faith that sent Ridley and

Latimer to the stake, or fired the fine ladies of Florence to sacrifice their vanities at the bidding of Savonarola. It is even considered impolite to speak on such subjects as the future life in general society! The crudity of the teachings of the churches on the subject of what happens after death is well typified by the lines of the famous hymn of Dr. Watts, beginning:

When rattling bones together fly
From every quarter of the sky.

The publication of such gross caricatures of the truth has led people to doubt, justly enough, whether their self-appointed teachers know any more of the mystery of death than they themselves; and, as a natural consequence, those to whom the future is all dark, either cling to lives of hopeless suffering with the tenacity of despair, or destroy themselves in reckless disregard of the warnings they despise. The increase of suicide is one of the most menacing signs of the times.

Science on its part has nothing definite to affirm and refuses to answer the question of the possibility of a future life for man. The scientific world hardly dares to admit there is such a question at all, and prefers to devote its attention to researches of inferior consequence. No doubt this attitude of scientific thought is but a temporary reaction against the absurd and obsolete dogmas of theology, but the fact remains that the anxious truth-seeker receives no answer, and that in pursuing what is called the practical, Science strangely ignores the most practical question of all, *i.e.*, what are we here for; where have we come from; and where do we go? And in doing this Science today unscientifically disregards the testimony of a vast mass of facts bearing upon the question, and ignores the opinion of the greatest minds of the ages.

But if we shake off the preconceived prejudices we may have gathered from the vagaries of learned theological ignorance, or the negations of scientists, we will admit that the importance of the subject is undeniable; it is only the possibility of gaining any certainty on the subject that is doubtful. What a different thing life is to one who realizes that "The soul of man is immortal and its future is the future of a thing whose growth and splendor have no limits," [Idyll of the White Lotus.] and that it is in his own hands for weal or woe, from what it appears to one who thinks, Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die. How is the materialist going to confront the "King of Terrors" when the icy hand suddenly strikes the beloved one? Will not his pride of negation bend at that crisis? — for much of modern skepticism is born of conceit. It is not impossible that at such times a strange, wild hope, a flash from a higher source may startle him as he gazes down the street of tombs, the Appian Way of dead hopes and attachments!

The teachings of Theosophy, simple in their broad outlines, profound as nature in their details, have come as a revealer to those who are seeking the way to Truth. Theosophy reconciles the conflict between science and religions; it is nothing new; the truths it brings forward are as old as the hills, but it puts them in a manner conformable to the temper of the age. William Q. Judge, the successor to Madame Blavatsky, the great teacher of Theosophy of the nineteenth century, says:

Embracing both the scientific and the religious, Theosophy is a scientific religion and a religious science. It is not a belief or dogma formulated or invented by man, but is a knowledge of the laws which govern the evolution of the physical, astral, psychical, and intellectual constituents of nature and of man.

There is nothing grotesque in Theosophy; it is a system which is scientific and not merely speculative. It is inevitable as the multiplication table.

But Theosophy demands one difficult thing from the student — an unprejudiced attitude of mind, for it takes a real effort to change our standpoint and to admit that our ignorance has been perpetuated by sheer unwillingness to climb to the heights where a broader view can be obtained. But as we do know we have wandered in darkness it would be foolish in the extreme not to follow a gleam of light even if we have to abandon some of the cherished impedimenta of mental habits. Those who are willing to make the plunge and step out of the old mental grooves will find rich and unexpected reward.

The Manuals of this series are not written for the purpose of defending Theosophy against the attacks of the misinformed or the traducer. They are for genuine inquirers who come honestly with unprejudiced minds, willing to try to comprehend something new, and whose hearts seek the truth, even if it seem a little strange at first. Theosophy is essentially the philosophy which those who suffer, and who may have despaired in the confusion of thought and turmoil of the age, have yearned for. And it is for those generous souls who seek help that they may the better serve others. The self-satisfied and the captious must pass on; this avenue of enlightenment is not open to them until later, when they have discovered their need and asked for help.

Though Theosophy opens a new realm of Nature to the student and unveils facts and their meanings that have been lost or buried, it is not dogmatic; it does not demand acceptance under penalties. By its reasonableness it attracts those who are not too deeply prejudiced to break free from preconceptions, and in time the proofs become too strong to be resisted. Theosophy could not be dogmatic and continue to be Theosophy, for it teaches man to look within himself for the truth and not to accept the

testimony of another person, or of any book, as infallible. The real teacher is one who puts you in a position to find out truth for yourself. In Eastern Theosophy he is called the Guru, or guide and adjuster, and his duty is not to cram quantities of startling facts into the learner, but to show him how to travel from the known to the unknown. Theosophy tells us that if we follow the path of Brotherly conduct in all our acts and thoughts, the path of self-discipline and self-purification, the royal and only road to the Higher Wisdom will be found. In the poetical words of H. P. Blavatsky:

There is a road steep and thorny, beset with perils of every kind, but yet a road, and it leads to the Heart of the Universe. I can tell you how to find those who will show you the secret gateway that leads inward only and closes fast behind the neophyte for evermore. There is no danger that dauntless courage cannot conquer, there is no trial that spotless purity cannot pass through; there is no difficulty that strong intellect cannot surmount. For those who win onward there is reward past all telling, the power to bless and serve Humanity. For those who fail there are other lives in which success may come.

As we persevere in sincere altruistic effort for the uplifting of our “other selves,” our Brothers, Theosophy promises us that the darkest shadows will be lifted, and the mystery of death be solved, for our vision will be so pure that we shall see things as they really are. Of course short essays like these Manuals only deal with the initial steps, as they are but rudimentary and necessarily fragmentary, but they will be found to provide a few keys, derived from the teachings of H. P. Blavatsky, W. Q. Judge, and Katherine Tingley, with which the reader may unlock some of the closed doors; H. P. Blavatsky herself said that she was instructed to put forward the teachings of Theosophy primarily “to break the molds of mind”; that is to say to give the brightest and most spiritual minds of this age the opportunity of finding for themselves the truth by showing them the line of search and the method of commencing.

THE PLACE OF DEATH IN EVOLUTION

While, as we must all agree, the purpose of man’s evolution is to lead him to the complete knowledge of the Universe in its height and depth, and to the enjoyment of its glory, this cannot be done, according to Theosophy, until he becomes one with the Higher Self, the Divine Soul behind our separated human personalities, that Divine Soul which is the Christos, the true Vine of which we are the branches. To attain this godlike state we have to break down the wall of selfishness dividing one from the other; we have to identify our personal interests with those of the whole, and consciously to feel the unity of the race — that Oneness which is a

fact in Nature, and which is not a sentiment or a fanciful conceit of idle dreamers —

I am the Vine, ye are the branches.... If a man abide not in me he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered.... and cast into the fire and burned.

— John xv, 5, 6.

Those who are beginning to realize that the open door to all the powers of the soul is through actual, unselfish devotion to the interests of humanity; those who are seeking that which was lost, will find a certain spiritual comradeship in Theosophical work that nothing else can give, in rich, overflowing measure.

Physical science acts on the principle known as that of “*testimonium paupertatis*,” {A testimony of poverty.} *i.e.*, that farfetched and remote causes for appearances must not be sought when lesser and more obvious ones are sufficient. For instance, a weight rises the moment the precise amount of force necessary to overcome the resistance is put forth. It is not necessary to use a steam-hammer to crack a nut. So with the Theosophical teachings about Man after Death — they are the simplest and most rational intimations that could be looked for on a subject of such profound obscurity to the ordinary human mind. Above all, they are not speculations as to what may be, like the poems of Dante or Milton. They are the results of the observations of millenniums by those advanced Helpers of the race who have pierced the veil and who have been able to enter consciously into many states of which we can hardly imagine the existence. Though the Teachers have not given out nearly all the knowledge in their possession, many teachings belonging to the regions of the higher Mysteries being reserved as they cannot be revealed yet in our present state of evolution, enough is plainly set forth to satisfy reasonable inquirers who have gotten away from the misleading prejudices and limitations of orthodox bigotry or materialistic science.

H. P. Blavatsky and William Q. Judge left us a mine of valuable hints by which we can work out the thinly veiled clues with which the ancient philosophies and Sacred Scriptures of the world are filled, and we have the inestimable advantage of having Katherine Tingley, our Teacher and Leader, with us to help us and to prevent us from wasting our time on unprofitable byways of speculation.

The teachings of Theosophy deal with such intimate subjects and are so sacred that it would be a profanation to bring them forward in anything like school text-book form. They pertain to the most serious matters that can touch us, to things closest to our hearts, to feelings which English-speaking people particularly have a great and almost unconquerable reluctance to discuss. The secrets of Death and the mysterious journey of the radiant immortal soul should, fittingly, be spoken of in Miltonic

periods of stately verse, or suggested to the reverent ear by noble music. Feeling this so strongly, the subject of Man after Death will be treated without bringing in the text-book atmosphere; for we recognize fully that it has to do with our real selves, stripped of all pretense, as well as with our more tender relations with those “We have loved and lost awhile.”

For convenience, because the English language has not developed the suitable terms, we shall use the few Eastern words which H. P. Blavatsky adopted to save time in endlessly long explanatory sentences. The words may be found in Sanskrit or other Eastern languages, but the meanings attached to them by H. P. Blavatsky are not always precisely the same nowadays in the original languages from which they were taken. As Theosophy is not *exoteric* Buddhism, Hindûism, nor Christianity, but is the deeper meaning behind all the world-religions, the special words selected naturally had to carry a deeper significance than is attributed to them by philologists. The special uses of the few terms used will become quite clear as we proceed. Every science requires a certain number of words of technical meaning and it would be curious if Theosophy, the Science of Life, were an exception.

As a necessary introduction to the Theosophical teaching of what takes place after the last breath is drawn we must have a fair idea of what Man really is. Elsewhere the complex nature of man’s principles has been described at length, so it is needless to go into detail here. For our present purpose the following convenient arrangement of the principles or subdivisions of our nature as published by H. P. Blavatsky is sufficient, but we may notice in passing that several other slightly modified classifications were used by her as well.

The various Eastern Schools of psychology differ as to the best arrangement, for the principles can be grouped in different divisions. What we call the physical body — *i.e.*, the illusory appearance produced by the passing of material molecules through the ideal astral matrix — being so mutable can be safely ignored. Strictly speaking, it is not a “Principle” at all. The Egyptian and ancient Greek classifications are still other modifications, but H. P. Blavatsky decided that the following order was the most suitable for her pupils.

THE HIGHER SELF is

Âtmâ, the inseparable ray of the Universal and ONE SELF. It is the God *above*, more than within, us. Happy the man who succeeds in saturating his *inner Ego* with it!

THE SPIRITUAL *divine* EGO is

the spiritual soul or *Buddhi*, in close union with *Manas*, the mind-principle, without which the former is no EGO at all, but only the *Âtmic Vehicle*.

THE INNER or HIGHER “Ego” is

Manas, the “fifth” Principle, so called, independently of *Buddhi*. The Mind-Principle is only the Spiritual Ego when merged *into one* with *Buddhi*; no materialist being supposed to have in him *such* an Ego, however great his intellectual capacities. It is the permanent *Individuality* or the “Reincarnating Ego.”

THE LOWER, or PERSONAL “Ego” is

the physical man in conjunction with his *lower* Self — *i.e.*, animal instincts, passions, desires, etc. It is called the “false personality,” and consists of the *lower Manas* combined with *Kâma Rûpa*, and operating through the physical body and its phantom or “double.”

The remaining “principle,” *Prâna*, or “Life,” is strictly speaking, the radiating force or energy of *Âtman* — as the Universal Life and the ONE SELF — ITS lower, or rather (in its effects) more physical, because manifesting, aspect. *Prâna*, or Life, permeates the whole being of the objective Universe, and is called a “principle” only because it is an indispensable factor and the *deus ex machinâ* {god from the machine} of the living man.

We must never fall into the vulgar error of thinking of these principles as entirely separate things, like the coats of an onion, so to speak; during waking life our consciousness is playing through the whole set of principles, Âtman excepted, as It really stands above everything else. The human consciousness cannot be defined intelligibly; at best we can say it is the feeling of “I-am-I” and no other. The seven principles somewhat resemble the seven prismatic colors which appear to be one, white, when united, but when separated are found to have individual characteristics. Force and matter are admittedly indestructible, and conscious intelligence makes them coherent and orderly in their manifestation; otherwise chaos would ensue. The power of feeling inherent in us penetrates the different principles; but in our present state the mental self-consciousness is what makes us man, though unfortunately with the rarest exceptions this is merely the lower intellection and not the higher mind or the complete Manas. When humanity is fully self-conscious on every plane of existence it will stand forth as the Divine Man it is destined to become.

After death the Higher Manas withdraws into itself its “Shadow,” the higher aroma of the lower Manas, which has been prominent during life, and which we erroneously think is our real self; it is this dual Manasic principle, therefore, that we have to watch, chiefly, in its postmortem experiences.

To get an adequate idea of the conditions after death we must realize that the center of feeling giving us the sense of I-am-I, our individual consciousness, is able to identify itself with each of the different aspects or planes of Nature. These identifications are usually, though inexactly, called *changes of consciousness*. It is a matter of common recognition that a person is in an entirely different state when concentrated upon the solution of some difficult mathematical problem from the one he is in while enjoying a Christmas dinner or listening to worthy music; the intuitive consciousness which directs right action as in a flash, heedless of the slow process of reasoning, is different again; and then there are the little-understood states of dreaming and dreamless sleep. Theosophy being essentially based upon the study of consciousness, follows the individual perception through these “states of consciousness” and many others not yet recognized by science, until the personal limitations melt away into the whole, and “the dewdrop slips into the shining sea.” Throughout all the ramifications of this marvelous journey let us never forget that it is the conditions that change, not the perceiving, conscious Center.

There are many planes or conditions in Nature’s marvelous storehouse, and the vehicles or sheaths that the soul has created in order that it may understand these planes by plunging into them, are limitations. As we get away from the physical world and the brain-cells of physiology, the vehicles of consciousness are found to be of more subtle matter than the terrestrial, more ethereal, in harmony with the new conditions. The

most helpful method is to consider them as possessing higher speed and different qualities of vibration, and consequently, unfamiliar properties and energies.

The table of principles given on page 104 leads to an important point in connection with consciousness after death. To understand this we must dwell upon the strange fact that a center of self-consciousness can apparently emanate or put out an “automatic” consciousness resembling the light thrown by a lamp on a wall. It lights up a dimmer sensibility latent in the atoms of the associated substance. So, after death, the “astral” man or ethereal double of the body, though intrinsically mindless, has an automatic memory, an induced or reflected intelligence from its association with the lower Manas, which persists for a while, but must not be mistaken for that of the real Ego.

There are other separate persistences of consciousness after death which will be referred to later on, but the principle is the same. The full consciousness neither disappears into annihilation at death, nor does it exist in the same conditions as during life, but passes on to higher and “inner” states of being, leaving behind it sundry vehicles or emanations which have a reflected life and sensibility of their own, lasting for various periods according to the energy put into that part of the nature during life, and derived from their contact with the real Ego. To get even a dim appreciation of the release of the Higher Manas by death, the student is urged to dwell on this possibly novel conception to him of the temporary persistences of partial “reflections” and survivals of the lower passions of the human being now undergoing purification.

Perhaps this important point can be grasped more clearly if we watch the automatic department of our minds which intelligently, even if vaguely, answers questions, counts figures, and does other simple *mental* acts while “we” are profoundly absorbed in reverie. It is quite common to read a page without having the slightest recollection of a word, because the connection between the real center of perception and the automatic consciousness has been temporarily separated. Some business men, again, devise their most important enterprises while the lower mentality is automatically occupied with a game of cards. The same part of our nature has the power to shut the doors of memory against the higher man, and prevent their being opened for a while. Many instances of dual consciousness in daily life will occur to the reader, without referring to the merely physical consciousness of the body, which we all know can be absolutely disregarded for a while, as in the case of soldiers not feeling their wounds in the excitement of battle.

From the knowledge that consciousness can be in more than one state at the same time, paradoxical though it seems, it is but a short step to see that a continuation of a lower order of intelligence in a subtle body, after

the breaking down of the bond uniting the whole, is not by any means an extraordinary idea.

The instinctive intelligence, call it reflex action, or what you will, in a decapitated turtle or conger-eel, which will bite, if irritated, for hours after being cut up; or the automatic memory in a heart which keeps it beating for a long time after removal from the body, are illustrations of similar persistence; and the semi-animal sensibility of the Venus' Fly-trap or the Sensitive Plant is closely allied. The appreciation of the complex groups of semiconscious subordinate "men" combining with the real Man to form a human being, is of similar nature to the comprehension of a solid geometrical figure from the study of its component faces laid out on a flat plane. Like the geometrical figure which at last combines in the mind, as a solid, the unity of the principles has to be felt by the inner perception.

Observe carefully that Theosophy teaches that these semi-intelligent emanations — passions and desires — have bodily form to manifest in, however tenuous and ethereal it may be and however temporary. This point will be further dealt with later, but it is necessary to refer to it now for fear of misunderstanding.

The normal consciousness, composed of all the aspects of mental and emotional consciousness, added to the lower sensations of the physical cells and the organs of the body, we call our personal self. Theosophy calls this the "false" personality, and it is this that is greatly modified by death, which weeds out the impermanent and intensifies the self-consciousness of the Inner or Higher Ego.

Change is necessary for progress in the present condition of things. The feeling of Selfhood is partially induced from the element of change in the surroundings. Though we have obviously to advance beyond this attitude of mind, which exists because of our incomplete development, yet at this moment each perceives his own existence by the relationship of himself to what is not himself; and that relationship, to be felt, requires friction or change. Although, philosophically speaking, behind all stands the Spectator, the Watcher, the *Âtman-Buddhi*, yet from the standpoint of the lower mind, absolute changelessness of conditions would be equivalent to non-existence. We only feel the presence of still water by a difference of temperature; when the temperature becomes the same as that of the finger the water is not felt. We should lose all knowledge of our existence if there were no changes of consciousness. "Absolute" consciousness would be the same as non-existence to us as individual human beings, for the same reason that "absolute" light without the slightest shade or variety of color would be the same in effect as pure darkness, from want of contrast — or otherwise, from lack of change. "Death," therefore, is a necessary part of life for us at present, for it gives the greatest possible change of conditions, and ushers in a new order of existence for a while.

Carrying further the idea of change, Theosophy shows that the alternation of life and death — cyclic manifestation and repose — is a fundamental law of the Universe; but what is withdrawal and dissolution from one aspect is the opening into keener life when regarded from the other pole of being. So the death of the body allows the soul to be born into a larger life, to seek spiritual refreshment until the inevitable periodic law draws it back into reincarnation again on Earth — to be, like Adam, “clothed in skin,” in order to gain a further share of experience in the material world.

Earthly existence is, from the higher aspect, death, not only allegorically or mystically, but actually; for the higher Ego, when entangled with the brain mind, temporarily loses its celestial knowledge, and is only able to re-enter the higher spiritual states, in the case of the *normal* man, during “dreamless” sleep. Sleep is indeed the twin brother of death, and in greater measure than modern thinkers suppose.

It must not be thought that man has to undergo rebirths on Earth forever, although a large number of such experiences are necessary under cyclic law. After material conditions and temptations have been mastered, other regions open out and physical incarnation, being unnecessary, is left behind. But, as this subject is touched upon elsewhere we need not pursue it further here.

THE PROCESS OF RELEASE

Having gained from the teachings of Theosophy a broad idea of what man really is we are better prepared to understand the process of release from the prison of the body; for death *is* a deliverer in the present conditions of Earth-life, with selfishness and animality rampant. Death is the friend to the higher spiritual nature. Life as led today is fraught with far greater suffering than death; to millions it is life that is the King of Terrors, judging by the terrible increase in the number of suicides. But the Theosophist who really feels the continuity of life, its indestructibility, and who has felt the heart-touch even for a moment, has no more fear of death than of any other natural process in the experience of the soul. The student of Theosophy knows that death is not an unprecedented catastrophe or unlooked-for event, but a change natural to the state of evolution we are in at present. Doubtless it is a great and transforming change, and many strange portals and tortuous passages have to be traversed, but the real, immortal man knows the password — “Purification” — which will unlock the mystic doors.

After the last breath has been expired and all seems over, some time usually elapses before the inner Self has absolutely finished with his earthly tenement. Concentrated for a while in the deepest centers of the brain and totally unconscious of the body he is now leaving, man reads the

records of his past life, drawn from the imperishable register of the “astral light,” which nothing can modify; every event is presented in the startling vividness of life itself, long forgotten incidents are resurrected, and during the few moments before the loosing of the “silver thread” the past stands out in minutest detail and also as a whole, so that the complete chain of cause and effect is seen. This is the first Judgment Day, and there is no escape from this living picture gallery; for the man, now the Spectator of his deeds as if they were those of another, is compelled to be honest and to recognize where he failed and where he succeeded, where the lower nature conquered or where the higher gained the day. No excuses can be made at this awful moment. In many cases of apparent drowning the sufferers have been able to recollect passing through a similar profoundly impressive experience; though no doubt it is far less vivid than the vision at the time of real death.

That this solemn retrospect may bring forth its deepest results, that the facing of the calm dispassionate judgment of the Higher Ego may not lose its full efficacy, a peaceful atmosphere in the chamber of death is most important. Though the senses have ceased to convey their messages to the brain, and the inner Self can give no sign of his presence, any extreme agitation in his surroundings, such as excess of grief in the survivors, is felt by him through other channels and produces a retarding effect upon his rightful progress toward more and more inward states. Abandonment to the extremity of woe by those to whom the departing soul is closely attached is a positive injury to it, and should never be allowed. It is really a form of self-indulgence, and is not characteristic of true unselfish love, nor suitable for a moment fraught with such momentous consequences. It is necessary to speak very plainly on this point, for it is one of primary importance to all who love their fellows. Many persons seem to take a morbid kind of enjoyment in the over-indulgence in grief, a pride in being able to display supreme emotion. All the great religious teachers and philosophers of the world have censured extreme abandonment to sorrow, and Theosophy demonstrates why they objected. They knew it injures both the living and the dying. The solemn trial the loved one is passing through while reliving the past at the time of death and for a while after, should not be interrupted, nor should the soul be embarrassed by the despairing grief of the bereaved ones who often seem at those times to have utterly lost all hope or trust in the Higher Law.

This is a very delicate and sacred subject and in trying to help those who are in severe pain a sympathetic though firm touch is needed. Here is a time when Theosophy comes like a breath of fresh air, with its gentle message of healing to the stricken mourners. To all who have realized, even a little, the principle of Universal Oneness in their lives, the way quickly opens out of the close atmosphere of self-centered grief into the healthy air of generous service. Tears? yes, if you must; but let them be

transmuted from tears of despair to tears of tender sympathy. Theosophy does not check the faintest breath of heart-love that might help and strengthen the departed in the effort he is now commencing, under circumstances of extreme novelty and bewilderment, to break off with the lower things of Earth and to enter into the new life through the gates of the mystic “second death.”

Excess of grief on the part of the bereaved is an unbrotherly yielding to personal emotion. It is a subtle form of self-gratification. Besides the obvious weakening and disheartening after-effect on the survivors it seriously retards the pilgrim soul on his dark journey. But trust in the higher Law; tender reminiscence; combined with a loving desire for the purification and progress of the lost one, and a firm putting down of uncontrolled and sentimental lamentation, help to build a bridge of light for the friend who is crossing the mysterious river. Dignified self-control on the part of the survivors generates the atmosphere of peace, and surely it is a great comfort to feel that high spiritual and sympathetic feeling can really give help in the time of trial, though no external sign may be shown in return.

The touching Bible story of David’s conduct when his son was threatened with death is a beautiful illustration of the Theosophical teaching. After doing everything in his power to ward off the danger while the child still lived — fasting and weeping, as soon as there was no further hope he calmly returned to his duty, chastened and purified, saying, “Now that he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.” (II Sam. 12)

Once we realize the inner spiritual unity of the whole of humanity, embodied or disembodied, *i.e.*, the deeper meaning of Universal Oneness, there is no room for hopeless grief, which arises from the implicit denial of the great truth that the kingdom of God is within us and that we are the temples of God.

While the retrospect of the past is taking place and the brain-mind is yielding up the minutest recollections forgotten since the moment which saw them born, the bodily form is breaking up under the pressure of a change in polarity. H. P. Blavatsky puts it thus:

When a body dies it passes into the same polarity as its male [positive] energy, and repels therefore, the active agent, which, losing hold of the whole, fastens on the parts or molecules, the action being called chemical. (*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, 572.)

The active energy is *Prâna*, the vital solar force which animates all things, permeating everything, like water in a sponge. In life the body is polarized oppositely to this, and so, by the well-known law of Nature, a healthy interplay exists between the two. It is a case of manifestation

through the action of the “pairs of opposites.” In electric action for instance, every output of positive electricity has to be balanced by a corresponding display of negative energy. During the day the solar Prânic energy has been accumulating and by the hour of bedtime this positive flood begins to overpower the resisting negative forces of the body, which is then actually too full of vitality. It can no longer stand the strain and sleep is necessary to restore the balance. In death the body is completely overpowered by Prâna, we die from an excess of life, for the tremendous force rushing through the cells tears them apart, and destroys them in consequence of there being no opposing force strong enough to resist the pressure. William Q. Judge says:

When we awake we are in equilibrium as to our organs and life; when we fall asleep we are yet more full of energy than in the morning; it has exhausted us; it finally kills the body. Such a contest could not be waged forever, since the whole solar system’s weight of life is pitted against the power to resist focused in one small human frame.

A time comes in the life of every man when the mysterious disintegrating tendency increases rapidly and the body succumbs to what often seems an insufficient physical cause. The existence of this cyclic period of breaking-up is derived from the past and is largely hereditary. Man is a creature of habit and there is a strong hereditary tendency for successive generations to do the same things at the same periods of life. The development of the unborn child, the various physiological changes in the body, the arrival of the teeth, beard, etc., follow recognized cycles. Further still, evil tendencies, such as a craving for drink, have been observed to break out at exactly the same age in father and son, extending sometimes over several generations. Likewise a period when the body gives up the fight against the natural pressure of the Solar System comes to everyone, the length of normal life seldom exceeding seventy years.

Can this change be overcome and healthy life be lengthened indefinitely? If we lived wisely and were pure in act and thought we should not be the sport of this habit, which is of our own creation. Once this critical time is tided over there is no reason why life should not be prolonged. If we were truly selfless we should be able to lay down or take up the body at will, and not as now have it wrenched from us. But as the human race will obviously continue to perpetuate present conditions for a long time to come, we may dismiss further consideration on this point, as it would carry us beyond the scope of this essay. Very few persons would care to live on after the death of all their friends into new circumstances for which they had not been prepared in early life. The lesson contained in the legend of the Wandering Jew, an ordinary man who can never find rest but has to carry about the horrible memories of his past, is not encouraging

to those who may fancy an immensely long life in their present consciousness would be a desirable thing. We are irresistibly reminded of the Greek story of the love of Eos (the dawn) for Tithonus, son of Priam. The goddess succeeded in gaining immortality for her human spouse, but forgot to ask for eternal youth, and so the poor man became decrepit and miserable in course of time.

Eternal youth in the legend of course typifies the child-state we have lost, for without that, eternal life would be a terrible infliction. Jesus put the matter very plainly when he told the people that they could not enter the kingdom of heaven until they had become as little children. Fortunately the merciful law of Reincarnation gives the mind a complete break, as the memory of former lives is not contained in the new brain, and the man of desire does not know how to evoke it. Those few exceptional persons who have attained the power of safely passing through the dangerous cyclic period are, by the very nature of the case, qualified to endure the new conditions which greatly prolonged life must bring.

The disintegrating impulse would be easily resisted and the average length of healthy, useful activity increased if it were not that the selfish passional nature has been allowed to grow inordinately strong. The passions, coalescing into one dominant force in later life, form an enemy which takes advantage of the hereditary tendency to dissolve, and at last, as if with glee, gives the fatal blow. The final disintegration of the physical body is only the accentuation of the process of breaking up which is continually in action throughout life.

Consider for a moment what is this body which seems so firm and stable. Is it the material molecules? Hardly, for they are in a constant state of flux, passing into the frame and out of it ceaselessly. Not for one minute is the body in the same condition; as each particle yields up its quota of energy it is hurried away to be re-vivified by the sunshine; man's body is the least permanent of all his principles; in fact, so evanescent is it that some schools of Eastern philosophers have declined to call it one of the principles at all! It is like a river. How can we define a river accurately? Is it the bed, or the water? Both are forever changing; the sparkling drops never stay one moment, but glide along to their ocean home, not, however, to remain there long, but to rise again in vapor and unite into some other stream. The river bed itself changes in shape, in position, and in depth. In fact the river in itself is really the persisting "Ideal form" behind the everchanging particles. When the ancients named their rivers "Father" Tiber, or the "Son" of Brahmâ (Brahmâputra) they were allegorizing this point in poetical language. The matter of our bodies is as unstable as the water in the rivers, and as a further resemblance, on leaving the body to pass into the outer air it is not quite the same, for it has been impressed with some of the reflected consciousness of the man, it has been raised or lowered as the case may be. The water of the river is colored by the

geological strata it has passed through, the vegetation that it has supported, or the refuse that has been shot into it. The molecules leaving an alcoholic victim are in a very much lower condition than those from a pure, self-controlled person. The impress the molecules receive does not pass off quickly, and in fact, as like attracts like, the grosser ones are continually finding their way into the bodies of the more coarsely minded people and helping to keep them back; the more refined and spiritually impressed particles cannot be retained except by those persons with whom they are harmonious. From the standpoint of universal Oneness this fact impresses upon us the importance of pure thought and clean living; it shows that the Theosophic teaching of the unity of the race on every plane has a scientific basis. None of us can escape the influence of the rest, and no one is without the power of helping or degrading his fellows, consciously or otherwise, not only by his actions and his thoughts, but by the very complexion he gives to the atoms of his body.

THE DISSOLUTION OF THE ASTRAL FORM

As the mortal frame begins to decompose in the grave, or better still, in the reverent and sanitary flame of the crematorium, the “Astral Body” is released. The astral body is practically a second human form, mortal and perishable, a semi-material mold holding the particles of the physical body in their places; it is the ethereal matrix of the molecules, the Double or the *Eidolon* of the Greeks. It changes little during life, after the body reaches maturity; differing in that respect greatly from the physical body, but after death it immediately begins to dissolve into its own grade of matter. It is not spiritual at all, and it has no proper consciousness of its own; it has little to do with the progress of the soul, unless it is “artificially stimulated” or vivified, when it normally becomes a hindrance. As a rule, it fades out like a smoke-ring from a pipe, which has a definite form for a while. Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, the eminent biologist, was surprised to find the great tensile strength of this principle during some experiments he once made with a medium. The astral double has occasionally been seen by sensitive persons near graves, for it cannot get far away from the body, and many ghost stories have probably originated from this. After the complete destruction of the physical body the astral form entirely disappears, and cremation has great power in breaking it up rapidly.

Now we are coming to one of those teachings of Theosophy which, though eminently reasonable in themselves, and perfectly in harmony with our highest intuitions and strongest common sense, require a complete change from the ordinary theological method of considering the things of the inner world, or from the materialistic notions we have in so many cases consciously or unconsciously imbibed from the atmosphere of doubt and

sarcasm and controversy regarding the existence of the soul which is so prevalent today.

THE “SECOND DEATH”

Theosophy teaches that the death of the body is not the only great change that occurs at the close of life; there is a “second death,” a death of the lower passional nature, the *Kâma-rûpa* or Body of Desire. This mystic death sets free the higher principles, which then rise to sublime heights of spiritual existence, from whence they do not return until the next incarnation.

To understand this more clearly we must regard the Higher Ego or Manas as the center of *self*-consciousness, overshadowed by the potentiality of *Âtman-Buddhi*, but during life partly incarnated in this molecular existence, where for experience and for the elevation of lower states of being, it has identified itself in that limited bodily condition where passion and desire have great power. The Lower Manas is an Emanation, a portion sent out from the Higher Ego; we may call it for convenience the reflection or the Shadow; and, while in the body, it becomes fully identified with terrestrial existence, after the first few years of life, when, as Wordsworth says:

Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing Boy,
But He beholds the light and whence it comes,
He sees in it His joy;
The Youth who daily farther from the east
Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended;
At length the Man perceives it pass away
And fade into the light of common day.

It has forgotten “heaven which is its home.” The “false personality,” the compound of the Lower Manas — this Emanation of the Higher — the passions, and a number of sensory impressions derived from a long train of daily experiences strung together by the thread of physical memory, is what we call our personal self; Mr. —, or Mrs. — as the case may be; but all the time the real Reincarnating Ego, the higher “Individuality,” is behind, watching, guiding, and helping, whenever the lower self will allow its voice — the Conscience — to be heard. It is the “Guardian Angel.”

At death the body, the astral, and the physical vitality or Prâna, return to their own molecular or atomic states, and for the present we need say no more about them; the inner Self now stands freed from his physical sheath, but he is none the less a personality; he is still entangled in those

passions he has been weaving around himself since infancy. He is now on the *Kâma-loka* plane, the natural home of desire and passion. The *perfectly legitimate normal* existence of other states of being, “beyond and within” the ordinary terrestrial plane, blending into and interpenetrating it, is a conception beginners in Theosophy find difficult to realize in some cases. Even the lowest of these planes are invisible to our embodied senses except under very unusual circumstances, and though they shade into each other like the colors of the spectrum, each one is distinct and characterized by a dominant state of consciousness.

Most people are in the habit of thinking of everything on terrestrial lines, of supposing that the higher as well as the lower feelings disappear utterly with the destruction of the brain, or else of putting the whole question aside as a hopeless mystery. But to see the truth the student must look upon the things of the mind and the soul from higher ground. Reasoning which does fairly well for the things of the body and the mechanical forces will not apply to super-mundane conditions without modification. So when we speak of the plane of passion and desire whereon a being may live, we must not look upon it as if it were another material planet like ours, but rather as a subtle condition of matter, within, or interpenetrating our world; the *Kâma-lokic* condition of consciousness partly resembles the state the mind is in when dreaming an ordinary dream. Even this comparison is very incomplete, for most of our dreaming is done through the brain cells. Speaking of *Kâma-loka* H. P. Blavatsky says that it is

the semi-material plane, to us subjective and invisible, where the disembodied “personalities,” the astral forms, called *Kâma-rûpa*, remain, until they fade out from it by the complete exhaustion of the effect of the mental impulses that created these *eidolons* of human and animal passions and desires.

H. P. Blavatsky here uses the words *astral* and *eidolon* for a much more subtle and ethereal principle, so to speak, than that almost physical astral which perishes as the body decays. The *Kâma-rûpa* is the subjective being, (subjective from our terrestrially objective position but objective enough on its own plane) composed of the whole of the passional nature of the man that was; and for a while the Higher Ego cannot withdraw the Shadow, the Emanation or lower Manas which has gotten entangled in it. In some cases the lower consciousness absolutely dominates the position and the Higher Ego is compelled to break off from its Shadow. This terrible fate for the lower Manas even happens occasionally during life, and then we see the awful spectacle of a seemingly human being entirely destitute of conscience — a soulless being — although often highly intellectual. The *Kâma-lokic* plane has many divisions, each one in harmony

with the grade of materiality of the being passing through it. In the Egyptian *Book of the Dead* they are symbolized by the many portals the soul has to pass through before being finally allowed to enter the Elysian fields of Aanroo. At each gateway he has to give the password, showing advance in spirituality and purification.

As the departed soul progresses in purification it approaches nearer and nearer the Father in Heaven, the Higher Ego, and at the same time the Kâma principle fades away, only leaving behind it the seeds of future action, the seeds that have been sown in the life just passed and which have to come to fruiting in some later incarnation. Nothing but the highest thoughts and feelings of the past life can enter into the final state of heavenly bliss, but before this can be attained the gradual change called the Second Death has to be faced.

The *general* Theosophical teaching of the second death is nothing new, and, being a fact in the orderly progress of the soul, the most enlightened of the ancient philosophers knew of it and have handed it down to us, who have greater difficulties in investigating for ourselves. The sacred Knowledge of the mysteries of death cannot be found by the invocation of the fading Kâma-rûpic shades of the dead in séance rooms or by any ordinary means known to science. Penetration behind the veil of illusion that wraps us so closely can only be done with faultless vision by those who have passed entirely beyond the entanglements of selfish desire. Only those Masters of Wisdom who have attained perfect Compassion, the “perfect love that casteth out fear,” can venture into and return safely from those regions “from whose borne no (uninitiated, or untrained) traveler e’er returns.” The visions of such imperfect seers as Swedenborg, Scipio Africanus, St. Theresa, and the like are often quite unreliable, for they are colored by preconceptions arising from their own particular school of theology acting through self-hypnosis, as well as by gigantic personal limitations. Plutarch puts the ancient Theosophic teaching very clearly, though of course, he could not explain anything fully because the whole detail belonged to the inner Mysteries. He says:

Now of the deaths we die, the one makes man two out of three and the other one of (out of) two. The former is in the region and jurisdiction of Demeter, whence the name given to the Mysteries, *τελειν*, resembles that given to death, *τελευταν*. The Athenians also heretofore called the deceased sacred to Demeter. As for the other death, it is in the moon or the region of Persephone.... And as with the one, the terrestrial, so with the other celestial Hermes doth dwell. This suddenly and with violence plucks the soul from the body; but Proserpina mildly and in a long time disjoins the understanding from the soul. [*Proserpina*, or Persephone, stands here for postmortem Karma, which is said to regulate the separation of the lower from the higher “principles”—the *soul*, as *Nephesh*, the breath of animal life, which remains for a time in Kâma-loka, from the higher compound *Ego*, which goes into the state of Devachan, or

bliss.] Now both the one and the other happen according to nature. It is ordained by Fate [*Fatum* or Karma] that every soul, whether with or without understanding [mind] when gone out of the body should wander for a time, though not all for the same, in the region lying between the earth and moon [Kâma-loka]. For those who have been unjust and dissolute due to their offences; but the good and virtuous are then detained till they are purified, and have, by expiation, purged out of them all the infections they might have contracted from the contagion of the body, as if from foul health, living in the mildest part of the air, called the Meadows of Hades, where they must remain for a certain prefixed and appointed time. And then, as if they were returning from a wandering pilgrimage or long exile into their country, they have a taste of joy,... etc.

CONSCIOUSNESS AND PERSONALITY

Before passing on to the consideration of the region of Paradise where the Higher Manas and the spiritual aroma of the lower Manas become one and unite with the Higher *Self*, it will be well to take another glance at the question of reflected or emanated intelligence, the greatest stumbling block to beginners. The superficial materialism of this age, not only the theoretical disbelief in the existence of immortality, but the modern ideals of practical life, have brought so many millions into such a settled way of thinking of themselves as nothing but this body and brain-mind, that it requires some exercise of will to break up the hypnotic illusion and to see things in a larger way and with a broader view. But when this is done, what a relief to find it is not necessary to believe, as the theologians have indoctrinated us in their ignorance, that our present limited personalities will continue to exist in Heaven or Hell throughout all Eternity; nor to have to take refuge in a natural, instinctive horror of that wearisome belief — in the melancholy hope of annihilation!

All things possess self-consciousness in potentiality; every atom on each plane of being has it in latency if not in action, and the principles that the Ego builds round itself in order to come into touch with the many phases of Earth-life receive a partial awakening from its contact. Think of a light shining through differently colored panes of glass, some of which remain phosphorescent for a while after the withdrawal of the inner light, a physical fact which partly illustrates the super-physical condition of the lower states of consciousness when the Higher Ego has passed on. The whole of Nature is ready at the first favorable moment to acquire self-conscious existence; the greater object which man is struggling to reach (and all things are tending to become man on their way upward) is to “enjoy the Glory of God,” in the language of the theologians. We would prefer to put it — *That all things should become aware of the plan of the Divine Oversoul of which they are expressions.* Observe that the word God is not used in Theosophy with any “personal” signification — unless the

ordinary, limited meaning of the word “personal” is set aside — as so many theologians try to do by their desperate attempts to combine the incompatible, in their efforts to define “the Nature of God.” By this almost creative power of a higher consciousness to light the fires in less evolved substance, the illusion is produced in the mind that it can divide and subdivide itself; but actually the original consciousness must remain a unity and does not lose its identity. The basis in which it works will change, or more exactly, it will pass through many fundamentally distinct states, but once having arrived at that feeling, the sense of I-am-I exists through all the changes of form and growth during Earth-life. Even during the states of so-called unconsciousness (unconsciousness to the waking mind, such as when the brain is under the effect of hypnotism) there is no real blank, for when the subject is again hypnotized the lost memory of what has taken place during the hypnotic state returns and can even be made permanent. Even the character of the personality may change, but the “Spectator,” the inner Self “for whom the hour shall never strike,” looks on and recognizes the changes and profits by the experience gained through the lower self. Back of all there is That which is still more spiritual than the Higher Ego: the Higher SELF — the Divine Breath, *Buddhi* illuminated by *Âtman*, That which is ONE, the Oversoul.

“Lift thy head, oh Lanoo {Student, Disciple}; dost thou see one, or countless lights above thee, burning in the dark midnight sky?”

“I sense one Flame, oh Gurudeva {Great Teacher}, I see countless undetached sparks shining in it.”

“Thou sayest well. And now look around and into thyself. That light which burns inside thee, dost thou find it different in anywise from the light that shines in thy Brother-men?”

“It is in no way different, though the prisoner is held in bondage by Karma, and though its outer garments delude the ignorant into saying, ‘Thy soul and my soul’” — From an eastern esoteric Catechism, quoted by H. P. Blavatsky.

Now we have traveled in our imaginary journey a long way with the advancing soul, and though many mysteries have been left yet unexplained by the Teachers of Theosophy, and many gaps remain to be filled as the student makes progress in impersonality, still the broad outlines of the coherent system that has been given us are now apparent.

DEVACHAN

With the disappearance of the Kâma principle, the radiant glories of the Heavenly World open on the purified soul, now freed from the taint of everything that held it from the realization of the Christos, the true Vine, of which it is but one branch. As a tree puts forth twigs and leaves,

withdrawing into itself by degrees the virtue it has gained through the existence of the leaves, now mere skeletons, so the higher has withdrawn all that was useful, noble and of good report from the terrestrial. The state of “Devachan” has now been fully entered upon, the final state preceding the next plunge or rebirth into Earth-life for further development.

As this Manual is concerned only with the broader aspects of Man after Death, we must leave for separate treatment the consideration of many undesirable hindrances that interfere with the orderly progress of certain souls in passing through the planes of Kâma-loka and disengaging themselves from the stains of passion. These hindrances are caused by an overmastering desire for the pleasures of the senses enjoyed during life, by such events as suicide and accidental death, or by the efforts of misguided people to get into communication with the departed, through the necromantic practices of mediumship.

To get an approximate idea of Devachan, [Pronounced *Dayva-kan*.] the highest state between earthly incarnations, we must not allow ourselves to dwell too much on form. No doubt it is difficult for our brain-minds to separate the idea of conscious existence from definite form of some kind; probably the easiest way to open the intuitive faculty in this direction is to meditate on — and then act out — such attributes of the divine nature as Justice, Mercy, Love and Compassion. These are as actual as anything else we contact; nay, they and their like are the only actualities, for they are changeless and everlasting; but they are *formless*, they cannot be laid out on the dissecting table or analyzed with spectroscopes! They are the Eternal Verities shining behind the veil of illusion created by the Spirit of the Universe to manifest them. It is impossible to put these high and sacred matters into words to be understood by the brain-mind in its ordinary condition, for the mind partakes too much of the nature of matter itself to do more than grasp faint glimpses of what is meant by spirit. The caricatures the laboring minds of men have drawn in their futile efforts to explain the meaning of spirituality have disgusted many thoughtful seekers who were just turning towards the light, and have sent them back to materialism as a lesser evil than superstition. Attempting to explain spiritual consciousness to one who has no glimmering of intuition is like discussing the colors of the rainbow with a blind man.

But Theosophy does not leave anyone without hope. It teaches that if even the least effort is made to break away from the clogging things of personal selfishness, a little spiritual knowledge will come, and that if the struggle is continued without slackening, the light will get brighter until the full daylight of what is called in the East “Nirvâna,” and in the Christian mysticism the “Beatific Vision,” will flood the soul. The heat of aspiration transmutes the lead of the lower nature to the Gold. Spiritual fire begins to work the instant a high aspiration is entertained.

But Devachan is not this state of perfect knowledge and wisdom; it is a high and exquisitely refined condition, but even in its purity the soul is bound to a certain extent by illusion. Although Devachan is nearer the One Reality than the physical plane, it is not that divine region where all things are plain to the view of the illuminated Seer and are known in their *real* essence. We have not yet gained our freedom, for the life-cycle of humanity is only partially completed and ages must elapse before perfect liberation is achieved by the race as a whole.

In the Theosophical teaching of Devachan an entirely new conception of life after death has been offered to the western world. A dismal materialism has woefully misunderstood the meaning of our environment; it can see nothing but that Nature is “red in tooth and claw,” and thinks that with the disappearance of the brain, annihilation is the end of consciousness; while the vague and inconsistent ideas of Heaven and Hell of the ecclesiastics, or the “Summerland” of the spiritists, are the only alternatives. No wonder there is so much negation and rejection of all but what pertains to the life of the senses; no wonder that the highest ideal of large masses of the people is that “Honesty is the best *Policy*.”

But Theosophy shows that between the extremes of denial and credulity the truth is to be looked for. Neither will the Intelligence of man sink into the abyss of nothingness, its existence having been to no purpose; nor will the narrow brain-mind of Mr. A. or Mrs. B. drag on a wearisome career in eternity cramped by the limitations of personality as we know them. No indeed; in the Theosophical teaching of the existence of a Devachanic interlude between incarnations on Earth, an entirely new conception of the greatness of life and the object of death has been projected into the western world. Once we realize that the real Man is a part of the Oversoul; is immortal in past and future; that he has to understand the various planes of existence in this illimitable Universe by embodiment in forms of different degrees of materiality; that for the Inner Self there is no alarming shock at death flinging him into painfully new conditions — once we grasp these sublime conditions we shall comprehend the mercy of the Higher Law in a new way. The Theosophist rejoices in the knowledge that Devachan is at least a partial release from the bonds of personality, a perfect rest for the soul after the strife of Earth-life, when it assimilates the worthiest experiences of the past, and gains strength for the next battle. William Q. Judge puts the case tersely:

Nature, always kind, leads us soon again to heaven for a rest, for the flowering of the best or highest in our natures.

In Devachan, the Imagination, one of the highest faculties we have, is given full play. This godlike creative power, the inspiration of the artist, the musician or the inventor, has for its materials experiences of the past

life, memories of antecedent states, unknown to the brain-mind of the previous incarnation, as well as knowledge of things entirely veiled from us by the limitations of the senses. Who knows what creations of poetry or of invention have not been worked out in Devachan, which afterwards seemed to shoot into the brain of the personality in his next incarnation? The following arrangement will help the student to understand something of the changes produced by the journey through the portals of death. This classification is not set forth as the authoritative teaching of Theosophy, but is the writer's deduction from the little that the Teachers have given out about the changes of consciousness after death.

MORTAL MAN IN TERRESTRIAL LIFE.

The *Feeling* of “*I-am-I*” and no other, the Self-consciousness, permeating the whole man, but mainly centered in the Lower Manas and the Brain-mind.

Imagination, weak in most cases; great geniuses possible exceptions.

Reason strong; the principal faculty in action. Uses the brain and is mainly stimulated from the outside; rare flashes come from a higher source for it to work out.

The *Emotions* of the Passional nature, usually physically dominated and self-centered.

Lower animal *Desires*, and intense Desire for Sensuous existence. (Suicides are seeking happier conditions — not extinction.)

Brain-memory of events of the present incarnation: materials for reasoning and, in a small degree, for the imagination to use.

MAN AFTER DEATH.

The same *Feeling* of “*I-am-I*,” but at first chiefly concentrated in the lower Kâma-Manasic passional principles. Afterwards centered in the Higher Manas and illuminated by Buddhi after the “second death” — when the withdrawal into the Devachanic state takes place.

LATER, IN DEVACHAN

Imagination strong and active,— the principal faculty working.

Reason in abeyance as a rule; when it is active it uses internal or subjective stimuli from higher planes.

The higher *Unselfish Emotions* and *Heart* feelings.

“*Tanhâ*,” the Desire for Sensuous Life latent in Devachan at first, but grows steadily stronger as the karmic time for reincarnation approaches, and the forces keeping the soul in the Devachanic state are becoming exhausted.

Memory of the permanently valuable spiritual thoughts and deeds: materials for the imagination to work with.

IN LIFE.

The whole of the “Seven Principles.”

AFTER DEATH.

The Astral body for a short time; the Lower Manas entangled with the passional nature, forming Kâma-rûpa; afterwards the Higher Ego, or Reincarnating Ego, united with the spiritual part of the Lower Manas or Shadow and illuminated by the overshadowing Light of *Buddhi* and *Âtman*; the “Skandhas,” or seeds of the actions performed in the past life, ready to be vivified under favoring circumstances in the next life.

THE PREPARATION FOR THE NEXT INCARNATION

In Devachan the higher energies or causes set in motion in Earth-life are carried to their completion. The very nature of the Manasic principle requires the time and peaceful conditions provided in Devachan to work out the effects of what it has stored. While in a body these higher fruitions cannot manifest themselves, for the environment and structure of the brain are too material. In Devachan the Higher Ego, overshadowed by *Buddhi* — the *Buddhi-Manas* — by the assimilation of the Lower Manasic Personal ideations and such consciousness of the better things like compassion, patience, the higher side of Art and Music, ideals of service for humanity,— draws up the enduring part of the Personality that was, to itself. The Higher Ego is the bearer of all the “alter egos” threaded on its silver line of successive incarnations, which blend into one at last; but in the Devachan immediately succeeding any one life, the spiritual “aroma” of the events of that particular lifetime is what colors it with the greatest distinctness. Personal immortality for the “alter ego” is so far conditional that it depends upon the quality of its aspirations to make its union with the Father, the True Vine, possible. Like to like is the rule in all worlds, and the law of least resistance bears sway everywhere; it would be obviously as preposterous to imagine an utter sensualist in the higher and more refined degrees of Kâma-loka or (until purged) on the spiritual plane of Devachan, as to expect a cannibal savage to enjoy a classical concert.

The descent of the Higher Ego through its Shadow is symbolized in the Christian story by the incarnation of the Christos in Jesus of Nazareth and his subsequent ascent to his Father, after being crucified on the Cross of Matter. The penitent thief stands for the higher aspiration of the past

life, as he is promised paradise with the Christos, but not so the other who represents the unredeemable passions which go to the pit.

The Ego in Devachan, now a Trinity in unity, is not omniscient nor free from illusion; it has ages of necessary experience to go through first. We ought really to regard Devachan from the standpoint of the Lower Manas, or more properly, and more correctly, from the standpoint of the Bridge, or "*Antaskârana*," the part of the Higher Ego that has been the connecting link between the two Manases in life, and which now bears all that essence of the late personality which can be united with its Father in Heaven. From this position, looking *up*, the mystic union with the Higher Ego in Devachan will be, to the purified *Antaskârana* — all that we can recognize as worth preserving of the Personality — a tremendous increase of Life and Light, of Glory, of Bliss beyond anything in our most exquisite dreams. The Imagination comes into action with a thousandfold the power it ever had before, and the rich and satisfying Dream, which is more than a Dream, abundantly rewards the Pilgrim for those distressing events on Earth for which it may not have been responsible *in that particular incarnation* and which had left a sense of injustice.

Although Devachan is much nearer the reality of things than any ordinary dream, yet it is sufficiently illusory for the soul to be able to build up its castles in the air without fear of disturbance by anything outside. It is surrounded in imagination by friends, relatives and all it held dear; as the creative imagination builds exactly what it desires so vividly as to appear more real than the most intense experiences while embodied, everyone gets precisely what is to him the highest joy. The soul in the Devachanic state is, in fact, practically in that wondrous condition of rapture that the Poet or the Musician or even perhaps the Mathematician enjoy when absorbed in their highest creative states, states in which the body, the Earth and all other persons absolutely cease to exist for the time.

The actor [in Devachan] is so imbued with the role just played by him that he dreams of it during the whole Devachanic night, which vision continues till the hour strikes for him to return to the stage of life to enact another part. — (*The Key to Theosophy*)

Glorious as the state of Devachan is, *it is not equal in importance to the condition of Earth-life*. Necessary it is, joyous exceedingly, but it is on Earth that Liberation from the chains of illusion and passion has to be gained. Here, where the whole nature of man is crying to be used wisely, is the real school, here it is that the Perfected Man must arise. When this is done the time spent in the spiritual state of Devachan will be unnecessary; that condition is now needed by the soul for recuperation, for without it the strain of earthly existence could not be endured; but when the whole nature has been purified in the fires of trial, and absolute

impersonality is gained, the Divine Man will be as one of the Gods and will in his turn become a fully conscious Creator and Guide to the unprogressed beings below him on the upward march.

THE INDIVIDUALITY AND ITS IMPERSONATIONS

Theosophy urges upon students to make the greatest distinction in their own minds between the Immortal Individuality, the divine Christos, called in the East “the Îśvara that dwelleth in the heart of every creature,” and the fleeting personality. Man in his ordinary state believes that he is nothing more than the lower mind. Even the greatest intellectual thinkers of the age do not dare to break through this hypnotic veil, well symbolized by the teaching of the creeds that men are “miserable sinners,” a depressing nightmare; or the similarly depraving notion that a man is no more than “a monkey shaved,” of the biologists. Theosophy recognizes the backward state of humanity to the full and makes no attempt to flatter his vanity with false praise; but it gives him hope, and by showing him that there is the Higher Ego overshadowing his personality, that it is ever trying to call his attention to those things which are pure and of good report, and that he can enter into the Mansion that is waiting for him if he will only try the right means, it destroys the fear of death.

In gaining the Real Life of the soul, of which the Devachanic interlude is a pale reflection, we really shall not be gaining any *new thing*; if we go about it rightly we find that we have but to remove the obstructions that are in the path, most of which we have built up for ourselves. If we give up the lower desires and turn our energies to those which are in harmony with the highest aspirations of the race we at once find ourselves partaking of a larger consciousness; we begin to hear the mysterious whisper in the heart,— the voice of the greater humanity of which we are all a part, but of which, alas! we are so little aware. Without going more deeply into metaphysics here, it suffices for practical purposes that as we remove the obstructions, the glories of real life and the existence of the true Self break in upon us. This is the only way to triumph over death. All the greatest teachers of the ages have brought the same message, but the Teachers of Theosophy in this age have shown how to train the young by the Râja Yoga system in such a perfect balance of the faculties and joyous self-control that they will be able to say fearlessly, “Death, where is thy sting?”

The terrestrial body is not the only River of Lethe, plunged into which, as Plotinus says, the soul forgets all, but Devachan partakes of the same nature, for in that blissful state the celestial body with which the soul is united causes it to lose sight utterly of the painful events and thoughts of the past life. Although the real cause of Devachan is ignorance of the Higher Ego, yet in our present state of evolution it is a necessary and

desirable experience; we see how necessary by the very fact — a profound mystery to physiology — that to keep going and preserve sanity the Higher Ego has to abandon its communication with the body for a large part of each twenty-four hours. The Higher Ego never entirely quits the spiritual realms, and although the materials used by the imagination in Devachan with which to build its ideal life are only derived from the most sublimated thoughts and acts of the past incarnation, yet the totality of events of that and all the previous lives is indelibly recorded so that when real Self-knowledge arrives the veil will fall and access be gained to the records, and the course of evolution be plainly seen. We are taught that the soul is able to look back with purified sight a little way into the past as it re-enters Earth-life. It then sees the causes that have led it irresistibly to the new incarnation, good or bad, and recognizes the justice of the Law of Karma; it takes up the cross again with willingness.

“Devachan is a spiritual gestation within an ideal matrix state,” [H. P. Blavatsky.] and as we emerge from it into the light of earthly day, complete in all our potentialities for good or evil, we again have the opportunity of keeping the simplicity of the spiritual life. Of all the poets, Wordsworth has given us in his “Intimations of Immortality” the most inspired vision of pre-existence in the Devachanic state. In the haunting sweetness of his word-picture we catch evanescent glimpses of that which we have lost:

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
 The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
 Hath elsewhere had its setting
 And cometh from afar;
 Not in utter forgetfulness,
 And not in utter nakedness,
 But trailing clouds of glory do we come
 From God, who is our home.
 Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
 Shades of the prison-house begin to close, (etc.)

And this:

Hence in a season of calm weather
 Though inland far we be,
 Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
 Which brought us hither;
 Can in a moment travel thither,
 And see the children sport upon the shore,
 And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

Some have been fortunate enough to retain the “vision splendid” longer than others; *some have revived it*, after recollecting how they once

lost it in early childhood; pity those who never had it, to whom everything is commonplace and drab. They have been the materialistically minded, worldly-wise folk who have not sown any seeds in their past life for the reaping in Devachan, and have therefore passed the time while waiting for a suitable incarnation in a semi-torpid state. They may even have reincarnated immediately, without any Devachanic break.

The subject of Necromancy, the attempt to raise the shades of the dead, must be treated elsewhere; it is merely necessary to mention here that the purified soul in Devachan does not respond to artificial means taken to revivify the *astral shell* (the residue of the *Kâma-rûpa*) with a factitious vitality derived chiefly from the medium and the sitters in the séance-room. But though the soul in Devachan is so far removed from the physical plane, and so fully occupied with the wondrous inner experiences for which it needs to be temporarily sequestered, that it cannot return to Earth — in the true sense of the word it has not lost touch completely with the loved ones left behind. A mother's love is a protecting shield for her children long after she has passed away, though she does not have the pain of seeing them suffer the vicissitudes of life. And at times of great spiritual exaltation a person in Earth may sense the bliss of the one in Devachan; but we are taught that this is of very rare occurrence, and is poles asunder from the alleged return of the souls of the dead in the séance-room — apparitions which, *when genuine*, are almost invariably caused by the astral body of the medium or the shell of the deceased, the *Kâma-rûpa*, or something else which is not the *real man* — by which we mean, of course, the Higher and Lower Manas, united at last.

The length of time spent in Devachan is a question of difficulty; little direct information has been given on that point, but a general average is said to be about fifteen hundred years. In the case of persons having led an ordinarily creditable life and having a fairly large store of lofty experiences to be assimilated, the time will be much longer than in the case of those who have pursued none but ignoble aims, or materialists who utterly deny the possibility of any existence but the physical. The latter will return to Earth very soon. A study of the cyclic periods of history gives some light on the subject; it is seen that there is a distinct tendency for the repetition of similar events in a period of between twelve hundred and two thousand years; witness the Renaissance of Art in the fourteenth and later centuries, which followed about 1600 years after the great period of Art in Greece. But we have not yet sufficient historical data to be able to follow out this line of research in detail, though as new discoveries are constantly being made, future historians will find this a profitable study, clearing up many otherwise inexplicable difficulties.

The question of the existence of heaven or hell presents no great difficulties to the Theosophical student. Hell is mainly here on Earth, where we have made the horrible conditions of existence for ourselves;

after death there is a period of purification in which many earthbound souls must necessarily have suffering. Heaven is the long blissful ecstasy of Devachan, terminating in the awakening to Earth-life in a new personality, formed by the just law of Karma from the seeds of action, the Skandhas, carried on as seeds by the Immortal Reincarnating Ego after the break-up of the Kâma-rûpa, and in which we have a fresh chance of undoing the mistakes of the past and gaining that real spirituality rendering the semi-illusions of Devachan, lofty as they are, unnecessary. The two procedures of purification on Earth through lives of effort, and the trials for entrance into Devachan have close points of resemblance, and were condensed into one in the Egyptian *Book of the Dead*, and Job. H. P. Blavatsky tells us:

During the sacred Mysteries the candidate for Initiation enacted the whole drama of death and the resurrection as a glorified spirit.

Though we may have lost the key to the profounder teachings of the Egyptian and Greek Mysteries, we have not lost the key to the only method of regaining our high estate. William Q. Judge, the second Leader of the Theosophical Movement, to whose teachings we are indebted for much of our information concerning Devachan, in pointing the way to reach the Higher Ego, the “Warrior,” says:

It is selflessness, unselfishness, altruism, pure love of the light for its own sake, not for what it will confer — these things bring the candidate face to face with the “Warrior.”

Katherine Tingley is teaching the people to discover and make manifest that “You have within you the ceaseless flow of living Fire.” She has further said the following:

According to my knowledge, when a soul is leaving its earthly Temple, however dark and gruesome the circumstances may be, it knows its own path. So in moving out of the body, long before the pulse has ceased to beat or the breath is stilled, it finds itself born into a New Life, an unspeakable joy. Something new has been fashioned for that soul in that sacred moment, and then it comprehends the enormity of its mistakes and wills itself to higher things in the next life. There are different experiences for different souls according to their evolution, but at last each one rests in the arms of the beneficent Law, free from the limitations of earthly life. The ordinary mind cannot fully conceive what has happened; the soul is judged by the Law, not by any man, and when it is reborn it not only takes with it the experience of the past, though without the memory of details, but it takes something else that has happened at that wonderful time when it is born into the New Life, when it is reborn in more ways than one.

6

Kâma-loka and Devachan

A Student

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IMMORTALITY

Elsewhere the journey of “Man after Death” has been sketched in brief. In the present essay some consideration of the states of existence which succeed one terrestrial life and precede another will be taken up in a little more detail, but space will not permit of an exhaustive treatment of the subject, for which the advanced works of H. P. Blavatsky and William Q. Judge should be consulted.

Theosophy is not, and from the very nature of the case, cannot be dogmatic; it tells each man to search for himself, and it strongly enforces a point not popular with the dogmatists, *i.e.*, that as the faculties of man’s understanding develop in proportion with his developing moral nature, he will get closer and closer approximations to the truth, until at last he himself becomes “the Truth and the Way.” Jesus the Christ implicitly promised this when he said “Greater works than these shall he do.” Theosophy teaches and Theosophical students learn that the inner Light is no will-o’-the-wisp, but is a steady lamp to lighten the darkness; “If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine.” (John vii. 17)

But although Theosophy has no hard and fast creed to be enforced under penalties here or hereafter, it has teachings which may not be neglected without serious loss. All who study these teachings without fear or prejudice find them competent to lead the honest truth-seeker to a position from which their accuracy can be proved, and when he has arrived at this position there

leaps into flame the light of actual knowledge. Then the ears begin to hear. Very dimly, very faintly at first. And, indeed, so faint and tender are these first indications of the commencement of true actual life, that they are sometimes pushed aside as mere fancies, mere imaginings.

[*Light on the Path.* {p. 53}]

Theosophy teaches the doctrine of Reincarnation — the belief of a majority of the people of the civilized world — as a matter of common sense, a necessary portion of the law of Evolution, without which it is meaningless. Reincarnation postulates cyclic return after periods of “objective” into “subjective” life — conditions objective as regarded from one state being subjective from the other. In a dream, for instance, waking life is as unreal and subjective as dream-life is when we are awake. But as the question of Reincarnation has been treated elsewhere, to which the inquirer is referred, it is unnecessary to devote space to its consideration here.

The essential thing we have to learn from Theosophy, which is so novel to many, is that the larger life of man is a sequence of lives and not a unique thing, a detached adventure, quite different from what precedes

it and follows it; that the states after the death of the body are not “supernatural,” are not a complete break with everything natural. But how powerful is the impression that death is a total break of continuity! Katherine Tingley says, speaking to those who still cling to the ignorances of the narrow creeds which have obscured the light of Christ’s teachings for so many centuries:

Who among you can explain the Mystery of Death? I have yet to meet those who nominally accept the dogmas of the churches and who are thoroughly satisfied with them; I have yet to find such who can face death with knowledge and understanding. Let me proclaim now that I offer with absolute knowledge the statement that Theosophy reveals the Mystery of Death. But no Theosophist can even approximately understand the Mystery of Death until he is self-disciplined, and until he has absolutely set aside the false ideas about death he has been receiving since he was born. It is impossible to understand the Law, even approximately, until he has found confidence in himself; confidence in the Divine Law. For Death to a Theosophist is Birth; it is Birth.

Theosophy teaches us that Immortality can only be gained during the embodied condition, for the illumination which releases the bonds of selfishness is only to be won through strife; “The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence and the violent take it by force,” (Matt. 11, 12) and the purified Man to be complete must have the control of the material conditions as well as those of the higher regions. The only form of death which is utter disaster is caused by the withdrawal of the Higher Ego from the personality. This may take place at any time during the life of the body owing to persistence in evil. The state of such a being, cunning and mentally active but utterly selfish and soulless, is terrible to contemplate. H. P. Blavatsky said there were many such, scourges for humanity.

When the earnest truth-seeker who is not hunting for verbal flaws, one who has really suffered for want of the light, who has tried systems of thought and guesses into the meaning of things which lead to no satisfaction, regards Theosophy from a dispassionate standpoint he will find that its teachings are not strange, that they are not the grotesque vagaries of ancient or modern ignorance. Already to thousands they have come as the revealer of what has hitherto been obscure in the philosophies and religions of the world. It is to be regretted for the credit of humanity, and for their sakes, that many who have found the long-desired interpretation of their difficulties through the study of Theosophy have not acknowledged the source of their inspiration, but dare to pose before the world as original thinkers, when they are but plagiarists.

In considering the various “planes” or strata of consciousness in Nature, it is necessary to grasp firmly the idea that there is a close correspondence between the constitution of man and that of the Universe

— more than a close correspondence, for in fact man is a part of the Universe, body, mind, and soul, fiber to fiber. Man is, in the language of philosophy, the “microcosm” of the “Macrocosm,” the reproduction or manifestation in little of the greater Kosmos. Scientists have discovered that man has in his body organs which are of little or no use to him but which are functional in the lower animals, and in a similar way, Theosophy says, he has the potentialities of all the kingdoms, known and unknown, in germ or in manifestation. The pity of it is that he has been kept so ignorant of his greatness that he hardly dares to admit it even when it is forced upon him, and prefers to believe he has been “born in sin” or is merely a higher animal without an immortal soul of which he can become cognizant if he will. This is largely due to the paralyzing influence of the popular theology which has so long insisted upon the innate depravity of man and the impossibility, without extraneous help, of his getting out of the mire in which he was supposed to have been plunged by the sin of Adam.

Happily it looks as if the reign of fear and abasement arising out of a perverted view of the story of the Fall of Adam — one of the most instructive allegories of the Ancient Mysteries when interpreted by the light of Theosophy — seems to be coming to an end. Theosophy alone can give the key to unlock the closed doors to the secret meanings of that and the like curious allegories of which the Bible and all the world-scriptures are full, the ignorance of which has been fostered by those whose interest it was to keep the minds of the masses of the people in subjection. The fact that man is a god in potentiality, that he is a glorious being in essence however this may be concealed under an outer mask of grossness, that he is one with the Universe in essence and not a mere worm, is one of the teachings of the Mysteries that was willfully concealed at first by those who ought to have known better, then denied, and which at last has become almost lost to the western world.

According to the teachings of Theosophy, which have been handed down by the great Lodge of Illuminati who have given out what they dared through their messengers since the withdrawal of the Mysteries until the present day — and for the recent presentation of which we are chiefly indebted to H. P. Blavatsky, founder of the present Theosophical presentation — there are many states of consciousness of which the ordinary man has not the slightest idea; states in which time and space take on entirely different relationships from those to which we are accustomed. To these belong the planes of “Devachan” and “Kâma-loka,” the Elysian Fields and Hades of Greek philosophy, Aanru and Amenti of Egyptian.

Devachan is a high spiritual state of joy, Kâma-loka a state of transition, of passion and desire. In those states we are in unison with other “regions” of the Universe “within” the terrestrial, in unison with other *rates* or *conditions* of vibration, in which we are as far removed from the earthly as if in a dream, in which all familiar objects are obscured as if by

an impenetrable wall. After we have ceased to function through the physical body ("we" referring to the real, more divine part of us) we utilize and develop another part of our complex make-up, that vehicle which is in harmony with the vibration of the new plane into which we have entered.

It has been aptly pointed out by some more intuitive scientists that if our ordinary waking appreciation of time and space were slightly modified an extraordinary effect upon our lives would follow. Suppose that instead of perceiving events at the present rate — say one tenth of a second — we could observe a thousand events in the time now taken to see one, we should then clearly perceive things taking but one ten-thousandth part of a second to perform, and our lives would apparently be lengthened a thousand times; the day would be crowded with incidents which we now only see in a confused way if at all, and would seem to be interminably long. For instance we should be able to study the movement of the wings of a fly, or to hear sounds far more acute than a bat's squeak, to which many persons even as it is, are deaf. There would be, of course, no real change in outer Nature, but we should have changed our relation to it, thereby realizing the existence of the hitherto unknown. Conversely if our power of perception slackened we should not see more than a percentage of the events perceptible to us now; they would go too fast to be followed in detail.

Again, if our bodies were reduced to minute proportions the laws of capillary attraction, cohesion, and adhesion would bring us face-to-face with a set of problems which, as we are at present constituted, are non-existent for us.

The cells of our bodies have their own consciousness, which is different from that of the organs built up from them, and the consciousness of the organs is again different from the synthesizing consciousness in the cerebro-spinal nervous system. Like the cell, the personal human being is a part of a greater Being, the Higher Ego, which is trying to bring the consciousness of the lower self to a realization of its great destiny — ultimate unity with Itself first, and then with the ALL. Throughout our study of the inner planes we should never fail to bear this in mind, for it is essential to a fair understanding of the possibility of comprehending other planes; the Higher Ego lives in many planes at the same time so to speak, though the personality — the *false* personality, as the occultists call it — only lives the normal life of the senses.

What does the orthodox believer mean when he tells us of the heavenly world or of the abode of the damned? His familiar use of the words heaven, hell, purgatory, or what not, does not deceive us into thinking that the most erudite theological fledgling has any real initiation into the meaning of those words. Has he been taught that heaven is a locality? If so, where is it? Is hell a place in the interior of the Earth, at the bottom of some volcano? Or are both of them only conditions of the mind here on

Earth? How is it that the “cloud of witnesses” surrounding us is not visible to the strongest eyesight?

The church-goer, however well-educated and intelligent he may be, will find it difficult to answer these and similar questions that a child can put, and his self-appointed spiritual guides cannot do much better than he. Nowadays it is becoming hard to find anyone, professional ecclesiastic or other, who will commit himself to anything definite in regard to the next world, and the popular haziness as to its detailed condition is unfortunately extending itself into disbelief in any spiritual world at all. But the fact is that the heaven and hell of the churches are grotesque and distorted survivals of the real knowledge taught in the Mysteries of Antiquity about the inner planes of being. Theosophy has definite meanings to attach to the inner states whose pale reflections still persist under the names heaven, hell and purgatory. The dark cloud of mystery covering them, and the fear of the unknown that has been fostered is a powerful weapon in the hands of ecclesiasticism; but once the earnest inquirer begins, by self-discipline, to realize the fleeting nature of the personality and the immortality of the Higher Ego, these unworthy fears which have been used to keep him in subjection, disappear.

PLANES IN GENERAL

To get any conception of the Theosophical view of life and evolution and to understand the meaning of the inner planes of existence, old prejudices have to be set aside and an attitude free from bias must be striven for, because the student has to meet some quite unexpected facts, and to give dispassionate consideration to theories which may be quite novel to him. It will not do, if truth be the aim of the inquirer, to blink facts by saying: “Oh yes, those observations have certainly as much right to be believed after due investigation as any other well-authenticated facts, but Professor *So-and-so* has pronounced them outside the pale of reasonable consideration, or the Reverend Mr. Blank has denounced them as works of the “devil.” If the inquirer be sincere, if his motive be the pure one of wishing to gain power only to lift humanity from its degradation; in short, if he have the heart-touch of compassion and love for all creatures, he will not be psychologized by the dictatorial assertions of all the professors, nor deluded into begging the sanction of the priests before thinking for himself; nor will he have to wait too long for light on his problems. Theosophy is older than the professors of modern science and antedates any existing priesthood known to the world!

The “planes” of which Theosophy speaks with no uncertain voice are definite states or strata of molecular, or atomic vibration, as the case may be, each correlated to different and definite states of consciousness. They interpenetrate between the vibrations of terrestrial matter, earthly and

atmospheric, and the physical senses are not fitted to respond to them. The laws obtaining on the inner planes are not familiar to us; for instance, the farther we go from the material plane, the more responsive shall we find the substance of each inner state in succession becomes to the molding power of thought, imagination, or feeling. A helpful illustration is seen in the septenary division of the vibrations of light. There are no hard and fast lines to be drawn between the different colors and yet the chemical and some other properties of each are not the same, the violet rays of the spectrum being very different from the red.

H. P. Blavatsky says that it is a marvel that the almost imperceptible separation between the physical and the “astral” — the lowest of the inner planes of substance and consciousness — is not broken through continually. The constitution of a human being is so complex that he is necessarily on many planes at once, physical, “astral,” emotional, mental, and spiritual. The physical is hardly more than the container of or vehicle for the rest. We all know what a complete difference there is between one’s state when concentrated in the purely animal condition of hunger, and that when the spiritual consciousness is aroused to carry out some self-sacrificing deed. There are innumerable conditions in which consciousness can act, and all are related to those great departments of Nature we must call “planes,” though it is a most unsatisfactory word to describe whole worlds of feeling, action, and substance.

An important difference between the Esoteric philosophy and the ideas of modern science in regard to human nature is that the scope of Theosophy includes these other planes as factors in Evolution. Modern science tries to base every phenomenon upon physical causes, treating the physical plane as if it were the only real one, and concentrating upon this world alone; while dogmatic theology in giving but one life on Earth, and concentrating energy upon the unknown future forgets that we have hardly scratched the surface of this life yet. Like Newton said, we have been only playing with shells on the shore of the ocean of wonders; but Theosophy has looked more deeply into causes, and in finding that the physical is the outcome of hidden laws, has been able to reach other regions of consciousness nearer to the mysterious Primal Energy, and in so doing it has opened the way to a clearer understanding of the causes of epidemics of disease or crime, of the origin of genius, of the so-called “supernatural” phenomena, and of Death.

Scientific men who have superficially read a little about Theosophy have criticized it for advancing statements about the various states of matter and spirit with the confidence of knowledge, while the scientific world has been devoting the whole power of the human intellect for centuries in vain efforts to define the simplest properties of physical matter.

As a matter of fact Theosophy does not begin to deal with the laws governing substance from the same standpoint as modern science. Theosophy begins with states of consciousness; it learns the keynote, so to speak, of the different conditions or planes; it gets control of the underlying basis or *Noumenon* of each, and so all the necessary experiments to verify details and to observe changes are conducted from a sure foundation of knowledge of the thing as it is. Theosophy has proved that matter is “crystallized” life, is a form of consciousness, protean in its changes as the changing cycles pass. Modern science has very nearly touched this idea in the most recent and daring speculations about the electrons — corpuscles of a *non-material* nature — centers of negative electricity.

A good instance of the contrasting attitude of Theosophy to modern science, and one that shows why science finds it impossible to reach the causes of external phenomena while confining its attention to the physical plane, is seen in the consideration of the problem of the elements. Modern science tells us that the seventy-odd elementary substances are not reducible to simpler form and that each has inherently different characteristics from the rest (though there has lately been some doubt expressed of this in orthodox scientific circles) and it recognizes no other forms of matter than the electronic, and the atomic or molecular; the solid, liquid, gaseous, and the radiant or “fiery” being considered merely mechanical changes of state caused by temperature and pressure. Now the better-instructed scientists or philosophers of antiquity, and the few disciples of the Ancient Wisdom who kept the light from going out during the Middle Ages, knew that the solid, the liquid, the gaseous, and the fiery were more than this. They had learned that these physical changes in the distances and relationships of the molecules were produced by some *ultimate*, hidden causes, something radical and of a much deeper nature than the proximate and fairly obvious ones which are the only subjects of physical research today.

No one wishes to deny the accuracy of the observations of scientists in regard to the effects of changes of temperature, pressure, electric tension, etc., but that is not the point at issue. Theosophy has reasons to accept the observations of those trained occultists of ancient and modern times, in possession of more accurate and certain means of ascertaining the real cause of changes on the physical plane than the materialist with his mechanical instruments, and it accepts as true their belief in the existence of semi-intelligent forces, “Elementals,” manifesting through matter, and governing respectively the solid, the liquid and the other conditions. The *states* of (absolute) matter are the real Elements, and each state belongs to a plane, or more correctly, a sub-plane of the astral world, and its manifestation in the physical world gives us the “solid,” “liquid,” and the other conditions. The semi-intelligent forces, the “elementals” of fire, air, water, and earth (the “Salamanders, Sylphs, Undines, and

Gnomes” as personified by the imagination of antiquity) modify the conditions of terrestrial matter in accordance with their nature. If our sight were only a little clearer we could see the action of these forces on the inner planes and would then clearly understand how they modify the condition of physical matter, changing it from the liquid to the solid state, etc., working through the agencies of the vibrations of heat and the rest. Theosophy declares from absolute knowledge, and to the unprejudiced mind it is clearly reasonable, that there can be no such thing as “blind force,” or “dead matter” in the Universe, but that all natural forces must have intelligence (of different degrees) behind them and guiding them. It is not necessary to believe that the lower forces of Nature are possessed of intelligence like the human mind; less so that they are handled by an anthropomorphic, personal god, like a man with a switchboard; but it is reverent and reasonable to find that there are grades of intelligence, from the lowest to the highest, guiding that manifestation of life we call Matter in its evolution from the inorganic to full self-consciousness.

The planes of Devachan and Kâma-loka are in many respects quite different from the physical, though they interpenetrate and affect it, the latter the most owing to its proximity. The “lower” portion of the plane of Kâma is the abode of an undesirable form of consciousness and of dangerous and un-progressed entities; it is the reservoir of Passion. The higher part approaches the Devachanic state, which is a high and pure condition where the Higher “Ego” rests after death illuminated by the light of the “Higher Self.” Yet Devachan is not a plane of perfect knowledge. In fact the soul in Devachan is under illusion, of a kind, all the time; this “illusion” *is a necessary condition for the orderly development of the stifled spiritual aspirations of the past life* in the normal man of this age; it is not the full illumination.

Happiness, that ideal happiness which the soul needs as part of its training, and which it deserves after the burden of physical life, cannot be gained under the conditions of Earth-life in its present imperfect state. In Devachan the soul does not know it has left the Earth; or at least, such an idea as that of death never occurs to it any more than other unpleasant things, and its existence seems to be an intensely vivid and perfectly joyous continuation of the Earth-life just over. As the imagination is now intensely active in a way never known while trammled by the brain, the surroundings the soul creates for itself are exquisitely delightful. It is clear that to undergo this experience of perfect joy no painful ideas must be allowed in, and therefore a certain amount of illusion is of necessity an attribute of Devachan.

He who has passed beyond illusion and who needs no Devachanic break between incarnations or who needs no further incarnations at all, and who can bear the full blaze of the consuming fire of Divine Wisdom, is the

one described in the eloquent and poetic language of the allegorical book of Revelation:

Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out;... and I will write upon him my new name.

— Rev. iv, 12.

THE NEED FOR DEVACHAN

The Higher Manas or Ego (not the Higher Self, which is above the possibility of illusion) in Devachan is assimilating the highest experiences of the Earth-life just closed. While the lower passions and selfish memories have been left behind to fade out in Kâma-loka, the inferior Hades, the noblest aspirations and permanent spiritual memories of the past, “the aroma of the flower that has been mowed by death,” as H. P. Blavatsky calls it, colors the Devachanic consciousness of the Higher Ego, carrying on for the time the personal idea in a sublimated form.

The ACTOR is so imbued with the *role* just played by him that he dreams of it during the whole Devachanic night, which *vision* continues till the hour strikes for him to return to the stage of life to enact another part. [*The Key to Theosophy.*]

In the Gospel of John the union of the higher part with the personality is referred to in plain language:

I am the vine, ye are the branches:... If a man abide not in me he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered;... and cast them into the fire and they are burned. — John xv, 5, 6.

We cannot see the suffering of our friends when we are in Devachan; happy illusion again, for the imagination has little more than the memories of the past life to build with, and while we weave the images of our friends into our Devachanic dream in bright and lively colors, the real person may be undergoing very different experiences. That does not make the Devachanic dream any the less joyous during the time it lasts. For Devachan is not really a counterpart of the heaven of the orthodox. That heaven is supposed to last eternally, while the subjective state of Devachan is but temporary, and out from it the soul emerges to take up its complete life again. It is in Earth-life that the real knowledge that is beyond illusion must be gained; when that is done and man has become more than man, he will be able to see that “Nature energizes for the soul’s experience,” and that *all* the different experiences he has passed through, embodied and disembodied, have partaken more or less of the nature of illusion. In fact, according to the greatest thinkers, all things up to the Divine First Cause,

the “Unconscious” in German philosophy, are under illusion in different degrees.

H. P. Blavatsky defines Devachan as:

The “dwelling of the gods.” A state intermediate between two earth-lives, into which the Ego (Âtmâ-Buddhi-Manas, or the Trinity made one) enters after its separation from Kâma-rûpa, and the disintegration of the lower principles, on the death of the body on earth. [*The Key to Theosophy*, Glossary.]

Again, one of her Adept Teachers says:

In it we are rested; that part of us which could not bloom under the chilling skies of earth-life bursts into flower and goes back with us to earth-life stronger and more a part of our nature than ever before. Why should we repine that nature kindly aids us in the interminable struggle; why keep the mind revolving about the present petty personality and its good and evil fortunes? [*The Path*, Vol. v, p. 191.]

In that last passage there is the key to the whole secret. It is the continual harping on the small events affecting the egotistic personality that holds us back from our rightful entering into our birthright of knowledge. There is, behind what we call the personal self, the great Impersonal “Individuality,” the real Man, who is not bounded by the limits of the personality, which is but a temporary and partial phase or aspect of the Higher Ego, as we have to learn before we can make any progress. It is to the union with this overshadowing higher Being that all the limited personal lives of successive incarnations tend. The work of the present personality in each one of us is to blend itself with the Immortal, the Warrior, thereby gaining its salvation. The Bible says a man must be born again before he can enter the kingdom of heaven. True; he must be born into the knowledge of the higher existence that is waiting for him; then the petty things of his old, limited and selfish life will be as if they had never been. In Devachan the soul touches the fringe of the spiritual life; it has put off, temporarily, most of the trammels formed by the desires of the lower personality and has entered upon the fruition of those better things which were almost buried under a mountain of egotism and passion while on Earth.

Though Devachan is not the ideally perfect condition of the man who has attained his own divinity, who has conquered the great Enemy — *self* — and who has arrived at the region where things are seen as they are, where the law of cause and effect, Karma, is known, where the “Justice of God” is understood, and where the power to help humanity has been gained, still it is not the teaching of Theosophy that Devachan is a waste of time; that would be an outrage on the Divine order of Nature. Devachan is needed by the soul for its restoration, for its purification after the soiling

and tiring experiences of Earth. It is a restful and blissful “sleep” after the day of Earth-life. Devachan is a period of adjustment in which what may be called the “undeserved” sufferings of the past life on Earth are healed by a compensating joy, for Nature balances her books correctly in the long run. The drop of water that has been raised up from the ocean returns at last, however long the journey. As each personality cannot see the causes of many of its sufferings in the past life, causes which have been sown in previous lives of sin, it endures much distress from the apparent injustice of fate; and, owing to the fact that we are all “members one of another,” literally, when one yields to evil all have to bear some of the penalties. For these apparently undeserved sorrows, and for others which the Higher Ego has deliberately chosen for the help of humanity or for its own purification, the merciful Law has provided full and overflowing compensation in the joys of Devachan; for, whatever may be the illusionary nature of the surroundings of the soul in that state, there is no mistake about the happiness of it being vivid beyond all present understanding.

Another reason for the erroneous idea that the Devachanic “illusion” is a waste of time is the materializing tendency of the age, which is hypnotized into believing everything to be unreal that it cannot test with its formulae, put into the crucible, or examine with the spectroscope. And here we must not forget the important tenet of Theosophy, *i.e.*, that there is no break of continuity at death. The soul, the higher Ego, goes on through all states, observing, learning and building. In thus passing through the various planes there is no waste of time, unless they have already been experienced and their lessons assimilated; in such cases any further delay would be unnecessary. But in this age a repeated number of sojourns in Devachan is a necessity, for in it the reincarnating ego needs to get rid of the cramping physical body for a while to approach nearer to his innermost Divinity.

A charge has been made against the Devachanic hypothesis that it would be monotonous. This is not so; it is no more so than it would be if the moments of the most exquisite mental pleasure one has ever had were greatly accentuated, and lengthened out indefinitely. In such moments one loses almost entirely the sense of personal existence; one is so fully absorbed in the feeling of the time that the thought comes afterwards, when self-consciousness has returned, “why a whole hour has passed and it seems but a minute!” Such a state gives us the nearest approach or parallel to the Devachanic absence of self-consciousness that we are likely to experience while embodied. Schopenhauer, called the great pessimist, a much misunderstood thinker, uses arguments based on similar postulates in support of his contention that the less self-conscious we are — the less we realize our own separated existence — the happier we are. He is using arguments in favor of Earth-life being a poor affair as it is lived by humanity. Without entering into a consideration of the philosophy of

Schopenhauer, it is only necessary to say that the arguments in favor of the possibility and desirability of losing the personal separated consciousness in another more vivid and more impersonal one, are capable of being applied to the theory of Devachanic existence. In battles and other conditions of exalted consciousness the same observation has been made; the wounded soldier does not feel the pain of his injuries until the excitement is over, when normal consciousness returns. The higher and more impersonal states into which we have the power of entering destroy the egotism which is the cause of most of our suffering. The Devachanic state, though not altogether impersonal, is so intensely vivid that it blots out every other; but it is not monotonous and dull. The following quotation from one of H. P. Blavatsky's Teachers, touches upon this:

Therefore there *is* "a change in occupation," a continual change, in Devachan. For that dream-life is but the fruition, the harvest time of those psychic seed-germs dropped from the tree of physical existence in our moments of dream and hope — fancy glimpses of bliss and happiness, stifled in an ungrateful social soil, blooming in the rosy dawn of Devachan, and ripening under its ever-fructifying sky.... there all unrealized hopes, aspirations, dreams, become fully realized, and the dreams of the objective become the realities of the subjective existence. And there behind the curtain of Mâyâ {Illusion}, its vaporous and deceptive appearances are perceived by the Initiate, who has learned the great secret how to penetrate thus far deep into the Arcana of being.

REALITY AND UNREALITY

This brings forward again an interesting point and one that has to be referred to constantly in our consideration of this subject. The Author of the above refers to the illusionary nature of the so-called "objective" and "subjective" existences. The teaching of Theosophy is that up to the highest state of Godhood, Parabrahman, the One Ultimate Reality, everything is more or less illusionary; less so as the highest is approached. The Initiate is one who can perceive some of the workings behind the scenes of outer nature, in regions unseen by the uncontrolled man of the world.

This does not mean that the highest Initiates connected with this Earth can penetrate into the ultimate realms of the First Cause, still less so of Parabrahman, for "he made darkness a pavilion round about him." We are told by Those who have learned how to travel safely into other planes, that while Devachan is unreal from a *higher* standpoint, it is not so unreal as this life, of which, when reduced to the last analysis, we have to admit that philosophically we know nothing but our own states of feeling. All external things are presumed to exist *per se* in consequence of certain sensations and changes we experience within our own consciousness. By

the open admission of the greatest minds of modern science we know nothing of matter as it really is.

But Theosophy helps us to clear up the ground upon this point too. Theosophy shows that the atom is a life, a manifestation or center of consciousness; that all things have intelligence in different degrees, that there is nothing absolutely “dead,” and that there is no “blind force.” To pursue this question here would carry us beyond the scope of our present study, but it will be considered elsewhere, for it is of extreme importance for a right understanding of the difference between the hopeful, practical, and spiritual philosophy of Theosophy and the disheartening materialism prevalent today in physics.

The leading characteristic of Devachan is the intense power of the Imagination in action. The Imagination is the highest power we have, the creative power; but how little is it allowed to come into play on Earth! Yet without it, cramped and suppressed as it is, nothing would be done. Not only the artist, the poet, the mathematician and the inventor, but also the business man, the organizer, the statesman, must use this faculty. The unimaginative man loses more than half the savor of life, while those who work their imagination most actively feel the keenest pleasure possible to man. But in comparison with what is experienced by the soul in Devachan our most exquisite creations of the imagination are but pale reflections. Everyone who has permitted the spiritual nature to grow in the least, who has cultivated the higher pleasures of a refined and elevated life, the love of art, poetry, music, of natural beauty, generous friendship and unselfish natural affection, and so forth, will have a rich Devachan in which these can find fullest scope and development.

The finest example of creative imagination on Earth is one that is constantly before us — the innocent play of children. A few bits of stick, a stone or two and a puddle of water will supply the healthy normal child with all the physical materials with which they will build a navy and a magnificent harbor in their own mind. The most unsightly doll is usually the favorite; why? Because it gives more scope for the imagination of the child; the finely dressed one with moveable eyes, etc., actually destroys the keen edge of the active imagination, just lately come from Devachan. Watch the children at play in the house and learn with how few “properties” they can build up a whole drama; a good lesson upon the action of the building faculty of the imagination in Devachan can be learned in this way.

It may be asked: Seeing that Devachan is an internal state, protected from outside contact with the world of people, where will the materials come from with which the imagination is to work?

A fundamental postulate of Theosophy is that the Higher Self of which we are a part contains the potentialities of all Nature, that it is an inexhaustible mine of treasure. Consider the action of a beautiful scene

upon the feelings. Is it *in itself* a source of delight, like a red hot poker is a source of pain? A dog can feel the effects of the heated iron as easily as the most cultivated man, but however long he may look at the landscape we have no reason to believe it affects him with the same sense of delight that the artist gains from it. The scenery arouses something in the man that the dog only has in germ. That something, that sense of pleasure, can be aroused in the man in other ways too; by music, by a noble poem. In Devachan the Inner power stimulates the memory of the best things in the past life, glorifies them, and produces the same effect, though greatly intensified, that the music, scenery, etc., arouse in the mind on the physical plane.

In Devachan everything that the higher part of the soul has desired gets the possibility of blossoming. The will is operative in a different way, using a different grade of cosmic substance from the terrestrial, a grade which responds more rapidly, infinitely more rapidly, to the power of thought. Why, even in ordinary dreams, who has not been sufficiently awake to perceive that he was really shaping and molding a finer grade of matter than the physical? There are innumerable observations showing this, some even recorded in the textbooks on sleep.

It sometimes seems as if the fine substance of which our dreams are made and which is called “astral” matter for want of a better term, is at the limit of pliability, for it answers the molding efforts of the playful and partially unrestrained lower mind so promptly. At times *you* can actually stand apart from the lower mind and watch it shifting the masses of “astral scenery” and ensouling the puppets as it wants, and then all of a sudden the whole thing is dissolved into thin air, and you find yourself awake and with a much more stubborn kind of matter to deal with, and a different perception of time. But the extremely refined substance with which the soul in Devachan is concerned is much more tenuous than the astral matter of the ordinary dream. It is in refinement in relation to astral matter as the latter is to terrestrial matter; and we know nothing actually in itself of the nature of terrestrial matter! It is an illusion of the senses, so far as we know. Our most eminent scientists are now reducing the physical atom “the smallest particle of matter known” to a whirling of electric “ions,” immaterial in their nature! So it is difficult to talk of Devachan being a state of illusion and Earth-life the reality! The fact is, in both Devachan and Earth-life the outer garb is partly illusory and the soul is the knower, the spectator of the experiences which can be gained in no other way.

In Devachan the soul is able to create its own surroundings more harmoniously and easily than here. Being of its own creation, what is about it exactly suits its desires. Though merely psycho-mental forms, are they much more illusory than the things of Earth? Here we are surrounded by crowds of things called “material,” but whose real nature we do not know; all we know is that we have called them to us by some kind of affinity with

our desires; in a sense we have created them. Place a number of people in exactly the same circumstances, give them the same materials, and see in how short a time each one will have created his own characteristic environment! In Devachan it is the same, only there the conditions are more easily modified.

ANALYTIC AND SYNTHETIC THOUGHT

For the ordinary man the causes of *intellectual reasoning* disappear a short time after the death of the body; the mind — the lower mind, the personality, Mr. A—— or Mrs. Z—— that was — loses touch with the things of the outer plane and begins to disintegrate, its higher elements rejoining the Higher Manas, from which it came at birth; and uniting with the spiritual consciousness of Buddhi (the Spiritual Soul, in the Esoteric classification) enters the Devachanic state where Imagination reigns supreme, carrying with it the most valuable and ennobling memories of the past, the spiritual aroma of the life just ended; while the lower elements of the mind, and the common and passional memories which have no part nor lot in paradise, go to their own place, Kâma-loka, which will be considered later. This is the inner meaning of the Mystery-Drama of the Crucifixion. The Christos who is crucified between the two thieves represents the Higher Manas; the penitent thief the purer portion of the lower Manas which returns to paradise, and the other the evil portion that has identified itself with the lower things of the world, and has to disintegrate in Kâma-loka.

It is well to bear in mind in this stage of our discussion that the ordinary reasoning mind, the lower Manas, in normal cases ceases to function as a reasoning being very shortly after leaving the body, as it is disintegrating and fading away, while the higher portion — when the unconsciousness produced by the shock of leaving the body is over — takes up a new position, the feelings and the imagination getting an opportunity for expansion they never had when on Earth. As soon as the higher portion of the late personality, the penitent thief, becomes completely one with the Christos and illuminated by the Radiance from above, this opportunity is much magnified.

There are some exceptions to the rule of passing out from ordinary, reasoning, brain-mind consciousness after death, but they are so rare that they need not concern us much at present; they are chiefly confined to advanced souls who are able to carry their full consciousness backwards and forwards at will through the veil separating the visible from the invisible planes. To have this power usefully developed many lives of unselfish service must have been spent; it is a part of the necessary equipment of an advanced Helper of humanity. Without it his work would be unduly limited.

There is another class which contains a certain order of evil-doers, including among others suicides and executed criminals, as well as some of the victims of sudden death, who keep their normal terrestrial consciousness for a considerable time and are in peril of losing the Devachanic rest altogether; their case we must consider later.

A PLANE OF SPIRITUAL UNITY

Though Theosophy tells us that we do not see our friends in their bodily forms while we are in Devachan, that does not mean that there is no possibility of communion between the embodied and the souls in paradise. Truly, and very fortunately, the souls immersed in the Devachanic state are well protected from the disturbance of being dragged down to the lower earthly spheres of consciousness by mediumship or other necromantic practices. In the case of the raising of Samuel by the witch of Endor it would seem that he either had not entered Devachan, only having been dead a short time, or that it was his "*Kâma-rûpa*," or astral shade, that was raised. Whichever it may have been, the returned spirit complained of being disquieted by being brought up. Theosophy does not support the view that there is regular communication between the living and the blessed dead in Devachan, nor as a rule, in *Kâma-loka*, or that those who have passed on have the pain of watching the troubles, the mistakes or the crimes of the friends and relatives they have left behind. The merciful Law is not so cruel. There is a period of perfect rest, refreshment and holy peace for the purified Manas after the probationary region of *Kâma-loka* has been passed through. Close communication between the visible and invisible worlds would destroy this invaluable opportunity of rest and recuperation between incarnations.

It is nothing but a form of selfishness, however sublimated, and however disguised in fine phrases, that leads anyone to demand personal contact with the departed at the expense of their progress. Emerson says, "Why this pawing and clawing?" between friends; why cannot we be satisfied with a higher, a more spiritual communion, a communion of ideals and of unity of purpose. The ghost-hunter who demands the presence in tangible form of a friend, a wife, or husband; who attempts to "materialize" a spirit (!) has a very extraordinary conception of what spirituality means. The agnostic who supposes that he will probably be annihilated after death, and yet does his duty, living up to his highest ideals of honor and unselfishness, has a truer idea of the meaning of spirituality. What are we to think of the attitude of mind of a person, such as one well known to many students of Theosophy, who sincerely believed the tangible spirit of his deceased wife was constantly with him, advising him in all his actions by tapping on his shirt front! If this phenomenon had been really produced by the poor woman and was not due to some entirely

different cause, what a cruel thing it would be to foster it, for it would be the surest way to hold her back from the rightful and sane evolutionary progress through Devachan and back to Earth-life. The fact must be that those who demand and try to drag back the souls of the departed either do not realize the mischief they are doing because they are blinded by their enthusiasm at discovering that death does not end all, or they are too regardless of the welfare of others to consider anything but their own selfish pleasures; for in all ages the wisest Teachers of Humanity have uniformly denounced necromancy, not only from its evil effects upon the evoker of the departed, but because it is an unbrotherly action towards them, holding them back and preventing the rightful separation of the Principles from taking place.

Theosophy, however, does teach that we not only meet the souls of our friends in a future life on Earth when drawn together by mutual attraction after reincarnation, but that also in the sublimated condition of Devachan — far away from Kâma-loka where the astral shades linger on — there can be and often is a true *spiritual communion* between souls who were closely attached while on Earth. But the high soul in Devachan cannot be drawn down to the physical plane, to rapping tables, dark cabinets and shirt-fronts! It can only communicate with that part in sympathetic relationship with itself, with the Higher Ego of the living; overshadowing and gently influencing the feelings of those with whom it has the greatest sympathy. By the very nature of the case it does not crudely impress the brain-mind of the survivors by speech or the like, but in the deeper concealed consciousness which is not displayed on the surface. In some — very few — dreams such experiences occur; after these real dreams we vaguely recollect having had large and striking experiences which the brain-mind cannot clearly bring to memory. Even in waking life we would notice certain unexplained sensations if our minds were purer and we were more observant — impressions and ideas that come from inner sources.

But the Theosophical teachings go a little farther still; for it is distinctly stated, though very briefly and guardedly, for fear of exaggeration, that the overshadowing love of a mother or devoted friend in Devachan exerts an influence that really protects the beloved from personal injury and other harm — for all the planes of Nature are inter-communicable, they are not separated into water-tight compartments, and an unselfish thought has greater potency and power of penetration than a strongly colored, selfish one, for it is working in harmony with Evolution, with the Law. This is the origin of the Christian expression, the “Communion of the Saints”; the saints in this connection are the resting, purified souls in Devachan. A glorious prospect will someday be in sight for a regenerated humanity when the barriers of self shall be removed between the inner and the outer, and the Unity of Oneness realized as in the Golden

Age with the experience gained through the age-long pilgrimage of reincarnation. But this cannot come until humanity has awakened to its larger life, its real life, of which the present is but a distorted reflection, and the lower forces now acting in the interest of selfishness and personality have been transmuted to the service of the soul.

It is the fearful materializing tendency of the age that makes it difficult at first for inquirers in the West to understand such a “meta-physical” conception as that of Devachan. In the East such an idea is easily grasped, for the people have not been hypnotized by a materialistic science, teaching them that the existence of the soul is a myth, nor by an almost equally materialistic theology, trying to compel them to believe in an impossible “resurrection of the body.” But if an immortal soul exist at all, as we know it does, it must necessarily be of a non-physical nature, and possess different characteristics and properties from those of the mental and physical and passional components of the man on Earth, for they all perish. Man to get the ideally perfect condition must so clarify himself that the light of the soul illuminates him through and through.

He is thyself, yet thou art but finite and liable to error. He is eternal and is sure. He is eternal truth. When once he has entered thee, and become thy warrior, he will never utterly desert thee; and at the day of the great peace he will become one with thee. [*Light on the Path*. {p. 10}]

Referring again to the recognition of our friends when they are in the Devachanic state and to their cognizance of our existence, before we can begin to grasp the problem intelligently we must face this question: How do we recognize our friends on Earth? Is it by their external forms alone, by their little idiosyncrasies or habits, or by something higher and almost indescribable? Is it, in short, by those things in which they are imperfect and different from the ideal, or by the things that belong to the higher life, things which carry the feeling of inner unity, of oneness, few though they may be? The latter is the only sort of recognition that is worth preserving or that can last. The low and undeveloped man recognizes in another of his own kind an eating and drinking animal; the intellectualist feels sympathy with those who enjoy similar mental pursuits to his own; each accords recognition to something in the other that is like what is in himself, and prefers it, though with a certain difference in order to give variety; but the difference must not be too great.

Now consider those who have gone higher than the intellectual plane, and have developed a great heart-force, a great love for others and a sympathy with their sufferings and a perfect willingness to sacrifice their own comforts to help others. Such great souls stand in a *spiritual* relationship to others, and they recognize something in others which answers to this inner attitude without a word — the brooding Soul, calling

all the best out of their natures. They have been called to service by the recognition of something in their fellows which is trying to get out and realize itself; something imprisoned, something godlike, not the intellect of the brain-consciousness. All other forms of recognition are but temporary, unimportant, and cannot be carried through the ages of the future. How miserable it would be to have to spend eternity with the very best persons you know, with all their little foibles and meannesses, their limitations and oddities; for no one in our work-a-day world is free from large imperfections. Everyone knows how fatiguing the society of the same people becomes on a very long ocean voyage, and to think of an eternity spent in the same company without such a complete change in their and our own personality as to make practically new men is horrible. It may be said that humanity is improving and that after death the soul is freed from many of the limitations of this life, and that a communion of advancing souls would not be so irksome at all; that we shall recognize higher and better things in our friends than the animal or the intellectual as they make progress. This is so to a degree, but it should apply to life on Earth better than to any theological “heaven” or “summerland,” — though the records of the past do not show any great advance in spirituality within short periods, nor does Theosophy give us the false hope that the very fact of leaving the physical body will enlighten us immediately, and make us ideal beings on ordinary personal lines.

In Devachan the “muddy vesture of decay” has been temporarily left behind and the aspirations are pure. Therefore thoughts of love and helpfulness sent out from the purified soul reach the higher nature of those to whom they are sent and there is no real separation after death, though the gulf between Devachan and Earth-life and the difficulty of impressing the brain upon return are so great that the embodied mind can very seldom recollect who or what it met when it rose to Devachan; still the effect remains. Katherine Tingley says:

Oh if you could have the power to see the soul moving on in the majesty of its new birth, in the glory of the divine Light, illuminated in its new liberty, ascending, ascending! If those who sorrow could but see, they would rejoice indeed at the glory and sing Hallelujah.... As the soul ascends with its great love, its power and joy, it throws them back to those who can receive them, and who then go out to help the people with a greater love. Their divine natures have been aroused — the glory of the Law is upon them.

THEOSOPHICAL AND MATERIALISTIC CONCEPTIONS

Before leaving the subject of Devachan it would be well to note the comparison between the puerile, orthodox, theological idea of heaven, and the elevated Theosophical one based upon knowledge, not upon perverted

traditions of the Ancient Mysteries, hopelessly confused and materialized. Orthodox Theology has tried for centuries to make us believe that heaven is a place to which all who “believe and are baptized” and throw all their sins upon Jesus Christ, accepting his sacrifice on Calvary as having appeased the “wrath of God” for the guilt of Adam, will go soon after the death of their bodies; that at first they will be pretty much the same as they were on Earth, though better informed and better mannered; that they will meet their friends in social intercourse; and that one of the pleasures of the redeemed is to watch the sufferings of the damned who have not accepted the blood of Jesus — an honorable pleasure for the reason that the justice of the Almighty is eloquently set forth thereby, and surely we can safely admire His work! It is true that the more thoughtful or prudent clergy of today are finding out that their flocks will not stand this sort of thing much longer, and so they have begun to throw a veil of mystery around the next world thicker than was formerly thought necessary, when the crudest pictures were presented to the wondering gaze of the ignorant. But even now the whole popular idea of the future life, as far as it is at all coherent, is tinged strongly with the personal flavor, with the impression of limitation, of narrowness and unreality.

Popular Spiritualism goes one step further in materializing and formulating the life of the next world.

Of course the majority of the people in Western lands pay little attention to any of the unlikely hypotheses of futurity (until they approach their latter end, when they regret their ignorance) for they feel there is something ridiculous in most of them, and that real spirituality is lacking in all of them. So indifference has grown and scientific materialism sneers loftily at any suggestions of consciousness beyond the terrestrial life.

But there is a new spirit growing up between these warring factors of materialism and superstition, and materialism is weakening its hold upon the best thinkers of the twentieth century; people of intelligence are not so much afraid of being suspected of believing that there are more things to be known than all the test-tubes and spectrosopes can investigate, and here is another danger of the age, as H. P. Blavatsky foresaw and pointed out in her works; *i.e.*, the danger of running into the pursuit of so-called but really *false* occultism. For as soon as persons of intelligence in large numbers find out that both Theology and Science have been feeding them on husks, the former ignoring, the latter denying the truth of well-authenticated so-called “supernatural” facts, they are likely to “rush in where angels fear to tread” and dabble with things much better left alone by the unprepared and the mere curiosity seeker. But fortunately Theosophy is here with its sane, reasonable and demonstrable explanation of these unusual facts in Nature, an explanation warranted and confirmed by the experience of ages, preserved and tested by generations of profound students and Masters in true Occultism, the Science of Life.

Now compare the unreasonable and grotesque theories of the future life with its puerile heaven and revolting eternal hell as taught for centuries by the theologians, by the “Infallible Church,” falsely claiming to represent Christianity, the Christianity of the Compassionate Man of Sorrows, with the simple, ancient and Theosophical teaching of Reincarnation and its logical counterparts, Kâma-loka and Devachan, in which the soul is purified and rested before taking up another earthly habitation. Let us put aside all inherited and acquired habits of thought and look at the thing squarely and see how perfectly our highest ideas of Divine Justice and the mercy of the Law are satisfied by the conception of a heaven where the real spiritual part of the man can get its own, where each one according to the nature of the higher aspirations and occupations of the past life, will have the opportunity of developing and realizing them in a fulness never possible while trammelled with the gross material brain.

The *average* period of time (*as we reckon it here*), spent in Devachan, is about fifteen hundred years, but varies widely in individual cases. In studying history with the light of Theosophy it becomes clear that there is some evidence of this from the recurrence of many cycles of about that period. For instance the Italian Renaissance (the word is literally correct!) commenced about a millennium and a half after the great Greek civilization was on its decline, and there are others; but the records of the past are so imperfect and have been so twisted to fit this or that theological creed that it is impossible to get full data at present. To write the true history of the past with the light of Reincarnation is the task of the future historian, who will certainly have much more to enlighten his path than we have. Katherine Tingley has stated that at the proper time strange archaeological discoveries will be made confirming still more fully the teachings of Theosophy respecting the past history of man than even the Egyptian, Babylonian, Indian and Central American have done.

Speaking of the length of the Devachanic period, William Q. Judge says:

But as the ethereal garments of Devachan are more lasting than those we wear here, the spiritual, moral and psychic causes use more time in expanding and exhausting in that state than they do on earth.... The “dream of *devachan*” lasts until karma [the law of cause and effect, of action] is satisfied in that direction. In *devachan* there is a gradual exhaustion of force. The stay in *devachan* is proportional to the unexhausted psychic impulses originated in earth-life. Those whose actions were preponderatingly material will be sooner brought back into rebirth by the force of *Tanhâ*. *Tanhâ* is the thirst for life,.... the pulling or magnetic force lodged in the *skandhas* inherent in all beings. [The “*skandhas*” are the seeds of action left behind when the soul enters Devachan. They are not destroyed, but revive at the proper time and draw the Ego back to the right environment on earth for him to work out the results of his acts.] The whole period allotted by the soul’s

forces being ended in devachan, the magnetic threads which bind it to earth begin to assert their power. The Self wakes from the dream, it is borne swiftly off to a new body, and then, just before birth, it sees for a moment all the causes that led it to *devachan* and back to the life it is about to begin, and knowing it to be all just, to be the result of its own past life, it repines not but takes up the cross again — and another soul has come back to earth.

Any difficulty in understanding the concept of Devachan will be found to originate in ignorance of the compound nature of man. As long as we are satisfied that man is but the eating, drinking, talking, *cooking* animal, the egotistic “man-in-the-street,” it is naturally difficult to comprehend the possibility of such a transcendental state, and the materialists will seem to have a strong case; but Theosophy has cleared up our conceptions of the real nature of man, and a careful study of our own states of consciousness from the standpoint of the “Seven human principles” detailed elsewhere, will give a substantial basis for grasping this idea of the Devachanic state, one of the most helpful of all the truths that Theosophy has brought to save us from the negation of agnosticism or the credulities of superstition. The claim that man is a soul, immortal in essence, using many vehicles of more or less refinement in order to get in touch with the different planes of Nature, that after the death of the gross body he passes into “inner” states where other experiences can be obtained, one of which is the Devachanic blossoming of all that is rare and beautiful in the memory of the past life, cannot be repugnant to the sense of fitness of anyone who has not a strong theological or materialistic bias. To the bigoted in either camp we do not appeal; they have to go through varied experiences, to seek abroad, to suffer pleasure and grief before they will look for the light of the soul in the only place where it can be found — *within themselves*, the only place where real peace and satisfaction can be found.

The Devachanic and Kâma-lokic experiences will not always be required, for when the race has progressed further upon the upward arc towards spirituality it will have passed beyond the need which they supply. According to *The Secret Doctrine*, which gives the clue to many of the invaluable records of the past that have been preserved secretly and of which numerous though incomplete portions are incorporated into the sacred scriptures of the world, man needed neither the rest of the Devachanic state nor the purification of Kâma-loka, in the periods of greatest antiquity, millions of years ago. In those times his constitution was not so complex as at present and there were no intervals between successive lives; for Man, the immortal Ego, had not completed his descent into material and animal life, and his existence was more spiritual. There was no break of consciousness between life and life, only a gentle blending. As Evolution proceeds new conditions prevail. It was not until

the “Third Root Race” of man that intellect and passion awoke and brought about the necessity for Devachan and Kâma-loka.

H. P. Blavatsky says in *The Secret Doctrine*:

Now compare the evolution of the races, the First and Second of which are of the nature of Âtman-Buddhi, their passive spiritual progeny; and the Third Root-Race shows three distinct divisions or aspects physiologically and psychically; the earliest, sinless; the middle portions awakening to intelligence; and the third and last decidedly animal: *i.e.*, *Manas* succumbs to the temptation of Kâma.

KÂMA-LOKA THE PLACE OF DESIRE

A less agreeable subject now presents itself for our consideration, the state or the complex variety of states called in Theosophy, Kâma-loka, “the Place of Desire.” Normally this stage of the evolutionary process should be passed through in a brief time, one hundred and fifty years being the maximum as a rule, and a much shorter time sufficing in the case of pure minded, unselfish persons. Kâma-loka is but the dark vestibule into the bright abode of joy and light, Devachan, and therefore it would not be necessary to say much about it, had it not had such a powerful effect on the embodied portion of humanity. H. P. Blavatsky says:

KÂMA-LOKA (*Skt.*) The *semi*-material plane, to us subjective and invisible, where the disembodied “personalities,” the astral forms called Kâma-rûpa remain, until they fade out from it by the complete exhaustion of the effects of the mental impulses that created these *eidolons* of human and animal passions and desires. It is the Hades of the ancient Greeks and the Amenti of the Egyptians, the land of Silent Shadows.... Kâma-loka has, like every other region, its seven divisions, the lowest of which begins on earth or invisibly in its atmosphere; the six others ascend gradually, the highest being the abode of those who have died owing to accident, or suicide in a fit of temporary insanity, or were otherwise victims of external forces.

The passions and desires, according to the ordinary conventional acceptance, are intrinsic parts of a man’s structure, inseparable from him, and generally speaking of a similar nature to those of the animals, though more extensive in range and energy. Those who believe that death ends all suppose that they disappear like the noise of machinery when the fires go out.

But according to Theosophy, while the force of Desire is inherent in man and cannot be destroyed, or he would cease to be the “microcosm,” the image of the Universe, in which Desire has a prominent part as the propulsive force, the evil “*colorings*” of this force, which are usually confused with the energy itself, are not essential and have to be eliminated.

These “colorings,” the Kâma principle, which have become, by our permission in the past, energized by the force of desire, are perversions, or more correctly, survivals or retrogressions. They belong to a lower stratum than that upon which humanity is struggling to plant its feet. Our ideals have risen, and the lower passions needed for self-preservation, while we lived under different conditions, are now a hindrance to progress. During life we have the opportunity of transmuting the Desire energy into proper channels. Each event is a test of strength of will, and as we use it to extirpate the “giant weed” of selfishness — *i.e.*, the feeling of separateness from the race, the only heresy recognized by Theosophy — which is the basis of all misery, so we get control of the power hitherto diverted to inferior purposes. Using the word passion in a broad sense to cover the energized tendencies towards separateness — the egotism of personality — let us regard it as a great ocean pressing in on all sides and continually trying to find the smallest leak. A little leak will quickly grow when neglected, until the whole ship is in danger. When a ship sinks the crew have to escape in boats, and so the Higher Ego has to leave the personal self to perish if the flood of passion has completely swamped it.

There is a dark side to Nature, and passion, based on egotism or separateness and ensouled by the force of Desire, is not an evanescent thing like the noise of the machinery, but a “roaring lion seeking what it can devour,” and its attacks are the most dangerous when the victim thinks he is most secure. But

Once force the animal into his rightful place, that of the inferior, and you find yourself in possession of a great force hitherto unsuspected and unknown. [*Through the Gates of Gold.*]

THE RELEASE FROM ENTANGLEMENTS

Since man grows into self-knowledge and divine wisdom only by struggle, if it were not for the animal and mental desires we should have no field of battle within. As Krishna says to Arjuna in the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*, part of the great religious epic poem of India, “with the meditation fixed upon the Higher sold, resolve to and with it expectation, devoid of egotism and free from anguish.”

Purified Desire is the Divine dynamo, the driving force in Nature. “Desire first arose in IT” (the Eternal Source) and the worlds appeared.

But after death the passions are not destroyed, though they soon lose their controller, the Higher Manas, which withdraws its ray sent into the brain at birth, and in time they disintegrate from exhaustion of energy, though the seeds are left lying in wait. The passions unite with the “shell” — the astral and mental dregs of the personality — which has a spurious life of its own, and lingers on while the momentum of the mental force

lasts which was originated during the previous life. After this subsides, there is nothing left on the lower planes but the seeds (*skandhas*) or essence of the lower desires, and other “mental deposits,” waiting for the Ego to emerge from Devachan. We are responsible for the residue left disintegrating in Kâma-loka even after the entrance into Devachan, and the more quickly they disappear the better for us. A person who has led a pure, unselfish life has little to get rid of and little to dread upon returning to Earth, but the egotistical and uncontrolled have a heavy bill to pay.

Kâma-loka then is characterized by being the natural reservoir of a vast mass of uncontrolled Kâma or desire-force, colored with evil in large measure in the “lower” portions, purer as it rises nearer to the Devachanic state. The lower portion, nearest the earthly plane, is alive with undesirable thoughts, ready at all times to pour into receptive minds on Earth through the leaks caused by want of moral vigilance. The lower astral plane of which Kâma-loka is a portion — the word astral having a very broad and comprehensive meaning — is a condition of substance having the power to reflect back into the minds of men images of all sorts of past events, and as, unfortunately, there is still a greater mass of evil in the world than good, this subtle hypnotic influence holds us down seriously though almost unknowingly. It is this which makes it so hard to break the fetters of custom; this mirror can only be purified by good thoughts and good deeds. Man is his brother’s keeper.

Kâma-loka is primarily the sphere of *effects*, the locality where the effects of the past life are temporarily obliterated; it should never be the scene for new *causes*. The soul in Kâma-loka is getting rid, for the time being, of the clogging impurities that have gathered round it during its sojourn on Earth, in order to prepare for the Devachanic rest. If drawn back forcibly to the consciousness of the terrestrial plane by mediumship or other necromantic practice it suffers in more ways than one. It begins to form new Karma, new causes whose effects will have to be worked off later, and it gets into contact with all sorts of undesirable entities. More will be said about this point a little later, but the important thing to be borne in mind is that Kâma-loka is not the region where the will should retain the ordinary activity of Earth-life, occupying itself with the things which should have passed out of its ken. It is the time for purification and shedding only.

The nearest approach we can make to the astral condition is in the ordinary dream, and this is but partial, for the dreaming consciousness is interlocked closely with the brain-cells. Still if we consider for a moment some of the mysterious characteristics of the dream state we shall see how strongly it resembles the after-death state of Kâma-loka. In a dream the ordinary ideas of time and space are non-existent; the judgment is usually in abeyance, but the imagination is liberated. When senseless or vicious dreams come, the dreamer is practically on one of the lowest planes of

Kâma-loka, and it is well known to many dreamers that a certain part of the nature is dreaming them against the will of the better part. Under such circumstances H. P. Blavatsky taught her students to train the will to awaken the body, and by making a habit of throwing out of the mind all impure thoughts immediately they begin to insinuate themselves during the day, such action would become automatic at night in sleep. Undesirable thoughts of all kinds come from the great Kamic reservoir as well as directly from other minds, but they cannot get in to do harm if the mind is pure and the will strong enough to keep it so. They do not belong to *you*, unless you invite them.

The difficulty of understanding the astral planes from our present standpoint is similar to the difficulty a student of geometry has at first in reading the drawing of a solid object laid out on a flat sheet of paper. The astral planes, and all planes above the physical have properties of their own which cannot be rendered in the terms of the five senses. In dreams we get a glimpse of the truth of this. There are many well-authenticated accounts of long and elaborate dreams that have taken but a few seconds to experience yet which were crowded with such minute detail that the events passed through would have taken years to realize on the physical plane. An account has just been published in the papers of a very long and remarkable dream in which a man thought he had traveled for years and had been through eventful times, seeing them in close detail, hearing the conversations of many people and so forth. All this took place during the moment that elapsed while a vase was falling from a shelf. The dreamer was fully awake when it started to fall, dozed for a second, and awoke with the crash of the breaking, having gone through a vast experience meanwhile.

Again, the experiences of persons under anesthetics are most instructive, for then also time and space seem almost annihilated; and the curious testimony offered by the French experiments in hypnotism absolutely prove the picture-making power of the mind. For instance, a hypnotized subject is given a number of blank cards from which he selects one which he declares positively has a portrait or a number drawn on it. No one else can see anything, but when the card is carefully scrutinized the experimenter finds that it is the very one upon which he mentally projected an image or a number as the case may be, and as there were no means by which the card could have been detected or the subject of the picture or the number known, it would seem that a subtle or "astral" image was visible to the hypnotized person whose sensibility was partly transferred to the astral plane. Birthmarks show the powerful effect of antenatal pictures within the thought atmosphere of a mother. There are many other illustrations of the interpenetration of the astral and physical planes that could be given if space permitted, but the student can easily find them for himself, as it is the object of this little Manual to give only a

general outline of the Theosophical teaching respecting the Devachanic and Kâma-lokic planes. Further details must be looked for in more advanced works and by personal reflection on various facts that come to light from time to time bearing on this question.

THE ENTITIES OF KÂMA-LOKA

Not only is the Kâmic plane different in structure and characteristics from the terrestrial, but its inhabitants, if we may use the expression for some of them, are of a very different nature from those of Earth.

It would be impossible for the most imaginative novelist to describe races of beings of such remarkable qualities as actually exist on the astral planes, and it is fortunate for us that we are protected from their approach so long as we keep in a healthy state of mind. True Theosophy warns us against meddling with things that do not concern us in the astral world. The history of the past has consistently proved that stepping aside from our own normal, healthy development, our wholesome duties of life, and trying to get knowledge by rushing into communication with entities on other planes, or trying to develop "occult powers" when we have not glimpsed the larger possibilities of the wonderful mental and physical powers which are waiting development *within* us, are full of extreme danger to life and health, mental and bodily.

The motive of the search into the psychic byways of nature is seldom pure; it is usually the same curiosity-hunting that inspires the average vivisectionist to repeat the ghastly experiments that have been tried a thousand times; but if it were pure, if the aim of the experimenter were the benefit of humanity solely without a thought of his own profit or amusement, he would be far more usefully employed in putting his ideals into practice in qualifying to help the sufferings of humanity in ways about which there can be no difference of opinion. As Katherine Tingley has pointed out, while there are thousands of misunderstood and neglected children crying for redemption from lives of misery and degradation, there is enough work for all without venturing "where angels fear to tread." The perception of the other, "inner" planes will come in its due course, normally and healthily, when the right time arrives. Like the mists clearing from a landscape, the deeper and inner meaning of things will gradually reveal itself as we make progress and arrive at the condition which makes it necessary that it should. And when the first veil of matter shall be removed it will be seen that what is then revealed is perfectly normal and natural, for we shall be in sympathetic relationship with it.

The Founders of the Theosophical Movement recognized that at this critical period many ignorant experimenters would be in danger of allowing curiosity and the selfish desire for power to allure them into ill-directed investigations of the strange facts which "spiritualism,"

hypnotism, the “Hatha Yoga” practices of the East, and branches of “black magic,” miscalled “occultism,” have brought to the attention of Western thinkers lately in a little more palatable form than hitherto. To minimize the danger as far as possible enough information was given out through the work started by H. P. Blavatsky to provide a firm foundation for a philosophical conception covering the ground, and rendering it unnecessary for rash and ignorant human beings to sacrifice their time and their health, their sanity and moral character in ruinous exploration of things that are perfectly well-known to those who have earned the right to know them — but which are fatal to the untrained.

Kâma-loka contains, according to William Q. Judge’s classification, among other orders of intelligences which do not specially concern us in this inquiry, the following;

A few real people, fully alive although invisible, and, but for the deprivation of the physical body, the same as they were on Earth. These are the suicides, the victims of accident, executed criminals, etc. There is a natural law of cohesion in the inner planes similar to the law of cohesion in matter, which binds the various principles of man together and prevents them separating until the time for their orderly break-up arrives. In the cases referred to above, that time had not come when death arrived, the result being that the sufferers cannot pass on to the rest in Devachan, for the lower portion of the mind — the part we so falsely consider our real selves — is yet entangled in the web of passions which it has been so busy weaving around itself during life, and it cannot get free until the full time of the cohesion of the principles has expired, which is sometimes called the “Second Death.” Until then the personality is not only in peril itself but is a danger to the living, particularly in the case of executed criminals who have been thrust out of their bodies by the process of law in what they think an unjust manner, and who are too often burning with hate for all humanity. In the case of the victims of accident there is not so much danger unless they have led a very evil life, for they pass the time until the period of natural death in a dreamy sort of sleep. Fortunately the number of persons who come to sudden ends is not very large in proportion to the population, but it is large enough to make the question of capital punishment a very important one from the standpoint of Theosophy, for as a rule each executed person is a center of powerful and malignant force.

It is now generally acknowledged that there is truth in what is dubbed “telepathy,” (thought-transference) that minds can be affected by other minds from a distance, and that the unseen and subtle forces of Nature are the most powerful. We have all noticed the curious epidemics of crime as well as disease that constantly take place; but how many among our “original thinkers” have connected the simple cause and effect? It is as easy for the disincarnated murderer hypnotically to inject thoughts of hate and suggestions of self-destruction and every kind of crime into the minds

of the weak and mediumistic, as it is for the expert hypnotist in the clinic to impress his subject with suggestions of whatever nature he likes. There is no need to call in the far-fetched idea of “evil-spirits” to help to explain where the vile suggestions come from that criminals and lunatics often plead, honestly enough, tempt them, as if from an irresistible source — a voice in the air or a command in the ear. Fortunately for the world many countries have become sufficiently enlightened to abolish capital punishment, and in many others public sentiment is agitating for the destruction of this blot upon our civilization.

There is only one way to kill a criminal, and that is to transmute the evil within him into good, and the only way to do that is to recognize something else within him which is good, to evoke it and gain its cooperation.

[*Mysteries of the Heart Doctrine*, where this subject is treated at length.]

A numerous class of denizens of Kâma-loka is composed of the “shells” of the recently deceased which cannot go far from their place of burial. It is difficult for the beginner to realize the existence of these entities, which are not human beings and yet have a large amount of human nature left in them. A little consideration will show that as the deceased passes on toward purer states and leaves behind the imperfections of the lower nature for the time, the “thought-forms,” as we may consider the remains of the lower Manas that have been torn away from the Higher by its entanglement with passion, allying themselves with the semi-physical astral body and vitalized by their own residual energy and by some they derive from external sources, cling to a spurious life and are often mistaken, in the séance-room, for the real spirits of the departed. Being attuned to the lowest Kâmic plane, the plane of passion in its fiercest manifestation, these “shells” of the deceased are the more coherent, persistent, and intelligent in proportion as the former owner was the more gross, selfish, and material. A spiritually minded person leaves a shell that quickly fades and disintegrates, and is no menace to the living — another reason why purification of our individual lives is an essential part of the work of those who believe in the Oneness of Man. The shell is called Kâma-rûpa, the “Body of Desire,” but that term does not necessarily include the astral semi-material form.

A class of vague, shadowy, and generally less coherent shells comes next in order. These have been able to escape from the vicinity of their graves through lapse of time; they respond more feebly to the psychic currents set up by a medium or the sitters at a séance, but they may be galvanized into a sort of fictitious life and the ghost-hunter is deceived into thinking them immortal souls.

None of these pseudo-spirits know anything about Reincarnation, which is not strange as they do not reincarnate. Only the Higher Ego reincarnates and it has passed into Devachan from which happy place it does not return to rap on tables or write on slates.

The next forms that we are told about as existing on the lower planes of Kâma-loka, are purely shadowy remains that it is difficult to define or imagine. They are like a very tenuous and ethereal mold or impression, a kind of “thought-photograph” of the Kâma-rûpa long since disintegrated. To be at all perceptible they must be galvanized very strongly into activity by the thoughts and magnetic force of the sitters at a séance; they are in the last stages of decomposition.

There are also the disintegrating astral Kâma-rûpas of animals; and the last class we need to refer to at any length is thus described by William Q. Judge:

Definite, coherent entities, human souls bereft of the spiritual tie, now tending down to the worst state of all, *avîci*, where annihilation of the personality is the end. They are known as black-magicians. Having centered their consciousness in the principle of *kâma*, preserved intellect, divorced themselves from spirit, they are the only damned beings we know. In life they had human bodies and reached their awful state by persistent lives of evil for its own sake; some of such already doomed to become what I have described are among us on earth today. These are not ordinary shells for they have centered all their force in *kâma*, thrown out every spark of good thought or aspiration, and have a complete mastery of the astral sphere. I put them in the classification of shells because they are such in the sense that they are doomed to disintegration consciously as the others are to the same end mechanically.... This class of shell has lost higher manas, but in the struggle not only after death but as well in life, the lower portion of *manas* which should have been raised up to godlike excellence, was torn away from its lord, and now gives this entity intelligence which is devoid of spirit but has power to suffer as it will when its final day shall come.

In addition to these human reliquiae there are intelligences which are neither animal nor human, called “Elementals,” for they ensoul the elemental forces of Nature. Of these science at present knows nothing and has all to learn. They are able to pose as human spirits, using the minds and organisms of sensitives, and deceiving the credulous.

So far the entities spoken of as inhabiting the lower planes of Kâma-loka may be said to have a certain life of their own, but there are what must be called “pictures” in the astral planes which easily deceive the untrained by appearing to be the faces of real persons when dressed up and projected into the terrestrial region of vibration at séances, and in dreams.

And yet we are asked by the spiritualists to believe that all the frequenters of the séance-room are the veritable spirits of the departed!

Theo-sophy gives no support to that view, only admitting that in extremely rare cases and then only for a short time after death, can the dead return, with the exception of the malignant beings referred to above and the victims of premature death. It is undesirable in the extreme to have anything to do with such unfortunate beings, for we can do nothing for them owing to our ignorance of their exact conditions, and they can injure us in many ways, wasting our time, weakening us physically and mentally and injecting most undesirable thoughts.

When the Kâma principle disintegrates in its own plane it is not destroyed, for the conservation of energy is a law there as well as here. It enters and becomes part of the consciousness of, the lower animals — the red-blooded ones. This simple and natural process explains in part how the extraordinary idea of the transmigration of human beings into animals originated, a notion which Theosophy of course repudiates as entirely against reason, for the evolutionary process having brought us to the human stage cannot turn back the current of progress. "Once a man always a man."

In certain cases of abnormal living it is possible for the Kâma-rûpa — the astral body with some of its lower memories and desires — to linger on during the time the Higher Ego is in Devachan and to attach itself loosely to the new personality as it is coming into birth. Some mediums suffer unconsciously from this misfortune, which explains certain phenomena; but it is fortunately rare. The physically purifying and sanitary fires of the crematorium are helpful in destroying the astral form, which hangs about the physical body in cases of ordinary burial until every part, except the bony structure, has lost its organic form. Cremation cannot, of course, touch the soul, but it helps it to liberate itself from the ties of Earth.

THE NEW DAY'S WORK

Much more could be said upon the subjects treated of in this Manual, but to do so would extend its scope beyond what was intended at the outset; still it would not be satisfactory to conclude without reference to a natural query often made by inquirers: Is there no recollection of Devachan? Yes, there is, nearly always, a recollection of Devachan in young children. They live haloed in its glorious light.

Some persons distinctly remember the fading of this bright state of consciousness "into the light of common day," and as we considered above, the imagination, the most active faculty in Devachan, is strongly developed in the child, and diminishes in power as the intellectual faculties increase.

But beautiful as the Devachanic state is and necessary as it is in our present evolutionary period to be able to say of nearly everyone,

After life's fitful fever he sleeps well,

there is the higher life of Divine Wisdom to aim for, the life beyond illusion, the impersonal life in which truth is seen face to face, the life in which the joy of serving humanity, unselfishly "to the endless end," swallows up all egotism, in which "the Self Divine has slain the very knowledge of desire," [*The Voice of the Silence*. {p.38}] in which the Candidate for Perfection "becomes as one of the divine in his desire to give rather than to take, in his wish to help rather than be helped, in his resolution to feed the hungry rather than take manna from Heaven himself." [*Light on the Path*. {pp. 71-72}]

It is to lead humanity towards this ineffable goal that Theosophy has once more incarnated upon Earth in a new and grander form.

Teachers and their Disciples

A Student

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TEACHERS AND THEIR DISCIPLES

EDUCATION — ONE OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST PROBLEMS

One of the greatest questions, if not the greatest, that the world is facing today is that of education; for upon education depend all the other problems that confront us, social, political, and religious. Not that politics or sectarian religion should be taught in school, but that in a true education such principles will be inculcated and such a basis of right living, right thought, and right action be given to the pupils that when the time comes to face those problems they will have the power to discern the right and act accordingly. But the education that is referred to is not narrowed down to the education of the young, though it cannot be disputed that “as the twig is bent so will grow the tree”; but the term is given its wider signification as including that process of educating, or drawing out, all the inner powers and faculties which belong to the highest human nature. As Katherine Tingley has said in regard to the Râja Yoga system:

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

This is said with special reference to the children, but this same process of education continues in more or less intensity throughout life; though it must be more and more by our own unaided efforts as we assume the responsibility of added years. And did we always live up to our highest possibilities it would continue in ever increasing ratio even up to the hour of death. As it is now, with the great mass of the people the tendency very early in life is towards a stereotyped set of opinions which, as old age creeps on, results in more or less complete stagnation of ideas. The whole trend of modern school education and the education that is later received in contact with our modern civilization is towards the establishment of fixed opinions, thus endowing man with a goodly supply of preconceived ideas, warping his judgment and making it almost inevitable that he will view new questions with bias and prejudice. Because of this the average modern mind demands that facts shall fit in with its theories and preconceptions, instead of remaining fluid and plastic and so being able to flow around and take hold of new facts understandingly and thus give them their right place and value. Basic principles capable of universal application are almost wholly lacking from the world of modern thought save such as we find partially stated in science; but even here as elsewhere with

but few exceptions we have only theory and conjecture. But as regards the problems of life and human conduct and man's place in the Universe, and especially with reference to that highest expression of man's thought — the religious — we do not find them, but instead dogma or vague belief; and were it not for the presence of what we may call the religious instinct in the heart of man and an undefined sense of absolute justice and universal law, long ago he would have sunk hopelessly into the pit of despair.

What is the cause of this? In seeking an answer we look around to see if there be any who have the light, who can point the way, who are in fact Teachers and Guides. The first answer that will be given by many in so-called Christian countries will be that such a Teacher and guide was Jesus the Christ; but if confronted with the facts of modern civilization in so-called Christian countries and under Christian influence and asked to show evidence of the efficacy of the teachings of this Helper of Humanity, it is common knowledge that such could be pointed to only in isolated instances and that the nations as such could not claim to be governed by the principles of Christ's teaching. There has yet to arise a people that can be pointed to as "fulfilling the law of Christ," for judgment must be given in this as in all other questions with reference to the facts of life and not from the standpoint of mere professions.

Not only lip service shall ye render, but service of hand and of heart.

And it is indisputable that many of the highest examples of nobility of character, purity and high purpose, in fact of all that goes to make up a true life — judged even by the standard given by Jesus himself — are to be found among those who never heard his name, and whom so-called Christians in their blindness have designated as heathen and pagan. Nevertheless the answer to the question above asked, that Jesus the Christ was such a Great Teacher and Helper of Humanity, is one that cannot be gainsaid and one in which Theosophists are only too ready to acquiesce. The criticism is not made against the Teacher but against those of whom Christ himself said:

Not everyone that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven,

and of whom, *i.e.*, those who say but do not, the modern world is so largely composed.

EVERY RACE AND PEOPLE HAS HAD ITS SAVIOR

Further, a little study into the history of other peoples, and especially of their sacred literature, will reveal the fact that all the essential teachings — which have been supposed by the great majority of Christians to have been revealed only through Jesus — were taught ages before his time. In fact we find that none of the great races or peoples has been without its Teachers and divine Saviors; and that, so far as we know from a study of the world's scriptures, the teachings that were given out by Jesus were but a fragment of those which had been proclaimed ages before by other Great Teachers.

It may be thought by some that such a statement as the one just made is derogatory to Jesus the Christ, whom they have regarded as the Savior of the world through whom alone men should be saved. But on the contrary it is in complete accord with his own teachings, which all led up to this — that men should become as he was:

Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

And furthermore:

My doctrine is not mine but his that sent me,

which, whatever interpretation we may put upon it, shows at least that the doctrine is anterior to the coming of Jesus. This position has been held even by many Christians themselves, and one of the old Church Fathers, St. Augustine, has said on this point:

The thing which is now called the CHRISTIAN RELIGION really was known to the ancients, nor was it wanting at any time from the beginning of the human race until the time when Christ came in the flesh, from whence the true religion, which had previously existed, began to be called *Christian*; and this in our days is the Christian religion, not as having been wanting in former times, but as having in later times received this name.

(*Opera Augustini*, Vol. I, p. 12. Quoted in Taylor's *Diegesis*, p. 42.)

One further point tending to strengthen still more this teaching of Theosophy that humanity has never been without its Teachers and Guides, is the fact that the statements which are made in regard to Jesus' "virgin" birth, his childhood, the slaughter of the innocents, his miracles and crucifixion — not to mention doctrines which as said above have been held to be peculiar to him — are told also of many other Saviors and Teachers of Humanity.

ONE VAST ONENESS AND ONE PRIMEVAL TEACHING

What is the conclusion to be drawn from this last statement? Or let us ask: What is the teaching of Theosophy in regard to it? For this latter will be found to be the only explanation that harmonizes and is in accord with all the facts. It is not denied that some of these statements may be actual records of fact, but it is asserted that they are symbolical and have a deep meaning as such, and further that all the Savors and Helpers of the world are members of one vast oneness which has existed throughout the ages and which works ever for the regeneration of the human race. This is the only conclusion consistent with the facts. These statements are symbolical of the life and work of all those whose high mission it is to teach and save humanity.

We have not space here to enter into the meaning of these symbols. For that the student is referred to the writings of H. P. Blavatsky, especially her two great works, *The Secret Doctrine*, and *Isis Unveiled*.

A closer tie that exists between the Teachers of Humanity, and one still more conclusively showing that they are all linked together down the ages, lies in the fact of the essential identity of doctrine, the same message that they have brought to the world — only the presentation, the garb, varying according to the age and people among whom they came. And it is claimed and proven in Theosophy that there is a great body of doctrine anterior to all the great religions of the world, which was their source of inspiration, and of which in fact these Teachers themselves were the disciples. So stupendously great is this body of doctrine referred to, which in Theosophical literature is known as the Wisdom-Religion, Theosophy, that H. P. Blavatsky says of it:

It is the last word of possible human knowledge.

All men are disciples and all men are also in degree teachers, consciously or unconsciously. We are all constantly learning, adding to our store of knowledge and experience for good or ill from all with whom we come into contact, being influenced by the very thought atmosphere of whatever place we may be in and adding to it the influence of our own lives. Much of this learning goes on unconsciously with the great mass of the people, and the example they set is given unheeding of the results that may accrue.

But the world has never been without its real Teachers and its real disciples — true Teachers, Masters of Wisdom, ever ready to impart their knowledge to those who were worthy, and to benefit humanity; and disciples who have sought the real knowledge and come to them to learn. Often, alas, have the Teachers had to remain unknown and obscure save to a few faithful followers, while false teachers, self-proclaimed, have

deluded the people, seeking for themselves fame and emolument where their aim has not been positively to teach false doctrine and so keep the people in bondage.

AN AGE OF TRANSITION

This subject of teachers and their disciples has ever been of vital interest to humanity, and dark indeed the age when real Teachers have had to hide themselves and teach only in secret. The present time is one of transition. Never in recorded history have age-old teachings been so widely called in question as during the last three decades, counting the last quarter of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th. Men are confronted with old teachings and new; religious dogmas and creeds, scientific theories, philosophical speculations, all shades of opinion and belief, as well as time-honored convictions, hang trembling in the balance. The unanswered question which Pilate asked of Jesus: "What is truth?" is voicing itself as a universal cry and demanding an answer.

Solomon is said to have declared: "There is nothing new under the sun," and it is not the first time that old faiths have been called into question and the Teachers of humanity persecuted and their disciples scorned. The questionings of the human mind today and the turmoil of warring sects and philosophies had their forerunners in the unrest which centered in Alexandria in the time of Hypatia, and still earlier in Greece and ancient Egypt. Human progress is cyclic and truly the times repeat themselves, the new is but the old in another dress. But today the stress is greater than at any previous transition period which history records.

Heretofore one nation or people has had its periods of mental upheaval almost without affecting any other nation or people, and its field of influence has been limited. In the time of Hypatia it hardly extended beyond the Graeco-Judaic civilization on the south-eastern coast of the Mediterranean and centering at Alexandria. But today the whole Earth is in touch; what takes place in one country is known the same day all over the world, and the mental unrest is not confined to one people or to one country, nor to the followers of any one system or religion, but affects all. It cannot be said that the center of the unrest is in Chicago, New York, London, or Paris. It is felt even to India, China, and Japan.

This fact all will easily recognize, but outside of Theosophy what reason is there offered as an explanation? The explanation is to be found in the Theosophical teaching of Cycles that mark the turning points in the history of nations, races, and of humanity as a whole. It marks the time too when again the old teaching must be brought forth out of the treasure-house of the Past, when again the keynote of truth must be sounded. For just as the general unrest affecting the whole of humanity points to the fact of the greatness of humanity's need, so also the answer which is never

lacking to the heart-cry of the world is commensurate. Those who are universally recognized as the Great Teachers of humanity, after whom the greatest of the world's religions have been named, Krishna, Buddha, Christ, Muhammad, Confucius — to name but a few of these — came each to one people or one race only, though their followers in later years have sought to make their teachings worldwide. But the worldwide call and the worldwide unrest demands a teaching that shall not be confined to one people or one race alone but shall speak to all.

THE SOURCE OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE

How is it that humanity has arrived at its present state of knowledge and civilization? Whence has been derived the wonderful knowledge of the arts and crafts, mechanical skill, the fine arts, science, philosophy — the knowledge we possess of astronomy and chemistry for instance? The usual answer would be, "By natural human evolution." But whence came man's earliest knowledge? and the same answer is given, "By evolution." We are told for instance that primitive man amid the virgin grandeur of Nature beheld the lightning strike some old dry tree, igniting it and teaching him the use of fire; or seeking to fashion some rude stone implement and breaking stone against stone a spark was kindled lighting some dry leaves and so revealing the mystery of combustion. In support of this theory we are referred to archaeological discoveries revealing the existence of the Stone Age when man had nothing but rude stone implements, etc., etc. Some few years ago this theory as to man's development was very widely held, but many discoveries of late years have made a wonderful change, causing in general much less readiness to dogmatize upon the knowledge of early humanity.

Researches into the histories of ancient Egypt, India, Babylonia, reveal the fact of a very high state of civilization and a wonderful knowledge of science and mechanical and applied arts, and referring to Egypt in particular it has been said that the farther we go back in the history of that wonderful country the more glorious does her civilization become. It is being also recognized by many that while these great civilizations existed there were in other parts of the Earth other peoples in a primitive state of civilization, perhaps in the Stone Age, just as today alongside of our own civilization we find such primitive types in some native peoples.

Can it have been chance that a little over a hundred years ago the Rosetta Stone was discovered that gave the key to the deciphering of the Egyptian hieroglyphs, or that a few years earlier still, in 1794, Anquetil du Perron, through the first translation of the *Upanishads* into Latin opened the door to the mystical knowledge of India? For these two events will stand out as guideposts in the history of all time as pointing the way to the recovery of humanity's real history, and as the first indications of the

answer that humanity is now demanding to its eternal questionings as to what is truth. In the light of the knowledge which by their means has been opened to humanity, it is no longer possible to hold to the theory that the knowledge and civilization possessed by humanity today has been the result of “natural human evolution”; and we are forced to the conclusion that instead of rising from a primitive state of savagery and ignorance, humanity has been descending for long ages from a height of glorious civilization and knowledge that is not ours even in this age which we are pleased to call so enlightened.

Aside from the teachings that Theosophy gives on this subject we may quote the independent opinion of one of our modern thinkers, Sir William Ramsay, who holds that the study of the history of the ancient peoples that flourished around the Mediterranean, reveals a *descent* from a higher state of civilization. All this is in harmony with the most ancient traditions of the great races of humanity, which speak of the Golden Age when humanity was ruled by gods, and that as age succeeded age they were ruled successively by demigods and the race of heroes, until finally save in rare instances their rulers were no more than themselves: weak, passionate, erring men.

There is a significant passage in one of the world’s most ancient scriptures, the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*, which shows the gradual loss of knowledge that humanity has undergone in its descent into grosser and grosser forms of living:

This exhaustless doctrine of Yoga I formerly taught unto Vaivasvata; Vaivasvata communicated it to Manu and Manu made it known unto Ikshvâku; and being thus transmitted from one unto another it was studied by the Râjarshis, until at length in the course of time the mighty art was lost, O harasser of thy foes! It is even the same exhaustless, secret, eternal doctrine I have this day communicated unto thee because thou art my devotee and my friend.

And Krishna, continuing, standing as the embodiment of the divine, says further:

I produce myself among creatures, O son of Bhârata, whenever there is a decline of virtue and an insurrection of vice and injustice in the world; and thus I incarnate from age to age for the preservation of the just, the destruction of the wicked, and the establishment of righteousness.

This gives the clue to the continuance of divine knowledge and its revival from age to age.

THE EARLIEST TEACHERS OF HUMANITY

Who then were the original Teachers of Humanity? For the theory that human knowledge has been evolved as previously hinted at is untenable. The most ancient teachings speak of the childhood of humanity, when the human race was, as it were, in a state of infancy, an age of innocence and sunshine and joy. In this Golden Age humanity had its Teachers, its divine Instructors who lived and taught openly. Who were they? Study Theo-sophy; read H. P. Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine*. They were beings from other and older worlds who had completed their evolution on those earlier worlds and whose duty and Karma it was to help forward the evolution of the human race on this Earth.

In the same way, we are taught, those in the present humanity who will have reached to the highest point of development and knowledge that life on this earth affords, will become the guides and instructors of the humanity that shall follow ours on a new earth. This is the privilege and responsibility of knowledge — to pass it on to others. Each race and each age has had its Great Teachers and at each cycle or turning-point in the world's history these have come, either openly or unseen, to guide the destinies of humanity. From the teachings of H. P. Blavatsky to some of her students in regard to this I have the permission of Katherine Tingley, Madame Blavatsky's successor, to quote the following:

The truths revealed to man by the "Planetary Spirits" (the highest Kumâras, those who incarnate no longer in the universe during *this* Mahâmanvantara), who appear on earth as Avatâras only at the beginning of every new human race, and at the junctions or close of the two ends of the small and great cycle — in time, as man became more animalized, were made to fade away from his memory. Yet, though these Teachers remain with man no longer than the time required to impress upon the plastic minds of child-humanity the eternal verities they teach, their spirit remains vivid though latent in mankind. And the full knowledge of the primitive revelation has remained always with a few Elect, and has been transmitted from that time up to the present, from one generation of Adepts to another. As the Teachers say: "This is done so as to ensure them (the eternal truths) from being utterly lost or forgotten in ages hereafter by the forthcoming generations."... The mission of the Planetary Spirit is but to strike the *keynote* of Truth. Once he has directed the vibration of the latter to run its course uninterruptedly along the concatenation of the race to the end of the cycle, he disappears from our earth until the following Planetary Manvantara. The mission of any teacher of esoteric truths, whether he stands at the top or the foot of the ladder of knowledge, is precisely the same: as above, so below. I have only orders to strike the *keynote* of the various esoteric truths among the learners as a body.

The vibrations of the primitive truths are what our philosophers call innate ideas.

This then, according to the Theosophical teachings, is the source from which humanity derived its earliest knowledge and also the fount from which have sprung all the great religions of the world, as well as the knowledge of astronomy and cosmogony and indeed all the sciences and arts. In the most ancient times all knowledge was sacred and was given at the time of initiation into the mysteries which were then universal. It seems strange to many that, for instance, geography was considered a sacred science. Yet a little reflection may show that in one light it may indeed be so; and perhaps too the science of geography as we know it may be but the outermost fringe of the real science. So too in regard to astronomy and all the other sciences. To the ancients astronomy meant much more than the cataloging of the stars and the calculation of eclipses or even spectroscopic analysis (if they had such). It meant the study of the heavenly bodies as living conscious entities and as the abode of entities. But as quoted above: “In course of time the mighty art was lost,” and for ages humanity has been groping amid the outermost husks of material existence.

THE TESTIMONY OF THE ANCIENTS

The above statement in regard to the origin of human knowledge is amply sustained by the traditions of all ancient peoples: of the Egyptians, Hindûs, Chinese, Native Americans and others. And in regard to these Divine Instructors it will be helpful to refer to a few quotations from *The Secret Doctrine*:

When the gods are said to forsake the earth, it does not only mean the gods, protectors and instructors, but also the *minor* gods — the regents of the Zodiacal signs. Yet, the former, as actual and existing Entities which gave birth to, nursed, and instructed mankind in its early youth, appear in every Scripture, in that of the Zoroastrians as much as in the Hindû Gospels. Ormazd, or Ahura-Mazda, the “Lord of Wisdom,” is the synthesis of the Amshâspends (or *Amesha Spentas* — “Immortal Benefactors”), the “Word,” however, or the *Logos* and its six highest aspects in Mazdyanism. These “Immortal Benefactors” are described in *Zamyad yasht* as the “Amesha Spentas, the shining, having efficacious eyes, great helpful... imperishable and pure... which are the *creators and destroyers of the creatures* of Ahura-Mazda, their creators and overseers, their protectors and rulers.” (*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 358)

The seven primeval gods had all a dual state, one essential, the other accidental. In their essential state they were all the “Builders” or *Fashioners*, the Preservers and the rulers of this world, and in the accidental state, clothing themselves in visible corporeality, they descended on the earth and reigned on it as Kings and Instructors of the lower Hosts, who had incarnated once more upon it as men. (*Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 514)

Elsewhere H. P. Blavatsky says of these that they were

The first preceptors of mankind.

But that which is preserved in *unanimous* traditions, only the willfully blind could reject. Hence we believe in races of beings other than our own in far remote geological periods;... in dynasties of divine beings, those Kings and Instructors of the Third Race in arts and sciences, compared with which our little modern science stands less chance than elementary arithmetic with geometry. (*Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 194)

... the first *divine Kings*, who are said to have “re-descended,” guided and *instructed* our Fifth Race after the last deluge. (*Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 354)

The Chinese traditions speak of the divine dynasties of Kings as much as those of any other nations.... From Manu, Thoth-Hermes, Oannes-Dagon, and Edris-Enoch, down to Plato and Panadoros, all tell us of seven *divine* Dynasties, of seven Lemurian, and seven Atlantean divisions of the Earth; of the seven primitive and dual gods who descend from their celestial abode and reign on Earth, teaching mankind Astronomy, Architecture, and all the other sciences that have come down to us. These Beings appear first as “gods” and Creators; then they merge in nascent man, to finally emerge as “divine-Kings and Rulers.” But this fact has been gradually forgotten. As Basnage shows, the Egyptians themselves confessed that science flourished in their country only since Isis-Osiris, whom they continue to adore a gods, “though they had become Princes in human form.” And he adds of Osiris-Isis: “It is said that this Prince [Isis-Osiris] built cities in Egypt, stopped the overflowing of the Nile; invented agriculture, the use of the vine, music, astronomy, and geometry. (*Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 365-366)

Not only Herodotus — the “father of History” — tells us of the marvelous dynasties of gods that preceded the reign of mortals, followed by the dynasties of demi-gods, Heroes, and finally men, but the whole series of classics support him; Diodorus, Eratosthenes, Plato, Manetho, etc., etc., repeat the same, and never vary the order given.

“It is indeed,” as Creuzer shows: “from the spheres of the stars wherein dwell the gods of light that wisdom descends to the inferior spheres.”

(*Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 367)

So, too, the traditions of the Hindûs, the Persians, and the Chinese are the same.

The book of the Chinese *Yi-King* {*I Ching*} attributes the discovery of agriculture to “the instruction given to men by celestial genii.”

(*Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 374)

The whole human race was at that time [of the Third Race] of “one language and of one lip.” This did not prevent the last two Sub-Races of the Third Race from building cities, and sowing far and wide the first seeds of

civilization under the guidance of their divine instructors, and their own already awakened minds. (*Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 198)

And one more extract from the same work, which is especially interesting and valuable as it gives a summary of Plato's teaching which fully corroborates the position taken:

The very unbelieving Boulanger writes (*Règne des Dieux*, Introduction):

"If one has to lend ear to traditions,... the latter place before the reign of Kings, that of the Heroes and demi-gods; and still earlier and beyond they place the marvelous reign of the gods and all the fables of the golden age.... One feels surprised that annals so interesting should have been rejected by almost all our historians. And yet the ideas communicated by them were once universally admitted and revered by all the peoples; not a few revere them still, making them the basis of their daily life. Such considerations seem to necessitate a less hurried judgment.... The ancients, from whom we hold these traditions, which *we accept no longer because we do not understand them now*, must have had motives for believing in them furnished by their greater proximity to the first ages, and which the distance that separates us from them refuses to us.... Plato in his fourth book of *Laws*, says that, long before the construction of the first cities, Saturn had established on earth a *certain* form of government under which man was very happy. As it is the golden age he refers to, or to that reign of gods so celebrated in ancient fables... let us see the ideas he had of that happy age, and what was the occasion he had to introduce this *fable* into a treatise on politics. According to Plato, in order to obtain clear and precise ideas on royalty, its origin and power, one has to turn back to the first principles of history and tradition. Great changes, he says, have occurred in days of old, *in heaven and on earth*, and the present state of things is one of the results [*Karma*]. Our traditions tell us of many marvels, of changes that have taken place in the course of the Sun, of Saturn's reign, and of a thousand other matters that remained scattered about in human memory; but *one never hears anything of the EVIL which has produced those revolutions, nor of the evil which directly followed them*. Yet... that Evil is the principle one has to talk about, to be able to treat of royalty and the origin of power...."

That *evil* Plato seems to see in the sameness or consubstantiality of the natures of the rulers and the ruled, for he says that long before man built his cities, in the golden age, there was naught but happiness on earth, for there were no needs. Why? Because Saturn, knowing that man could not rule man, without injustice filling forthwith the universe through his whims and vanity, would not allow any mortal to obtain power over his fellow creatures. To do this the god used the same means we use ourselves with regard to our flocks. We do not place a bullock or a ram over our bullocks and rams, but give them a leader, a shepherd, *i.e., a being of a species quite different from their own and of a superior nature*. It is just what Saturn did. He loved mankind and placed to rule over it no mortal King or prince but — "Spirits and genii (δαίμονες) of a divine nature more excellent than that of man."

It was god, the Logos (the synthesis of the Host) who thus presiding over the genii, became the first shepherd and leader of men. [*The Secret Doctrine* explains and expounds that which Plato says, for it teaches that those “inventors” were gods and demigods (Devas and Rishis) who had become — some deliberately, some forced to by Karma — incarnated in man.] When the world had ceased to be so governed and the gods retired, “ferocious beasts devoured a portion of mankind.” “Left to their own resources and industry, inventors then appeared among them successively and discovered fire, wheat, wine; and public gratitude deified them.” (*De Legibus*, I, iv; in *Crit.* and in *Politic.*)

And mankind was right, as fire by friction was the first mystery of nature, the first and chief property of matter that was revealed to man.

“*Fruits and grain, unknown to Earth to that day, were brought by the ‘Lords of Wisdom’ for the benefit of those they ruled — from other lokas (spheres)...*” say the Commentaries. Now: “The earliest inventions [?] of mankind are the most wonderful that the race has ever made.... The *first use of fire*, and the discovery of the methods by which it can be kindled; the domestication of animals; and, above all, *the processes by which the various cereals were first developed* out of some wild grasses [?] these are all *discoveries with which, in ingenuity and in importance, no subsequent discoveries may compare*. They are all unknown to history — all lost in the light of an EFFULGENT DAWN.” — *Unity of Nature*, Argyll.

(*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, pp. 372-373)

THE LIFE OF A HUMAN AND THE LIFE OF THE RACE ANALOGOUS

We have quoted extensively as above mainly for two reasons. First, we hold this phase of the subject to be of such far-reaching importance as to demand at least the proportionate attention we have given to it in treating of the present subject; and second, because of the general lack of knowledge on the subject, as well as the absence of any satisfactory explanation of human history and the origins of civilization.

Yet in spite of the aid given to man by his divine Instructors and their guidance and protection during the childhood of the race, evil crept in and gradually humanity at large refused to listen to their helpers and forgot the teachings. There exists an analogy between the life of a man and that of the race which will enable us to understand the latter much more completely. Just as a child in its earliest years requires the constant care and watchfulness of parents, guardians, and instructors, but growing older is left to rely more and more upon himself, his progress being dependent more and more upon self-effort, yet never without help if he will reach out his hand to grasp it; so humanity in its infancy had the constant care of the creators, builders, divine instructors and guides, known under many names; and so too after a time, after the keynote of truth had been sounded and in order that humanity might learn to stand on its own feet, these instructors and guides withdrew, leaving however “their descendants and

pupils” and themselves coming again as “Avatâras” at great cyclic periods. And so we read of the Adept-Kings of Egypt and other countries, and as said above, of the reign of the gods, then of the demi-gods and Heroes, until indeed it seemed that “the mighty art was lost” and humanity had quite forgotten. The golden age gave place to the silver, followed by the bronze and last by the iron age in which we still are.

But humanity has never been forgotten by its Elder Brothers, its divine Instructors, and looking back into the very night of time one sees a mighty procession of torch-bearers lighting the pathway, speaking words of cheer, passing on the teachings, proclaiming the same message from age to age.

We cannot here do more than name a few of the Great Teachers: Krishna, Gautama the Buddha, Jesus the Christ, Zoroaster, Lao Tzu, Hermes, Quetzalcoatl, Apollonius of Tyana, Pythagoras, Solon, Aeschylus, Plato, Paracelsus, Ammonius Saccas, Patañjali, Śankarâchârya, King Asoka, and a host of others, some known, but the great majority unknown to the world today.

DISCIPLES AND DISCIPLESHIP

Coming down to our own times and considering now more particularly the other phase of our subject, discipleship and disciples, the distinction should be first pointed out between the use of these terms as ordinarily employed, and their deeper significance. Speaking generally, a disciple is one who learns, one who is a follower of a teacher, method, or system. Today we do not employ the term disciple so frequently, but in ordinary usage it has much the same meaning as pupil, scholar, student. It has this shade of meaning, however, which distinguishes it, that it often conveys more of the idea of adherence to and acceptance of the teachings — which the other terms do not, at least so fully.

In the etymological sense of a learner, we are all disciples; every child who attends school, every student at the Universities, every apprentice to a trade or profession, is a disciple. So too, everyone as he goes through life, to the extent that he keeps his mind open to learn by study, experience, observation, is a disciple in the great school of life. But by many the term is more particularly applied to one in respect to his faith or belief, and this possibly so because of the use of the actual word in the current translation of the books known as the New Testament. And it is doubtless because it is so used that there is attached to it in the general public mind a deeper significance. It is in fact the complement of the term Teacher, if we use the latter in its higher sense as of the great truths of life.

If we take the many passages in the New Testament where the term Disciple is employed we shall see that in general its significance is not simply that of a follower and adherent in an intellectual sense, but in an

actual living sense of embodying the precepts of the Teacher in everyday life, and in this deeper sense it is that we propose to discuss it here. In this connection it will be of value to refer to some of the passages in which disciples are mentioned:

And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? And he answered and said unto them, Unto you [as disciples] it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. (Matthew, xiii. 10, 11)

Jesus therefore said to those Jews which had believed him, If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. (John, viii. 31, 32)

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man would come after me [*i.e.*, if any man would be my disciple] let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? (Matthew, xvi. 24, *et seq.*)

And that remarkable and, usually, not understood, saying of Jesus:

And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that doth not take his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me. (Matthew, x, 36 *et seq.*)

RESPONSIBILITIES OF DISCIPLESHIP

These few quotations are sufficient to show the responsibility that was laid upon the disciples of Jesus through their discipleship. Nowadays, if any professing Christian were asked if he were a disciple of Christ, his answer would doubtless be in the affirmative, and in view of their profession, have we not a right to expect to find an attempt at the fulfilment of the responsibilities of discipleship, and more especially on the part of "ordained" ministers of the Gospel — professed teachers, not disciples merely — that they should be expounders of the Christ message not only by word of mouth but by the example of their lives? But to how many, if Jesus were here today, would he say as he said of the religious teachers of his own day:

This people honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men.... Let them alone; they are blind guides. And if the blind guide the blind, both shall fall into a pit. And Peter answered and said unto him,

Declare unto us the parable. And he said, Are ye also even yet without understanding? (Matthew, xv, 8 *et seq.*)

Does not this give a clue to the real meaning of discipleship? a meaning that has come down from far antiquity, and which Jesus, following in the footsteps of all the World-Teachers, sought to impress upon his followers. With what measure of success, alas, the Gospels record; for in his hour of trial, “they all forsook him and fled” — all save one who, remaining behind, “denied with oaths and curses, saying, I know not the man.” Yet upon this rock, this Peter — denier of his Master — the greatest religious organization in Christendom claims to have been founded. Had it not been for Paul, himself an Initiate, who accepted the teachings of the Christos and became the chief instrument in the spreading of them, the history of Christendom might have been very different. As it was, the same Peter, denier of his Master, attempted a quarrel with Paul, and from that day to this, dissensions have gone on among the professing disciples of Christ, until today at the beginning of the 20th century, after nineteen hundred years of “Christianity,” we find it split up into over three hundred different and conflicting sects, and the “civilized” Western world, in danger of being engulfed by materialism, animalism, and agnostic unbelief.

To realize how little the spirit of true discipleship has prevailed and how little has availed the teaching and injunctions of Jesus, we will not say among the millions of professing Christians, but among their recognized religious *teachers* and *guides*, it is sufficient to refer to history which records that they have not only failed in their influence over the masses to lead them to a higher and nobler life, but that again and again they have actually incited them to strife and fomented religious wars. Truly they have verified the saying of Jesus, “I came not to bring peace in the earth but a sword.” And all this in spite of the individual lives of the long line of martyrs, saints, heroes, everyday people, verily among the salt of the earth, who have truly been disciples of the Christos.

If the world has, as a whole, progressed spiritually during the past one thousand years or more, who can say it has not been due, not to the professing teachers of Christianity, but to some inherent power working unseen in the hearts of the people, to the stirrings of their own inner but unrecognized Divinity, and to those, few or many as the case may be, who, unheralded and in secret, have remained true disciples of the unbroken line of Teachers, handing on the truths of life to others and again to others down the ages? As examples of such were and are the true Rosicrucians — not those who proclaim themselves as such, or whose secrets certain writers profess to reveal, but as William Q. Judge says:

servants of the great Teachers, who are working for the {human} race in their various ways and places, unknown and unheralded. The imitators may be well-meaning and sincere, but they are only copies or imitations. The real “Rosicrucian” does not tell about it.

The book-learned Rosicrucianism

being merely theoretical — and not complete — leads not to the real fountain nor to practical realization.

THE DISCIPLE’S FIRST DUTIES

Another phase of discipleship may be seen in the relation that existed between some of the great painters of medieval times and their pupils, and in lesser degree in the apprenticeship to the different guilds. It is related that if one wished to become a pupil of one of the great painters, aside from evidence of talent which it is supposed he would be required to show, he had to prove his worthiness in other ways before receiving any direct instruction. He was given various duties in the studio, such as the grinding of colors, cleaning of brushes, running errands and other little menial services; and although perhaps for months not otherwise noticed by his master, yet he had the privilege of watching him at his work. This was his first lesson, and it rested with him to show whether he profited by it or not — to show whether there was the making of an artist in him, whether he had the enthusiasm and the real love of art to carry him beyond what the vulgar or the unthinking might call drudgery to the accomplishment of his hopes. He had to show himself proficient in service, and then it rested with him to show his ability by himself working at his art at times when not engaged in his duties. Happy and fortunate then if he received a criticism from his master and perhaps a suggestion or other instruction.

It is not our purpose to discuss the merits or demerits of this method, but merely to call attention to one phase of discipleship which it illustrates. *To a disciple no service is counted as drudgery; indeed if it were so considered, that would to that extent constitute failure to stand one of the first tests.*

In one of the greatest secret Orders of modern times, which though apparently asleep and apathetic to the deeper purposes and significance of its “work” and symbolism, still has potentially a vast power, another phase of discipleship is shown. On being admitted into this Order the two great lessons which are impressed upon the apprentice as the object of his entrance into the Order, are self-conquest and the building of character. Here again in the very name of this first step, that of “apprentice,” the great lesson of service and willing obedience is inculcated. If it were insisted that before he were permitted to take the next step the apprentice become

proficient in his first tasks, *i.e.*, in learning and applying these preliminary lessons to his life and conduct, learning obedience and the meaning of service, acquiring self-control, once more this ancient Order might become an active factor in the upbuilding of the world's inner life. But nowadays, unfortunately, there appears to be lacking both the patience and the thoroughness to do this, and the main object with many of the Lodges of the Order appears to be to enlarge their membership as much as possible, and to confer as many degrees as possible, the main mark of proficiency in preceding degrees being mainly that of memory, and to have the reputation of good-brotherhood and sociability — seemingly forgetful, if not ignorant, of the purposes for which the Order was founded.

WHERE ARE THE DISCIPLES OF TODAY?

We have already spoken of the present time as a turning-point in human progress, and of the juncture of the small and great cycles when the keynote of Truth is sounded for the new age. We have stated too that at times of crisis in the world's spiritual life there comes again one of the Great Teachers and Helpers. But what can the Teacher do if there are not those ready to carry his message out to others? What can the General do without the army and, between himself and the rank and file of the army, those who can be entrusted with duties of varying responsibility? The words of the Nazarene may well be repeated today:

The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few. Pray ye therefore the lord of the harvest, that he send forth laborers into his harvest.

The need for an awakening is urgently at hand; on all sides the enemies of man's soul and true human progress are stirring themselves as though for a life and death struggle, the outcome of which will determine the freedom or slavery of humanity throughout the cycle. And one of the gravest questions which the thinking world has to face is that of Discipleship. Where are the disciples of today?

Teachers have never been lacking, though unknown to the mass of the people; but their work can avail but little unless the disciples are ready, indeed we may say unless there are disciples first of all. So today neither the Teacher nor the teaching is lacking; are the disciples ready? are there those who are ready and willing to take up the duties of discipleship — willing to serve in the great Cause of Humanity, willing to become apprentices in the great school of life?

FALSE TEACHERS

One of the signs of the crisis in moral and spiritual life with which humanity is now face to face is to be seen (1) in the degradation which the noblest of all callings, that of Teacher, has suffered from those who especially during the past few decades have used it for their own ends and for the deluding of the people; and (2) in a lack of appreciation of the meaning of discipleship, and in the consequent lack of true disciples. Today the world is teeming with false teachers, crying out, Lo here is Christ! or lo there! lo here is knowledge and the secret of power, here is success! crying out, advertising themselves as teachers, willing to sell their “knowledge” for a price, offering to confer power on their disciples and to teach them the secret of success, for a fee or at the price of a book, or with the promise of power.

Some of these self-advertised teachers are so subtle in their appeals, so plausible in their statements and avowedly so disinterested in *your* welfare, that unless indeed there is discrimination and true disinterestedness in your heart, a seeking for the truth and the light for the sake of your suffering fellows — the danger of being led astray and becoming a victim is great, so tempting is the lure of obtaining something for nothing, or at least for so very little, so tempting is the lure of gaining knowledge that, it is said, will give a man power over his fellows, and so subtly entrenched is selfishness and the desire for self-benefit in the hearts of all.

Perchance it may be asked why is reference made to these false teachers and false systems, and it will be well to state the reason. These false systems are the very antithesis of the true, and those back of them, advertising them, professing to be teachers, seek followers, that is, disciples. We may at all times learn much from the study of contrasts, and, in our search for Wisdom, though the positive direction, following which we may enter on the Path, is truly of greatest importance and should come first, fortunate is he who is forewarned regarding the pitfalls and the false signposts that he must inevitably meet.

H. P. BLAVATSKY’S WARNING

One of the greatest enticements offered by false teachers is the possession of power, the development of inner senses; something is offered to the disciple which will immediately or with very little effort — so it is said or implied — place him above his fellows; he is to be taught Occultism or Yoga; to have degrees conferred upon him and, as above said, usually he may obtain all this for a fee.

Today psychism is in the air; on all sides we hear of the development of abnormal powers. Beginning with a few isolated instances some fifty or more years ago and increasing with every decade, the last ten years have

seen an enormous increase in the number of those whose psychic senses are to some degree developed. Often the degree of development is but very slight, and more often than not the exercise of these inner senses and powers is under little or no control of those who unfortunately possess them. I say unfortunately, for it is a misfortune if with their possession there is not also purity of life, and the knowledge and the power to control and to use them rightly.

The idea is held by many and fostered by false teachers, that these powers are spiritual. *No greater mistake could be made. It is one of the baits held out to catch the unwary.* But true spirituality does not lie that way. How different was the teaching of H. P. Blavatsky, and of her successors, William Q. Judge and Katherine Tingley. Madame Blavatsky wrote in 1888:

It must be remembered that the (Theosophical) Society was not founded as a nursery for forcing a supply of occultists — as a factory for the manufacture of adepts. It was intended to stem the current of materialism.... It has to guide the spiritual awakening that has now begun and not to pander to psychic cravings, which are but another form of materialism.

“Light and darkness are the world’s eternal ways,” says the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*, and these two ways lie ever before man. He has his choice and may take either one. *And even after, as a disciple, he has chosen which of these he will follow, again and again must he decide whether he will continue in the path or forsake it.*

Since the earliest ages there have been found those who for power or gain or from ambition have sought to keep their fellows enslaved.

The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so. (Jeremiah v, 31)

And there have always been those

Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits.
(Isaiah xxx, 10)

False teachers and false disciples, how many of both are there today!

All these are lures for the one awaking to the possibilities of discipleship. Shall he accept the offer of power and knowledge at the seeming cost of so little effort? Shall he take the fruit that looks so tempting, feeding his vanity, his ambition, that will enable him to play on the weaknesses of his fellows? But what of the ultimate cost? What of the ultimate slavery to the dark powers of his lower nature? In other words, shall he seek for power for himself and become enslaved or shall he follow

the path of self-conquest and service “that leads to the heart of the universe,” and thereby gain freedom and power to bless and serve humanity?

EACH ONE IS RESPONSIBLE

You yourself, dear reader, may feel secure in the knowledge you possess, against any allurements held out by false teachers, but it is not to you only that these words are addressed. Look around you, look in the daily papers, in the magazines, in books; look at some of the reputed savants of today, our scientific men, dealing in necromancy, in the worship and evocation of the dead; some of them discussing, nay advocating and practicing, *the benumbing and killing of man's free-will, whereby alone — no matter how low he may have fallen — he can be saved, and by means of hypnotism, the interposition of another's dominating will, killing the very soul of man, making of him instead an automaton.* Or read the advertisements of so-called institutes and colleges professing to have some secret to impart and, strange to say, so great is their solicitude for their prospective disciples and for the “welfare of humanity,” that they not only *profess* to offer this secret free, but go to great expense to notify the public by means of long advertisements.

“Am I my brother's keeper?” All this may be no lure for you, but it may be for a weaker brother or sister; and do you never think of setting the weight of your thought and influence against the psychological lure of these things? Was ever anything gained without sacrifice, ever anything given for no price paid? Is it in Nature's law that it should be so? Ah! you remember that beautiful passage in Isaiah, that appeal of the prophet to his people:

Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not?

And it is true that spiritual truths can never be bought for money, nor will ever any such price be accepted for them; but for all that, paradoxical as it may seem, the price must be paid — the sacrifice must be made — the sacrifice of the lower to the higher; and the price, that of self-conquest, self-purification.

But what do we see, out in the world today? A grievous and sad thing: the name of the spirit and so-called spiritual things, and the name of the Christ, prostituted for money; and in the name of the Christ — that Christ who said, “Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” — in his name a denial is made of the world's pain and

sorrow, that it does not exist; and all over the land and in many countries the people flock to the churches where this lie is taught, and where escape from non-existent pain is held to be the chief good, and physical well-being the highest ideal. And the teachers and readers and healers wax fat and enjoy the flesh-pots of Egypt, for many are their disciples.

Is there no test, no sign, you ask, by which the false teacher may be recognized? Yes, there are several, and one may be fittingly mentioned here. In the words of Jesus, “The hireling careth not for the sheep.” Yet did not Jesus say, “The laborer is worthy of his hire”? Yes, but do not forget that he clearly defined what he meant by “hire.” Read the context:

Carry no purse, no wallet, no shoes... and in that same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the laborer is worthy of his hire. (Luke x, 4 *et seq.*)

Not a word about receiving money, or a stipend; and though Jesus said, “and heal the sick that are therein” (in the city) not a word did he say about charging or receiving payment for the same. But on the contrary, if we turn to Micah iii. 10, 11, we read:

They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity. The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us? none evil can come upon us.

Surely no clearer words are needed on this point and surely they ought to be conclusive to anyone who accepts the Bible as the Word of God and as the guide of spiritual life. But this teaching, this test both of teachers and disciples, is far more ancient than any biblical records, and belongs to the remotest antiquity; no question of money or payment or personal reward or recompense in any form was ever permitted to enter into the relation between teacher and disciple. As H. P. Blavatsky once said, when offered money for her teachings: “I did not so receive it, and I will not so impart it.”

A GREAT TEACHER

But there are others who claim to be teachers, who even publicly proclaim themselves as Initiates, whose feet have been within the outer portals and almost on the threshold of the Sacred Temple of Divine Wisdom, who have been privileged — ah! how great the privilege — in being permitted the opportunity of enrolling themselves as disciples of Theosophy and of that Great Teacher of this modern age, H. P. Blavatsky, but who, some for one cause, some for another, whether ambition,

unwillingness to face and conquer themselves, or to accept the discipline of discipleship, to fulfil the service of apprenticeship, or for some other failing, cut themselves off from the heart of the Movement founded by her.

A TRUE DISCIPLE

In a letter sent by her to the Second American Convention, held at Chicago, April 1888, H. P. Blavatsky wrote:

To William Q. Judge, General Secretary of the American Section of the Theosophical Society:

My dearest Brother and Co-Founder of the Theosophical Society: In addressing to you this letter, which I request you to read to the Convention summoned for April 22nd, I must first present my hearty congratulations and most cordial good wishes to the Society, and to yourself — the heart and soul of that body in America. We were several to call it to life in 1875. Since then you have remained alone to preserve that life through good and evil report. It is to you chiefly, if not entirely, that the Theosophical Society owes its existence in 1888. Let me thank you for it, for the first, and perhaps for the last time publicly and from the bottom of my heart, which beats only for the cause you represent so well and serve so faithfully. I ask you also to remember that on this important occasion my voice is but the feeble echo of other more sacred voices, and the transmitter of the approval of Those whose presence is alive in more than one true Theosophical heart, and lives, as I know, preeminently in yours.

Further, H. P. Blavatsky, in December of the same year, wrote the following:

As Head of the Esoteric Section of the Theosophical Society, I hereby declare that William Q. Judge of New York, U.S.A., in virtue of his character of a chela (disciple) of thirteen years' standing and of the trust and confidence reposed in him, is my only representative for said Section in America, and he is the sole channel through whom will be sent and received all communications between the members of the said Section and myself, and to him full faith, confidence; and credit in that regard are to be given.

And as if in prophetic anticipation of the outrageous attack upon him and the bitter onslaughts of ambition against his position so faithfully held by him, H. P. Blavatsky, on October 23, 1889, wrote:

The Esoteric Section and its life in the U.S.A. depend upon W.Q.J. remaining its agent and what he is now. The day W.Q.J. resigns, H.P.B. will be virtually dead for the Americans.

In the life of William Q. Judge we have an example of a true Disciple and of a true Teacher. It is perhaps fitting here to make a brief reference to the relation which H. P. Blavatsky held to the Theosophical Society, for among those who accepted teaching at her hands, and to whom she gave the opportunity of becoming disciples, there were some who, as previously said, sought to belittle her and her position after she had passed away, who sought to make it appear that she had only a secondary place in the foundation of the Society. Let any student ask himself, Through whom were the teachings known as Theosophy made known to the world? Who was the central figure around whom gathered those who assisted in the formation of the Theosophical Society in New York in 1875? Madame Blavatsky held no outer official position except that of Corresponding Secretary. She did not ask nor need to be regarded as a figurehead; she did not demand nor require public recognition; but it is the duty as well as the privilege of all her faithful disciples to accord to her that recognition which is her due, and so to proclaim her and her work to the world. For although she did not hold any outer official position except as just stated, she nevertheless held the highest authority, the only real authority, which comes of wisdom and power, the authority of Teacher and Leader, the real head, heart, and inspiration of the whole Theosophical Movement. It was through her that the teachings of Theosophy were given to the world, and without her the Theosophical Movement could not have been. She was also the founder of the Esoteric Section, and Teacher and Head, so recognized by all her students, members of that section.

Now this Section was founded by H. P. Blavatsky on the suggestion and at the request of William Q. Judge, and the latter at the request of his Teacher, H. P. Blavatsky, wrote out the rules which were approved without change by H. P. Blavatsky. We have seen from her own words in what manner she regarded him, "her only Friend," as she afterwards wrote to him, and he was the only one of all her disciples of whom she did not require a pledge in the Esoteric Section, for as she herself said, he had years before been pledged and accepted as a disciple of Those who were her own Teachers; but of all others she required a pledge.

We do not regard H. P. Blavatsky as infallible and she herself would have been the first to repudiate any such view regarding herself; but to express it in the mildest terms, it were indeed arrogant presumption on the part of one of her disciples to accuse H. P. Blavatsky of having been mistaken in her estimate of William Q. Judge; yet this is what a certain Englishwoman, Mrs. Annie Besant, the chief persecutor of William Q. Judge, has presumed to do; and as if to palliate what she so outrageously accused him of doing, she makes the same baseless and utterly false charge against her own Teacher.

“MANY ARE CALLED, BUT FEW ARE CHOSEN”

How true it is that in Discipleship, “many are called” — offer themselves, we may say — “but few are chosen”; and not one of those who have accepted H. P. Blavatsky as their Teacher and been privileged to enroll themselves as her disciples can rightfully plead ignorance of the meaning of the first steps in discipleship and its preliminary responsibilities. And the same is true of those who have enrolled themselves under William Q. Judge and Katherine Tingley. The choice as a disciple was made with open eyes, and full responsibility rests on those who have proved themselves unfaithful.

For themselves as individuals we would have nothing to say and naught but pity. Some few there have been who finding themselves unable to fulfil the duties of discipleship have drifted back into the maelstrom of the world’s life; to these we do not refer; but in defense of the principles and the sacred name of Theosophy we cannot pass by those who appear before the public misusing the names of Theosophy and the Theosophical Society, calling themselves not disciples merely, but professing to be Teachers, “Initiates,” “Occultists,” and by their misrepresentations causing confusion in the public mind. And no one today who is interested in Theosophy can put these things aside or say that these things do not concern him. The disciple of Theosophy cannot say, “I will accept the teaching and not care through whom I receive it, all I care for is the Truth” — for knowledge of the Truth demands recognition where recognition is due; it demands and includes discrimination and insight into human character.

For while it is true that one may hear words of wisdom from the lips of a fool, or from one who is unfaithful, yet to accept all such a one may say on the strength of one wise statement that may have appealed to us or helped us to solve a problem, would be of itself folly and unwisdom. No, when as disciples we seek for truth, we must have regard to the channel through whom that truth has come. We cannot accept Theosophy and at the same time be indifferent to or reject H. P. Blavatsky through whom Theosophy in these days has been given again to the world; we cannot reject her words in regard to William Q. Judge; nor can we reject her successors, William Q. Judge and Katherine Tingley, who by their lives, their teaching and example have led us still farther along the same pathway. Verily there is a great responsibility and trust laid upon the disciples of Theosophy in this respect, and furthermore a responsibility to the public to warn them against false teachers.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A DISCIPLE?

The distinction must be drawn between a mere student and a disciple. The motives that prompt one to take up a study of Theosophy, just as of any other subject, may be many and various. It may be curiosity, desire to know for the sake of knowing from a mere intellectual standpoint; it may be a selfish or ambitious motive; or it may be a search for the truth and to help others. If the last named, then indeed the student has taken, perhaps unconsciously to himself, the first step in true discipleship, and towards a deeper knowledge of life and its mysteries than can ever be approached from a mere intellectual standpoint. This is indeed the supreme test, for what the Christ said, “Whoso will do the will of the Father [the Divine Higher Self in every man] shall know of the doctrine,” is held in Theosophy to be a statement of absolute fact.

Possession of knowledge does not imply discipleship. William Q. Judge has said:

It is one thing to have the knowledge which disciples have; it is quite another thing to be a disciple. The possession of the former does not imply the latter.

To be a disciple means not merely knowledge, and not knowledge primarily, though that is indispensable, but a living of the life in conformity with that knowledge, and with the highest promptings of the heart and, as one comes to know them, with the ideals which the teachings make known.

In a little book, *The Voice of the Silence* — “Chosen Fragments from the ‘Book of the Golden Precepts,’ for the daily use of Disciples,” — translated and annotated by H. P. Blavatsky, the first and second steps are stated as follows {p. 33}:

To live to benefit mankind is the first step. To practice the six glorious virtues {Paramitas} is the second.

And in the preliminary instructions which she gave to those who sought to take upon themselves the duties and responsibilities of discipleship, she quoted the words of her own Teacher as follows:

Behold the truth before you: a clean life, an open mind, a pure heart, an eager intellect, an unveiled spiritual perception, a brotherliness for one’s co-disciple, a readiness to give and receive advice and instruction, a loyal sense of duty to the Teacher, a willing obedience to the behests of TRUTH, once we have placed our confidence in and believe that Teacher to be in possession of it; a courageous endurance of personal injustice, a brave declaration of principles, a valiant defense of those who are unjustly attack-

ed, and a constant eye to the ideal of human progression and perfection which the secret science (Gupta-Vidyâ) depicts — these are the golden stairs up the steps of which the learner may climb to the Temple of Divine Wisdom.

THE RELATION BETWEEN TEACHER AND DISCIPLE

The relation between Teacher and disciple in the days of antiquity was most sacred — the most sacred of all ties. In one of the most ancient writings it is said:

To the earnest Disciple his Teacher takes the place of Father and Mother. For whereas they give him his body and its faculties, its life and casual form, the Teacher shows him how to develop the inner faculties for the acquisition of the Eternal Wisdom.

It should be clearly understood that these inner faculties do not mean psychic powers, but faculties of heart and mind that unfold as the true disciple's life is lived. And the Nazarene Initiate said:

Except ye be born again, ye cannot be my disciple.... Except ye become as little children ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven.

Perfect trust and confidence in the Teacher are as necessary on the part of the disciple as on the part of the child for his parents. We know the latter should exist and does exist in homes filled with the sunshine of pure affection, and where parents realize the sacredness of their responsibility and whose lives are lived on the highest lines. And such feelings of trust and confidence on the part of the earnest disciple for his Teacher are as natural as those of the child for his father and mother — they are the expression of the reality of the tie that binds Teacher and disciple together.

GREAT SEATS OF LEARNING

No treatment, however brief, of so important a subject would be complete, unless mention were made of the great centers of learning which from the remotest times have existed here and there in the world. It is not intended to speak now of the great Universities that have sprung up in historical times, such as those of Paris, Oxford, Cambridge, Heidelberg, Vienna, and the more modern ones in Europe and America, all of which play so important a part in the intellectual life of the people. But there were others of greater antiquity which had more far-reaching effect because of the greater knowledge possessed of life and its purposes. Some of these belong partly to the historical period, but of others we have only tradition. They were the schools of the Mysteries — Eleusis in Greece, and the

schools in Egypt, in India, Persia, China, Ireland, and other ancient countries.

It will be remembered that Jesus *went to Egypt*, and Solon also and others of the wisest of the Greeks; Pythagoras is said to have journeyed to India, Aeschylus and Plato were Initiates of the Mysteries of Eleusis. In these and other lands were centers of sacred learning, schools of the Mysteries, of Magic [Regarding this word *magic*, H. P. Blavatsky says the following: “Magic, *Magia*, means, in its spiritual, secret sense, the ‘Great Life,’ or divine life *in spirit*. The root is *magh*, as seen in the Sanskrit word *mahat*, Zend *mas*, Greek *meas*, and Latin *magnus*, all signifying ‘great.’” The study of Magic, therefore, in its true sense is the study of the great spiritual life of the Universe and man; for the latter is the key to the former. The ancient schools of Magic were schools of spiritual instruction and had naught to do with what today are known as magical or “occult” arts. See *Studies in Occultism*, No. 1, “Occultism versus the Occult Arts,” by H. P. Blavatsky. “That which was then termed Magic,” she further says, “we now call *Theosophia*, or *Divine Wisdom, Power, and Knowledge*.”] in its true sense of “hidden Wisdom.” Some of these “schools,” as for instance, Eleusis, are known to modern “scholars” only in the days of their profanation and degradation, yet the greatest of the ancients speak with reverence of the purity of the ancient wisdom there imparted.

Has Earth then its sacred spots? Ancient tradition says so, and modern Theosophy declares it to be true, and that one day they will be known and resorted to again.

THE SCHOOL OF ANTIQUITY AT POINT LOMA

{Although quite bourgeoning in their time, given the cyclic nature of things, none of the following schools nor ‘Lomaland’ still exist today. The THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY *does* still exist, as it has *since the beginning of Humanity*, in various forms throughout the world. Today it may be found through its website: theosociety.org.}

One such sacred spot is Lomaland, Point Loma, in sunny California, on the shores of the vast Pacific Ocean, and tradition has it that untold ages ago on its rocky crest were Temples and schools. Years ago H. P. Blavatsky declared that a Great Seat of Learning would be founded in the West, and Katherine Tingley in her childhood foresaw the white-domed City of Learning, and now as successor to H. P. Blavatsky and William Q. Judge has made it an actual fact. For here on Point Loma, one of the oldest lands above the ocean, Katherine Tingley has established “The School of Antiquity” which although American in center, is international in character, and is, to quote her own words:

a temple of living light, lighting up the dark places of the earth.

Through this School and its branches the children of the race will be taught the laws of physical life, and the laws of physical, moral, and mental health and spiritual unfoldment. They will learn to live in harmony with nature. They will become compassionate lovers of all that breathes; they will

grow strong in an understanding of themselves, and as they gain strength they will learn to use it for the good of the whole world.

And as branches of this great School there have been established by Katherine Tingley the Râja Yoga College and the Râja Yoga University of Point Loma, also other Râja Yoga Colleges in Cuba, England, Sweden, and other countries. In these are taught the first steps of the true knowledge of life. Truly are the Râja Yoga pupils apprentices in the Science of Life, learning the first lessons of discipleship; not merely intellectual lessons, but lessons in right living, knowledge of human nature, human motives and character — the perfect balance of all the faculties, physical, mental, moral, and spiritual. They are young disciples of Râja Yoga, apprentices in the Royal Science, the Kingly Union.

8

The Doctrine of Cycles

A Student

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CYCLIC LAW UNIVERSAL

Whatever attention men of science may have given to the action of cyclic law in some realms of Nature, it is certain that in recent times little notice has been taken of it by most Western peoples. We are doubtless more or less conscious of the reign of law in terrestrial as in sidereal affairs. "History repeats itself" is a trite saying, often applied to the petty as well as to the larger events of life. But we have surely not gained more than a faint notion of the universality of this law — in everything from tiniest atoms to circling universes; in living forces; in our emotions, aspirations, intelligence; in individual and racial consciousness: all the panorama of life, whether visible or invisible. Nor do we seem to have learned so to use, or rather to respect, cyclic laws as to redeem or free from the action of lower forces — or, putting it more exactly, so to use inner cyclic laws as to free or transmute outer ones, and thus to open the path of a true and boundless freedom within the regions of equally true and illimitable law.

The doctrine of cycles, one of the teachings met with in the study of Theosophy, is no merely metaphysical fancy, but will be found to be something which can be not only verified by study and observation, but seized upon and applied practically in everyday life; and this even without very much effort, yet producing results beneficent, sane, and far-reaching.

We shall first glance at some manifestations of cyclic law in the world about us. In the effort to do so, we shall be inevitably confronted with some apparent "mysteries," which will probably suggest the action of definite laws belonging to inner causal realms. We may be led to perceive a fact which the latest scientific thought has already formulated regarding the phenomenal world — namely, that there are very few laws known to science or philosophy behind which there may not be higher laws capable of either "upsetting" "reversing" or at least modifying effects hitherto considered inevitable under given circumstances. In short, our knowledge of Nature's laws being relative and limited, we shall perhaps realize that the barriers of the known continually recede; and thus we may be encouraged fearlessly yet reverently to press onward. We shall never rise above the domain of Law, but we may reach places where the picture of formerly imagined laws — *e.g.* the "law of universal gravitation" — will be seen to be nothing more than a necessary though passing stage in the evolution of human intelligence, itself under cyclic laws of development.

It need hardly be said that every thought of force or value in this as in the other Manuals of this series is taken mainly from the teachings or writings of H. P. Blavatsky, William Q. Judge, and Katherine Tingley, the three Leaders of the Theosophical Movement in this era; or is at least derived from these teachings, to which all earnest students of life should refer for fuller information and guidance — because in these teachings will

be found epitomized much more of those of the Ancient Wisdom-Religion than can readily be found in its offshoots.

In the domains of biology and pathology the existence of cyclic law has not escaped attention. The following passage is from the *Medical Review*, July, 1844:

There is a harmony of numbers in all nature; in the force of gravity, in the planetary movements, in the laws of heat, light, electricity and chemical affinity, in the forms of animals and plants, in the perception of the mind. The direction, indeed, of modern natural and physical science, is towards a generalization which shall express the fundamental laws of all, by one simple numerical ratio. We would refer to Professor Whewell's *Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences*, and to Mr. Hay's researches into the laws of harmonious color and form. From these it appears that *the number seven* is distinguished in the laws regulating the harmonious perception of forms, colors and sounds, and probably of taste also, if we could analyze our sensations of this kind.

So much so, indeed, that more than one physician has stood aghast at the persistent *septenary* return of the cycles in the rise and fall of various complaints, and naturalists have felt themselves at an utter loss to explain this law. As H. Grattan Guinness, F.R.G.S., wrote:

The birth, growth, maturity, vital functions, decay and death, of insects, reptiles, fishes, birds, mammals, and even of man, are more or less controlled by a law of completion in *weeks*,

i.e., cycles of seven days. Dr. Laycock (*Lancet*, 1842-3), writing on the *Periodicity of Vital Phenomena*, records a "most remarkable illustration and confirmation of the law in insects," and having given a number of illustrations from natural history, the doctor adds:

The facts I have briefly glanced at are general facts, *and cannot happen day after day in so many millions of animals of every kind, from the Larva or Ovum of a Minute Insect up to Man, at different periods, from a mere chance or coincidence.* I think it impossible to come to any less general conclusion than this, that in *animals, changes occur every three and a half, seven, fourteen, twenty-one, or twenty-eight days, or at some definite number of weeks,*

or septenary cycles. Again, the same Dr. Laycock states that:

Whatever type the fever may exhibit, *there will be a paroxysm on the seventh day,... the fourteenth will be remarkable as a day of amendment...* [either cure or death taking place]. If the fourth [paroxysm] be severe, and the fifth less so, the disease will end at the seventh paroxysm, and... change

for the better... will be seen on the *fourteenth* day, namely, about three or four o'clock a.m., when the system is most languid.

Thus materialistic science — medicine, *the most materialistic of all* — applies occult laws to diseases, studies natural history with its help, recognizes its presence as a fact in Nature, and yet must needs pooh-pooh the same archaic knowledge when claimed as part of the truths known to the Ancient Wisdom-Religion! For if the mysterious Septenary Cycle is a law in Nature, *and it is one*, as proven; if it is found controlling the evolution and *involution* (or death) in the realms of entomology, ichthyology and ornithology, as in the kingdom of the animal, Mammalia and Man — why cannot it be present and acting in Kosmos, in general, in its natural (though occult) divisions of time, races, and *mental* development? And why, furthermore, should not the most ancient Adepts have studied and thoroughly mastered these cyclic laws under all their aspects? Indeed, Dr. Stratton states as a physiological and pathological fact, that

in health the human pulse is more frequent *in the morning than the evening for six days out of seven*; and that on the *seventh day it is slower*.

— (*Edin. Med. and Surg. Journal*, Jan. 1843)

Why, then, should not Theosophy show the same in cosmic and terrestrial life in the pulse of the planets and races? Dr. Laycock divides life by *three great septenary periods*: the first and last each stretching over twenty-one years, and the central period or prime of life lasting twenty-eight years, or four times seven. He subdivides the first into *seven distinct stages*, and the other two into three minor periods, and says that:

The fundamental unit of the greater periods is *one week of seven days, each day being twelve hours*; [and that] single and compound *multiples* of this unit, determine the length of these periods by the same ratio, as multiples of the unit of twelve hours determine the lesser periods. *This law binds all periodic vital phenomena together, and links the periods observed in the lowest annulose animals, with those of man himself, the highest of the vertebrata.*

If *Science* does this why should the latter scorn the occult information, namely, that (speaking Dr. Laycock's language) "*one week of the manvantaric (lunar) fortnight, of fourteen days (or seven Manus), that fortnight of twelve hours in a day representing the seven periods or seven races — is now passed*"? This language of science fits the esoteric doctrine admirably. We (humanity) *have* lived over "*a week of seven days, each day being twelve hours,*" since three and a half races are now gone forever, the fourth is submerged, and we are now in the Fifth Race. We shall return to glance at the meaning of this statement presently, and

meanwhile it is interesting to note that the Hebrew word for “week” is Seven; and any length of time divided in seven parts would have meant a “week” in their day — even 49,000,000 years, as it is seven times seven million. But their calculation is septiform throughout.

In these days of continual discovery of “new” sets of invisible rays and radioactivity of various kinds, it need surprise no one to learn that certain rays from the Moon exert potent influences upon both vegetable and animal life. And it will be noted that the four quarters of the Moon’s cycle are each a week in duration. Granting other influences from the sevenfold radiance of the Sun, and having regard to the daily, monthly and annual cycles of these two orbs, it is easy to see how vast a network of subtle invisible forces controlling vital phenomena are swayed by the movements of Sun, Earth and Moon alone. Nor would it be altogether fatuous or unscientific in these days, to imagine that the other bodies in the solar system also exert definite and cyclic influences in majestic correspondence with their apparent movements across the firmament.

Were we to admit all this as ascertained scientific fact, it is at least easy to perceive that we have in the solar system a perfect mechanism to serve as the foundation of much in the cyclic phenomena of all terrestrial life, something in fact which would illuminate many problems in biology, to go no further.

If we ventured a step further, however, remembering that all the elements, cognitions and forces that make us Man (or at least potential Man) are themselves invisible and imponderable — for what ordinary mortal ever saw our thoughts, aspirations, emotions or desires? — remembering also that the most subtle and elusive powers in Nature (*e.g.*, the hypothetical “ether,” with its myriad correlations, or “gravitation”) are being daily proved to possess dynamic and formative power in inverse ratio to their perceptibleness (the subtler the force, the more powerful its effects), we need not surely hesitate to conclude that all the formative intelligent and dynamic powers that lie back of these cycling orbs in space, or of the tiniest atom, do in fact reside in the invisible and imponderable side of Nature; while suns, moons, earth, plants and animals with their countless emanations, are but outer appearances or effects, and in fact are further away from *reality*, in exactly the inverse ratio of their apparent solidity.

Granting so much for the sake of argument, it would be evident that the true cyclic laws controlling these planetary movements and their corresponding influences on terrestrial life must reside wholly in the noumenal, invisible, causal realms, as conjectured by both Newton and Leibnitz; and a further obvious inference would be that there must be different regions of subtlety in these realms — some for instance, determining the spheres of huge aggregated living and conscious forces, others concerned with the myriads of minor elemental lives that build up

the outer vestures of each great center; just as there is a unit-consciousness controlling the action of the myriads of tiny lives in our body.

ROUNDS OF HUMAN EVOLUTION

The Ancient Teaching is that everything in the Universe, including the Universe itself, is under cyclic law. Analogy being one of the great keys in such studies, we should expect to find that just as we have day and night, summer and winter, waking and sleeping, birth and death; so worlds, suns, sun-systems, universes and the Kosmos, each has its days and nights, summers and winters, waking and sleeping states, “births” and “deaths.”

And so, in the noumenal realms, vast periods of time are necessary to build up the different strata of form and conscious life which finally converge upon the objective world as we know it. From a kind of idealized cosmic substance, which is both spirit and matter, cosmic will and intelligence spin a web reaching through the seven worlds or states from the purely spiritual side of Nature down to the objective and material. The details of the process are naturally too vast and complex to be comprehended, but so much of the later processes can at least be outlined as will enable a glimpse of the action of cyclic laws to be reached.

As a result of the sevenfold cosmic forces —Intelligence, Motion, Vital Electricity, Magnetism, Astral Radiation or Emanation, Heat and Light — each center of life, planetary or atomic, becomes finally endowed with a septenary nature, swept by and responding to these septenary forces under cyclic laws. Thus in the case of the Earth (which according to the Ancient Teaching is the “child” of the Moon) the real Earth exists on four distinct “planes” or realms of inner nature, the visible world being the lowest of these. The degree of materiality or density of this lower state itself changes throughout the aeons of time.

The teaching is that “countless millions” of years ago (approximate figures will be found in *The Secret Doctrine*), certain “rounds” of evolutionary forces passed through that sevenfold center in space which was later to become the Earth, and that we are now in the fourth of these “rounds.” Each “round” was concerned with the building up of elements and vehicles for various forms of mineral, vegetable and animal life under various hierarchies of cosmic powers, and at a certain stage suitable *vehicles* for the entrance of higher hierarchies, of a divine consciousness belonging to older cycles, were finally produced. This was the “Fall” of the angels, who sacrificed their divine natures in order that a consciously divine race would ultimately reign on Earth. These have to pass through their self-elected pilgrimage through matter, under the cyclic laws sweeping round the sevenfold world, of which the visible Earth, as already said, is the lowest and most material; and it is accomplished during each Round, through seven great Races already referred to, of which in this

Fourth Round “three and a half” are gone, the Fourth (the Atlantean epoch) submerged, and the Fifth is now in progress. Each Great Race is further divided into seven great sub-races, of which the present, the “Âryan,” is the fifth.

Moreover, each Round, Race, and great sub-race is, according to the laws of correspondence, concerned mainly with the involution and evolution of one or other of the principles which go to make up the future complete Man.

Thus we learn that the present great sub-race is destined primarily to develop within the limits of cyclic law, the Higher Intuitional Mind or Human Soul, as distinguished from that other aspect of Mind which is more connected with our emotions, desires, and passions. This evolution will only be fully attained during the next or Fifth Round, however.

The next point to remember is that these cyclic waves of super-terrestrial forces and intelligences, which vibrate through every atom of the very air we breathe, are themselves involved in greater and lesser subdivisions, so that in studying the question we can step down in thought from millions to thousands of years, thence to centuries, single years, days, hours, minutes and seconds, and still be tracing the action of the particular element, force, or intelligence under review. (Some scientific writers have recently been tracing analogies between the conditions of the infinitely small and the infinitely great.) As an instance of our independence, in such a study, of time as a bar to comprehension, a period of 100,000 years will be found to bear the same proportion to the duration of one Grand Era of objective conscious Kosmic Life, as one second of our time bears to a hundred years.

THE THREE, SEVEN AND TEN

While seven is the “number of the manifested” on all planes of being, three is always inevitably and philosophically the number of the overshadowing noumenal; hence we should expect to find cycles of both seven and ten and their multiples having an appreciable influence in our progress toward the goal of Fifth Race evolution.

Thus, for example, if a wave of spiritual aspiration lasts for thirty years, we should expect to see it followed by an attempt at realization lasting seventy years, to be succeeded by another wave of spiritual energy. If one of these initial waves happens to coincide with several similar ones of larger cyclic sweep, we should expect to see its force enormously intensified.

A careful study of Eastern Chronology — which embraces periods so vast as to be beyond the dreams of even the most prominent western geologists, and withal so accurate in astronomical calculation, as to put in the shade our vaunted modern knowledge of astronomy — combined with a

study of modern history, will be found to confirm the teachings of Theosophy: on the one hand that waves of such aspiration and effort have occurred every hundred years; and on the other, that several larger cycles recently culminated simultaneously with the appearance on Earth of the Teachers and Teachings of the Ancient Wisdom-Religion, in fuller public form than has been known for five thousand years. This of course must correspond to something in humanity capable of receiving and rising to these tremendous though subtle cyclic forces, for as Katherine Tingley said a few years ago: "a new energy has been liberated from the center of life."

This must affect all on Earth, whether at first conscious of it or not, and the teachings of Theosophy are therefore a necessity of the age we live in, a response to an inner demand for truth in the hearts and souls of men at this time, and for this century; and they are thus seen to be in harmony with cyclic law.

The cardinal features of these teachings have been outlined elsewhere.

CYCLIC IMPRESSIONS

We may turn our attention to the action of cyclic law in our own lives and read if we please something of the inherent or implied correspondences to the larger cycles of human destiny. Its mode of action is by impression. The growing form, whether it be a nucleated cell, an egg, an embryo, a plant, an animal, or man, responds to and is affected by the different cyclic forces impinging upon its inner nature. These result in gradual modifications of form, and of capacity to receive further cyclic impulses or impressions. Thus the thoughts and acts performed by a nation constitute a collective impression. When we take part in gatherings, religious, social, scientific, or what not, definite impressions accrue. When we have a quarrel and get angry, an impression remains in our nature, as much subject to cyclic law as the Moon, and the stars, and the world, and it is one far more important as affecting our personal development or evolution than all these other great things; for while these affect us in the mass, those little ones affect us in detail.

This law of impression may be illustrated. If we look at an incandescent lamp the light makes an image on the retina, and if we then shut the eyes, the bright filament will still be seen. If we keep the eyes closed and watch intently we shall see the image come back a certain number of times, it will stay a certain number of counts, go away the same length of time and return, always changing in some respect but always the image of the filament, until at last it disappears, apparently because other impressions have covered it over. So there is a return even in the retina of the impressions of this filament. After the first time, the color changes each

time, and so it keeps *coming back at regular intervals*, showing that there is a cyclic return of impression in the retina, and if that applies in one place, it applies in every place. And when we look into our moral character we find the same thing, for as we have tides in the ocean, so in man we have tides, which are called return of these impressions; that is to say, we do a thing once, there will be a tendency to repeat; we do it twice, and it doubles its influence; and so on all through our character we have this constant return of cyclic impression.

We have these impressions from every point in space, every experience we have been through, everything that we can possibly go through at any time, even those things which our forefathers went through. And that is not unjust for this reason, that our forefathers furnished the line of bodily encasement, and we cannot enter that line of bodily encasement unless we are like unto it; and for that reason we must have been at some point in that cycle in that same line or family in the past; so that we must have had a hand in constructing the particular family line in which we now exist, and are once more taking up the cyclic impression returning upon us.

Now this has the greatest possible bearing upon our evolution as particular individuals, the evolution of our bodily life. An opportunity arises for us to do something; we do not do it; we may not have it again for a hundred years. It is the return before us of some old thing that was good, if it is a good one, along the line of the cycles. The opportunity may not return until another life, but it will return under the same law.

Or to take another case. A man is trying to find out things about his psychic nature, perhaps, but pays no attention to the return of the impression which he creates. He has times of depression which he cannot explain, and perhaps someone draws his attention to the fact that these are periodic. He does not know what to do, however, until possibly a friend, who knows something of these cyclic laws, advises him to compel himself to feel joyous, even against his will, and if he could not have done that, then to have tried to feel the joy of others. By doing that, he would have implanted in himself another impression, that is of joy, so that when this thing returned, instead of being of the same quality and extension, it would have been changed by the impression of joy or elation, and the two things coming together would have counteracted each other, just as two billiard balls coming together try to counteract each other's movements. This applies to every person who has the "blues." When it comes start up something else, start up cheerfulness, be good to someone, then try to relieve some other person who is despondent, and another impression will have been started which will return at the same time. It does not make any difference if we wait a day or two to make the attempt, for when the old cyclic impression returns it will have dragged up the new one because it is related to it by association.

THE RETURN OF RACES

This has a bearing also on the question of the civilization in which we are a part ourselves. For who are we really? Where are we going? Where have we come from? The old Egyptians disappeared. If we examine Egyptian history, the most interesting because the most obscure, we shall find the writers saying that the civilization seems to rise to the zenith at once. We do not see when it began. The civilization was so great it must have existed an enormous length of time to get to that height, so that we cannot trace it from its beginning, and it disappears suddenly from the sky; there is nothing of it left but the enormous remains which testify to these great things, for the ancient Egyptians not only made mummies in which they displayed the art of bandaging that we cannot better, they had put everything to such a degree of specialization that we must conclude they had many centuries of civilization. There was a specialist for one eye and a specialist for the other, a specialist for the eyebrow, and so on.

We are the Egyptians! We have come back again, after our five thousand or so years' cycle, and we have dragged back with us someone called the Semitic race, with which we are connected by some old impression that we cannot get rid of, and so upon us is impinged that very Semitic image. We have drawn back with us, by the inevitable law of association in cyclic return, some race, some personages connected with us by some acts of ours in that great old civilization now disappeared, and we cannot get rid of it; we must raise them up to some other place as we raise ourselves.

Here in America is the evidence that this old civilization is coming back, for in the Theosophical theory nothing is lost. If we were left to records, buildings and the like, they would soon disappear and nothing could ever be recovered; there never would be any progress. But each individual in the civilization, wherever it may be, puts the record in himself, and when he comes into the favorable circumstances described in Patañjali, an old Hindû, when he gets the apparatus, he will bring out the old impression. The ancients say each act has a thought under it, and each thought makes a mental impression; and when the apparatus is provided, there will arise that new condition, in rank, place, and endowment.

So we retain in ourselves the impression of all the things that we have done, and when the time comes that we have cycled back, over and over again, through the middle ages perhaps, into England, into Germany, into France, we come at last to an environment such as is provided here, just the thing physically and every other way to enable us to do well, and to enable the others who are coming after us. One can almost see them; they are coming in a little army from the countries of the Old world to endeavor to improve this one; for here ages ago there was a civilization also, perhaps we were in it then, perhaps anterior to the ancient Egyptian. It disappeared

from here, when, we do not know, and it left this land arid for many thousands of years until it was discovered once more by the Europeans.

Most of the ancient world in Europe has been poisoned, the land has been soaked with emanations, poisoned by the emanations of the people who have lived upon it; the air above it is consequently poisoned by the emanations from the land; but here in America, just the place for the new race, is an arable land which has had time over and over again to destroy the poisons that were planted here ages and ages ago. It gives us a new land, with vibrations in the air that stir up every particle in a man who breathes it, and thus we find the people coming from the Old world seeming to receive through their feet the impressions of an American country. All this bears upon our civilization and race.

We are here a new race in a new cycle and those who know say that a cycle has ended and a new one already begun, and that ending and beginning will be accompanied by convulsions of society and of Nature, some of which have already taken place.

We can all almost see the coming of the new cycle. Daniel said: "A time, half a time, and a time," and so on, and people in the Christian system have been trying to find out when the time began, and that is just the difficulty. We do not know when the time began. And the only person who in all these many years first made a direct authoritative statement is Madame Blavatsky, and she said, "A cycle is ending in a few years, you must prepare." So that it was like the old prophets who came to the people and said, "Prepare for a new era of things, get ready for what you have to do." That is just what this civilization is doing. It is the highest, although the crudest civilization now on the Earth. It is the beginning of the great civilization that is to come. The great new civilization will be one with the ancient East, who has sat there silently all these years, holding in her ancient crypts and libraries and records the philosophy which the world wants, and it is this philosophy and this ethics, which belonged equally to ancient America, that THE UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD AND THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY is putting into practice before the eyes of the whole world. It is a philosophy which can be understood and practiced.

It is well enough to say to a man: Do right. But after a while, in this superstitious era, he will say: Why should I do right, unless I feel like it? When we show him these laws, that he must come back in his cycle; that he is subject to evolution; that he is a reincarnated pilgrim soul, then he will see the reason why, and then in order to get himself a secure basis, he accepts the philosophy.

EVOLUTION THROUGH CYCLIC RETURN

It has been said that the great end and aim is the great renunciation. That is, that after progressing to great heights, which we can only do by

unselfishness, at last we say to ourself, "I may take the ease to which I am entitled." For what prevails in one place must prevail in another, and in the course of progress we must come at last to a time when we can take our ease, but if we say, "I will not take it, but as I know this world and all the people on it are bound to live and last for many thousand years more, and if not helped perhaps might fail — I will not take it, but I will stay here to aid and I will suffer, because of having greater knowledge and greater sensitiveness," — this is the great renunciation as Theosophy tells us.

We do not often talk this way, because many of us think that people will say to us, "I don't want it, it is too much trouble." So generally we talk about the fine progress, and how we will at last escape the necessity of reincarnation, and at last escape the necessity of doing this or that and the other; but if we do our duty, we must make up our mind when we reach the height, when we know all, when we participate in the government of the world — not of a town, but the actual government of the world and the people upon it — that instead of resting in our wisdom and power, we will stay to help those who are left behind; and that is the great renunciation. That is what is told of Gautama Buddha, and of Jesus the Christ. Doubtless the whole story about Jesus, which can hardly be proved historically, is based upon the same thing that we call renunciation. He was crucified after two or three years' work. But we say it means that this being divine resolves he will crucify himself in the eyes of the world, in the eyes of others, so that he can save men from the thralldom of their lower, personal natures. Gautama did the same thing long before Jesus is said to have been born. The story that he made the great renunciation just means this — instead of escaping from this horrible place, as it seems to us. For this is indeed horrible, as we look at it, surrounded by obstructions, liable to defeat at any moment, liable to wake up in the morning after planning a great reform, and see it dashed to the ground. Instead of escaping all that, he remained in the world and started his doctrine, which he knew at least would be adhered to by some. This great doctrine of renunciation, which is general to all the great World-Religions teaches that instead of working for ourselves, we will work to know everything, to do everything in our power for those who may be left behind us, just as H. P. Blavatsky says in *The Voice of the Silence*, "Step out of sunshine into shade, to make more room for others." {p. 32}

Is that not better than a heaven which is reached at the price of the damnation of those of our relatives who will not believe a dogma? Is this not a great philosophy and a great belief which includes the salvation and regeneration, the scientific upraising and perfecting of the whole human family, and every particle in the whole Universe, instead of imagining that a few miserable beings after seventy years of life shall enter into paradise, and then look behind to see the torments in hell of those who would not accept a dogma?

What are these other beliefs compared with this? How any man can continue to believe such an idea as the usual one of damnation for mere unbelief is hard to comprehend. One would rather, were a choice required, believe almost anything, and be left with one's common reasoning, than believe in such a doctrine as that which permits one to suppose that his brother who does not believe a dogma is sizzling in hell while one, by simply believing, may enjoy one's self in heaven.

If we turn to Buckle, a great writer of the English school, we find him saying in one of his often quoted books, that there is no doubt that cyclic law prevails in regard to nations, that they have come back apparently the same, only slightly improved or degraded, for there is a downward cycle included within those that rise; but he did not discover a law. He simply once more stated what the ancients had said over and over again. And it would seem that if such writers would pay a little more attention to the ancients, they would save themselves a great deal of trouble, for he obtained his law by much delving, much painstaking labor, whereas he might have gotten the law if he had consulted the ancients, who always taught that there were cycles, and that there always will be cycles.

A very suggestive work by a well-known German scientist, Dr. E. Zasse, appeared in the Prussian *Journal of Statistics* some years ago, powerfully corroborating the ancient teaching about cycles. These periods which bring about ever-recurring events, begin from small periods like ten years or so, and reach to cycles which require 250, 500, 700 and 1000 years to effect their revolutions around themselves, and within one another. All are contained within the Mahâ-Yuga, the "Great Age" or Cycle of Manu's calculation, which itself revolves between two eternities — the "Pralayas" or Nights of Brahmâ. As in the objective world of matter, or the system of *effects*, the planets gravitate around the Sun, so in the world of the subjective, or the system of causes, these innumerable cycles all gravitate between that which the finite intellect of the ordinary mortal regards as eternity, and the still finite but more profound intuition of the sage and philosopher views as but an eternity. within THE ETERNITY. "As above, so it is below," runs the old Hermetic axiom. As an experiment in this direction, Dr. Zasse selected the statistical investigations of all the wars recorded in history, as a subject which lends itself more easily to scientific verification than any other. To illustrate his subject in the simplest and most comprehensible manner, he represents the periods of war and those of peace in the shape of small and large wave-lines running over the area of the Old World. The idea is not a new one, for the image was used for similar illustrations by more than one ancient and medieval mystic, whether in words or pictures — by Henry Kunrath, for example. But it serves well its purpose, and gives us the facts we now want. Before he treats, however, of the cycles of wars, the author brings in the record of the rise and fall of the world's great empires, and shows the degree of

activity they have displayed in the Universal History. He points out the fact that if we divide the map of the Old World into six parts — into Eastern, Central and Western Asia, Eastern and Western Europe, and Egypt — then we shall easily perceive that every 250 years an enormous wave passes over these areas, bringing to each in its turn the events it has brought to the one next preceding. This wave we may call “the historical wave” of the 250 years’ cycle.

The first of these waves (in the period under review) began in China 2000 years B.C., in the “golden age” of this empire, the age of philosophy, of discoveries, of reforms.

In 1750 B.C. the Mongolians of Central Asia establish a powerful empire. In 1500 B.C. Egypt rises from its temporary degradation and extends its sway over many parts of Europe and Asia; and about 1250, the historical wave reaches and crosses over to Eastern Europe, filling it with the spirit of the Argonautic Expedition, and dies out in 1000 B.C. at the Siege of Troy.

The second historical wave appears about that time in Central Asia.

The Scythians leave her steppes, and inundate toward the year 750 B.C. the adjoining countries, directing themselves toward the south and west; about the year 500 B.C., in Western Asia begins an epoch of splendor for ancient Persia; and the wave moves on to the east of Europe, where, about 250 B.C., Greece reaches her highest state of culture and civilization — and further on to the west, where, at the birth of Christ, the Roman Empire finds itself at its apogee of power and greatness.

Again, at this period we find the rising of a third historical wave at the far East. After prolonged revolutions, about this time, China forms once more a powerful empire, and its arts, sciences, and commerce flourish again. Then 250 years later, we find the Huns appearing from the depths of Central Asia; in the year 500 A.D. a new and powerful Persian kingdom is formed; in 750 — in Eastern Europe — the Byzantine empire; and in the year 1000 — on its western side — springs up the second Roman Power, the Empire of the Papacy, which soon reaches an extraordinary development of wealth and brilliancy.

At the same time the *fourth* wave approaches from the East. China is again flourishing; in 1250, the Mongolian wave from Central Asia has overflowed and covered an enormous area of land, including Russia. About 1500 in Western Asia the Ottoman Empire rises in all its might, and conquers the Balkan peninsula; but at the same time, in Eastern Europe, Russia throws off the Tartar yoke; and about 1750, during the reign of Empress Catherine, rises to an unexpected grandeur, and covers itself with glory. The wave ceaselessly moves on further to the West; and beginning

with the middle of the eighteenth century, Europe is living over an epoch of revolutions and reforms, and, according to the author:

if it is permissible to prophesy, then about the year 2000, Western Europe will have lived through one of those periods of culture and progress so rare in history.

The Russian press taking the cue, believed that

towards those days the Eastern Question will be finally settled, the national dissensions of the European peoples will come to an end, and the dawn of the new millennium will witness the abolition of armies and an alliance between all the European empires.

The signs of regeneration are also fast multiplying, as everyone knows, in Japan and China, as if pointing to the rise of a new historical wave in the extreme East.

If from the cycle of two-and-a-half centuries we descend to that which leaves its impress every century, and, grouping together the events of ancient history, mark the development and rise of empires, then we shall find that, beginning from the year 700 B.C., the centennial wave pushes forward, bringing into prominence the following nations, each in its turn — the Assyrians, the Medes, the Babylonians, the Persians, the Greeks, the Macedonians, the Carthaginians, the Romans, and the Teutons.

After analyzing the periodicity of wars, this author finally comes to the conclusion that in view of facts, it becomes thoroughly impossible to deny the presence of a regular periodicity in the excitement of both mental and physical forces in the nations of the world.

TRENDS OF DESCENT AND ASCENT

Among the ancients they had a great many large and important cycles. In their classification they had a Saros and a Naros, the exact nature of which is not generally known today. The Egyptians taught that there was a great sidereal cycle, and this is recognized today, at last, as the period during which the Sun passes through the complete circle of the zodiac. That is to say, if the Sun occupies at a given date, say at the vernal equinox, a certain position, it takes 25,000 and odd years before it again occupies the same apparent position among the stars at the vernal equinox. It is now called the cycle of precession of the equinoxes.

But as the Sun itself moves onward through space round a center, as known to the ancients, our real course around the Sun is a spiral which in truth corresponds to the way in which cyclic law acts throughout Nature. We ascend and descend, and re-ascend, as individuals and as races, but the

culminating point of reascent on the upward-moving cycle is always a step higher than before. On the “downward” or outward cycles during the first half of the evolution of man on a world, the spirally acting septenary forces pass round the septenary World-chain as already said, each wave gradually perfecting and materializing the embodied forms of conscious life in the different kingdoms of Nature. And thus it happens too, that in the lower, or physical world of any Chain, on Earth for instance, there are perceptible gaps in any septenary classification hitherto attempted by science, as in the sevenfold grouped tables of the chemical so-called elements.

It follows also from the movement of the Sun with its attendant orbs through space, whether round Alcyone, or some other center, that the Earth moves into new regions of space continually, into cosmic spaces where things are different, where the subtle invisible forces are different; and thus it is that changes must be induced in the Earth itself, for changes in cosmic matter in the air and the ether, in the new spaces traversed by the Earth, must affect the Earth and all its inhabitants.

Just so, in the complex events of human history, when the waves of involutionary force — destined to lift man from his too close contact with the external back to a perception and realization of the subtler powers latent within himself and Nature — impinge upon him and stir his inmost nature, impelling him to action on new and higher lines, such forces in their recurring cycles, great or small, are the same yet not the same. Always there is some new quality in the balancing of forces and subtle influences, and as his material body becomes gradually more refined and responsive to the ministration of the indwelling subtle nature and its manifold spiritual essences, the more varied and beautiful will become the possibilities of soul expression and expansion.

While the dark ages through which we have passed are in part karmic effects of prior racial cycles, yet they are but the stepping-stones on which through experience we may rise to better comprehension of our place in Nature, if we take courage and learn the lessons.

For if the cyclic truth of Reincarnation, one of the most self-evident laws in Nature, be once fairly grasped, we may discern the importance, not only to ourselves but to the race as a whole (with whose destiny each of us is indissolubly connected) of trying to read, and understand something of the meaning of the dark ages.

These ages were for Europe dark in regard to any true teaching *publicly* given on man’s inner nature and destiny. They were not dark for all Europeans by any means, for the light some of them have shed into every nook and cranny of our modern life and thought is brilliant indeed. Yet dark were the times which commenced with the murder of Hypatia, since when men have scarcely dared proclaim their disbelief or doubt except at peril of torture-chamber, guillotine, or fagot.

But who were the culprits? We are prone to lay these things at the door of ecclesiasticism and priestcraft. But who supported and succumbed to ecclesiasticism, who condoned and upheld it? We did. If there was a Teacher of the Law of Compassion some nineteen hundred or two thousand years ago who was crucified, who crucified him? We did. For that matter, who killed Hypatia, or Joan of Arc? We did. It does not matter whether we were actually present at such events or not, we belong, most of us, to just that stage of human *undevelopment* which makes us participants, aiders and abettors, in them. We are morally responsible for all these happenings, no doubt in greater or less degree, but still responsible. We individually may or may not have been incarnated at the time of a particular crime, but that does not affect the question. Human consciousness so far as incarnated through these times was in the main too strongly immersed in a false psychology and too occupied with material affairs to act otherwise.

MAN NOT YET FULLY HUMAN

The true view is that *human* consciousness has not fully incarnated — yet — except to some degree in a minority; and thus it is still largely true that if you scratch a man you find — something else! It is the main purpose of the present Fifth Great Race to effect the incarnation, up to a point, of the true Human Soul within its bodily encasement of passions, emotions, and intellectualism, thus transmuting them, for none of these latter are Soul in any true sense. They are the instruments or vehicles through which the soul will eventually absorb through ripe experience the half-tragic, half-humorous effects of its contact with outer material existence; in its turn refining and raising these vehicles to its own conscious stature, where laws of ineffable harmony, beauty, and truth beyond our highest dreams constitute the inner keyboard of our marvelous divine Nature.

In truth we need be dismayed at nothing, not even at the tragedies in which we have taken guilty part, so long as we press upward and onward with a passionate belief in the inner beauty that resides in the awakening Soul of the Race.

Long, long ago, in the initiation crypts of remotely ancient Egypt, before the Mysteries commenced to degrade gradually under the stress of karmic and cyclic law, and then to disappear, what was it we chanted over the prostrate form of the neophyte lying in that mystic trance, from which perchance he might not rise until another cycle passed:

... Now in the ring, does not the past stand out like a sheeted fury?
 Dost thou behold the list of evil committed?
 Listen! Those echoes are the battle shouts, and those shrieking harsh
 voices are thine own saved against thee.
 Writhe now, poor soul; alas! thou must suffer.
 See now the time has passed, and thou art lifted from thy ring of
 suffering.
 Whence comes this change? Thy shadow has gained intensity, and thy
 form person.
 Now take the key, terror-stricken dove, and unlock that vast chest.
 Why tremble? Those bodies are but the victims which thou hast
 sacrificed to thy evil lusts.
 Those ghastly white staring skulls thou hast slain with thine own hand.
 Oh! Those terrible bruised hearts are only those upon whom thou hast
 trodden.
 Blench not, those maimed bodies are thy handiwork.
 Oh; pale face, take brave hold. Thou hast gloried over these deeds —
 why shudder now? Life taken is life left.
 Slain souls wait in the fields of Aanru.
 Long lost hearts burn in the oil of the lamp of the King.
 Hopeless maimed ones rest in the water queen's bosom.
 Remember not to forget, but forget to remember.

ANCIENT KNOWLEDGE

Excavations near the Pyramids show that long before the period of
 the known dynasties the Egyptians had attained to a refinement and
 perfection calculated to excite the wonder of even the most ardent admirers
 of Grecian art. Far below the stratum of sand in which lay the remains
 gathered into the collections of Lepsius, Abbott, and the British Museum,
 were found buried the tangible proofs of the Hermetic doctrine of cycles.
 And since then abundant evidences have been found, in the Troad and
 elsewhere, of the gradual change from civilization to barbarism and back
 to civilization, and from civilization to barbarism again. Why then should
 we feel so reluctant to admit the possibility that if the "antediluvians" were
 so much better versed than ourselves in certain sciences as to have been
 perfectly acquainted with important arts, which we now term *lost*, they
 might equally have excelled in psychological knowledge? Such a
 hypothesis must be considered as reasonable as any other until some
 countervailing evidence shall be discovered to destroy it.

Every true *savant* admits that in many respects human knowledge is
 yet in its infancy. Can it be that our cycle began in ages comparatively
 recent? These cycles, according to the Chaldean philosophy, do not
 embrace all humanity at one and the same time. Professor Draper partially
 corroborated this view by saying that the periods into which geology has
 "found it convenient to divide the progress of man in civilization are not

abrupt epochs which hold good simultaneously for the whole human race"; giving as an instance the "wandering Indians of America" who "are only at the present moment emerging from the Stone Age." Thus more than once scientific men have unwittingly confirmed the testimony of the ancients.

The impenetrable veil of arcane secrecy was thrown over the sciences taught in the sanctuary. This is the cause of the modern depreciation of the ancient philosophies. Much of Plato's public teachings and writings had therefore to consist of blinds, or half-truths, or allegories, and just as Jesus spoke in parables, so the Mysteries were ever reserved for special groups of neophytes — and, needless to say, they did not reach the Church of the days of Constantine, which never held the keys of the Mysteries; and hence can hardly be said to have lost them.

The ancient philosophers seem to be generally held, even by the least prejudiced of modern critics, to have lacked that profundity and thorough knowledge in the exact sciences of which our century is so boastful. It is even questioned whether they understood that basic scientific principle: *ex nihilo nihil fit*. If they suspected the indestructibility of matter at all — say these commentators — it was not in consequence of a firmly established formula, but only through intuitional reasoning and by analogy.

We hold to the contrary opinion. The exoteric doctrines of these philosophers as regards matter were open to public criticism; but their teachings in regard to spiritual things were profoundly esoteric. Being thus sworn to secrecy and religious silence upon abstruse subjects involving the relations of spirit and matter, they rivaled each other in their ingenious methods for concealing their real beliefs.

With the old philosophers, evolution was a universal theorem, a doctrine embracing the *whole*, and an established principle; while our modern evolutionists are enabled to present us merely with speculative theoretics; with particular, if not wholly *negative* theorems.

The philosophers themselves had to be *initiated into perceptive* mysteries, before they could grasp the correct idea of the ancients in relation to this most metaphysical subject. Otherwise — outside such initiation — for every thinker there will be a "Thus far shalt thou go and no further," mapped out by his intellectual capacity, as clearly and unmistakably as there is for the progress of any nation or race in its cycle by the law of Karma. Much of current agnostic speculation on the existence of the "First Cause" is little better than veiled materialism — the terminology alone being different. Even so great a thinker as Mr. Herbert Spencer speaks of the "Unknowable" occasionally in terms that demonstrates the lethal influence of materialistic thought, which, like the deadly sirocco, has withered and blighted most of current ontological speculation. For instance, when he terms the "First Cause" — the *Unknowable* — a "power *manifesting* through phenomena," and an "infinite eternal

Energy,” (?) it is clear that he has grasped solely the *physical* aspect of the mystery of Being — the Energies of Cosmic Substance only. The coeternal aspect of the ONE REALITY — Cosmic Ideation — (as to its *noumenon*, it seems non-existent in the mind of the great thinker) — is absolutely omitted from consideration.

Without doubt, this *one-sided* mode of dealing with the problem is due largely to the pernicious Western practice of subordinating consciousness, or regarding it as a “by-product” of molecular motion.

The doctrine of metempsychosis has been abundantly ridiculed by men of science and rejected by theologians, yet if it had been properly understood in its application to the indestructibility of matter and the immortality of spirit, it would have been perceived that it is a sublime conception. Should we not first regard the subject from the standpoint of the ancients before venturing to disparage its teachers? The solution of the great problem of *eternity* belongs neither to religious superstition nor to gross materialism. The harmony and mathematical equiformity of the double evolution — spiritual and physical — are elucidated only in the universal numerals of Pythagoras, who built his system entirely upon the so-called “metrical speech” of the Hindû *Vedas*.

In the *Vedas* we find positive proof that so long ago as *at least* 2000 B.C., the Hindû sages and scholars must have been acquainted with the rotundity of our globe and the heliocentric system.

In the *Sûrya Siddhânta*, śloka 29 to 34, we read as follows:

In an Age, the revolution of the Sun, Mercury and Venus, and of the conjunctions of Mars, Saturn, and Jupiter, moving eastward, are 4,320,000. Of the Moon, 57,753,336; of Mars, 2,296,832; of Mercury’s conjunction, 17,937,000; of Jupiter, 364,220; of Venus’ conjunction, 7,022,376; of Saturn, 146,568; of the Moon’s apsis in an age, 488,203; of its node, in the contrary direction, 232,238; of asterisms, 1,582,227,828.

Dividing the number of revolutions of the Moon in an Age by those of the Sun in the same period to obtain the number of sidereal lunar months *per annum*, we get $57,753,336 \div 4,320,000 = 13.3688+$. Making the same calculation with the figures of modern science, we have $365.2564 \div 27.32166 = 13.3688-$.

Next take Mars and compare the relative lengths of the terrestrial and Martian years:— $4,320,000 \div 2,296,832 = 1.8808$, the terrestrial year equaling of course 1. And by modern figures, $686.9897 \div 365.2564 = 1.8808$; and so on. By means of this accurate knowledge of the planetary periods, the ancient Hindûs divided time into ages, and could calculate the epochs of great conjunctions in the past and future. It will be observed that the key number of these calculations is a period of upwards of four million years, termed an Age. It is a number unknown to and undreamed of by

modern science; and yet it is only one of the minor cycles known to the Wisdom-Religion.

In view of the *fact* that we have this extremely ancient astronomical treatise, of such wonderful accuracy, wealth of detail, and far-reaching scope, what is to be said of those who declare and even teach that the ancients were ignorant heathen? It comes to this, that our modern “authorities” must plead guilty to one of three things: (a) willful falsehood, deceit, and trickery; (b) unpardonable ignorance of their subject; (c) self-deception sufficient to brand them as persons whose judgment is hopelessly feeble and altogether unreliable.

We are just emerging from the bottom of a special cycle, and therefore in a transitory stage. No stronger proof of the theory of cyclic progression need be required than the comparative enlightenment of former ages and that of the Patristic church, as regards the form of the Earth, and the movements of the planetary system. Even were other evidence wanting, the ignorance of Augustine and Lactantius, misleading the whole of Christendom upon these questions until the period of Galileo, would mark the eclipses through which human knowledge passes from age to age.

SYMBOLS OF THE PILGRIMAGE

According to the Arabian descriptions, each of the seven chambers of the Pyramids — those grandest of all cosmic symbols — was known by the name of a planet, this in its turn symbolizing one of the perfectly definite states of consciousness, plus its realm of super-terrestrial objectivity or actuality. The peculiar architecture of the Pyramids shows in itself the drift of the metaphysical thought of their builders. The apex is lost in the clear blue sky of the land of the Pharaohs, and typifies the primordial point lost in the unseen Universe whence started the first race, or the spiritual prototypes of man. Each mummy, from the moment that it was embalmed, lost its physical individuality in one sense; it symbolized the human race. Placed in such a way as was best calculated to aid the exit of the “Soul,” the latter had to pass through the seven planetary chambers before it made its exit through the symbolical apex. Each chamber typified at the same time, one of the seven spheres, and one of the seven types of physico-spiritual humanity alleged to be linked to our own.

Every three thousand years, the soul, representative of its race, had to return to its primal point of departure before it underwent another evolution into a more perfected spiritual and physical transformation. We must go deep indeed into the abstruse metaphysics of Being before we can realize the infinitude of the subjects embraced at one sweep by the majestic symbolism of its ancient Adepts.

Starting as a pure and perfect spiritual being, becoming far later the Adam of the second chapter of Genesis; not “satisfied” with the position allotted to him by the Demiurgos (who is the eldest first-begotten, the Adam-Kadmon) Adam the second, the “man of dust,” strives in his pride to become creator in his turn. Evolved then out of the androgynous Kadmon, Adam thus became himself an androgyne; for according to the oldest teachings, presented *allegorically* in Plato’s *Timaeus*, the prototypes of our race were all enclosed in the microcosmic tree which grew and developed within and under the great mundane or macrocosmic tree. Divine spirit being considered a unity, however numerous the rays of the great spiritual Sun, man has still had his origin like all other forms, whether organic or otherwise, in this one Fount of Eternal Light.

Were we even to reject the hypothesis of an early androgynous man, in connection with *physical evolution*, the significance of the allegory in its spiritual sense, would remain unimpaired. So long as this androgyne race, symbolizing the two opposite principles of creation unified, the dual male-female element, had no thought of good and evil he could not hypostasize sex. It was only when, as a result of the evil hints of the serpent, *matter*, as the latter condensed itself and cooled on the spiritual man in its contact with the elements, that the fruits of the man-tree — who is himself that tree of knowledge — appeared to his awakening *physical* understanding. From this moment the androgynal union ceased, and man evolved out of himself in course of aeons the present humanity. They have broken the unity between pure spirit and pure matter. Henceforth they will create no more *spiritually*, and by the sole power of their will; man has become a physical creator, and the kingdom of spirit can be won only by a long imprisonment and experience in the illusions of matter.

To begin further back. At the dawn of a fresh Mahâ-Kalpa the Invisible “assumed form when It called the Universe (again) into existence,” says the *Zohar*. The first light is Its soul, the Infinite, Boundless and Immortal breath; under the efflux of which the Universe heaves its mighty bosom, infusing *Intelligent* awakening life throughout sleeping creation. The *second* emanation condenses cometary matter and produces forms within the cosmic circle; sets the countless worlds floating in the electric space, and infuses the intelligent life-principle into every form. The *third*, produces the whole Universe of molecular matter; and as it keeps gradually receding from the Central Divine Light its brightness wanes and it becomes Darkness and the Bad; pure matter becomes the “gross purgations of the celestial fire” of the Hermetists.

Speaking Kabbalistically: When the Central Invisible saw the efforts of the divine *Scintilla* (unwilling to be dragged lower down into the degradation of matter) to liberate itself, It as a necessity of Karmic LAW “permitted” it to shoot out from itself a *monad*, over which, attached to it as by the finest thread, the Divine Scintilla (the Soul) had to watch during

its ceaseless peregrinations, from one form to another. Thus the monad was shot down into the first form of matter and became incased in stone; then, in course of time, through the combined efforts of *living fire* and *living water*, both of which shone their *reflection* upon the stone, the monad crept out of its prison to sunlight as a lichen. From change to change it went higher and higher; the monad with every new transformation borrowing more of the radiance of its parent, *Scintilla*, which approached it nearer at every transmigration. For “the First Cause had willed it to proceed in this order”; and destined it to creep on higher until its physical form became (once more) the Adam of *dust*, shaped in the image of the Adam Kadmon. Before undergoing its earthly transformation, the external covering of the monad, from the moment of its conception as an embryo passes in turn, once more, through the phases of the several kingdoms. In its fluidic prison it assumes a vague resemblance at various periods of the gestation to plant, reptile, bird, and animal, until it becomes a human embryo. At the “birth” of the future man, the monad, radiating with all the glory of its immortal parent which watches it from the seventh sphere, becomes *senseless* (see Plato’s *Timaeus*). It loses all recollection of the past, and returns to consciousness but gradually, when the instinct of childhood gives way to reason and intelligence.

At death, after the separation between the life-principle (astral man) and the body takes place, the liberated soul — Monad, exultingly rejoins the mother and father spirit, the radiant Augoeides, and the two, merged into one, forever form, with a glory proportioned to the spiritual purity of the past Earth-life, the Adam who has completed once again the “circle of necessity.” Long before this it was freed from the last vestige of its physical encasement. Henceforth, growing more and more radiant at each step of his upward progress, he mounts the shining path that ends at the point from which it started around the GRAND CYCLE.

Such is the broad outline of human destiny, sketched so as to show the absolutely Dual Nature, essentially, of every particle and organism in the Universe; the main fact, in short, which modern scientific thought is reaching towards, but has not yet by any means fully grasped. *Dual*, that is, as having two broad aspects, the material and the spiritual. *Triple*, in reality, as both spirit and matter rest upon something within — the Rootless Root — or Causeless Cause, the *only* Reality in truth — all else being more or less transitory, even though lasting for periods so vast as to be absolutely beyond the reach of human thought. And *Septenary*, still more exactly and scientifically, owing to fundamental laws which are touched upon elsewhere, and more fully treated of in *The Secret Doctrine*.

The details of cyclic law are not such as can be given here. Many figures could be given, having both general and astronomical significance, but the truth of the matter is, as has already been hinted, that there is no subject connected with the Sacred Mysteries of Human Fate, of Life and

Death, upon which less has been definitely stated by the Messengers of the Ancient Wisdom. And for very good reasons, which are indeed so obvious to any thoughtful mind that loves the human race, that it seems hardly necessary to say more.

IMPORTANCE OF PRESENT CYCLE

The important thing at present for us to know in this connection, is that there *are* Cycles in human destiny and in the destiny of civilized as well as of other races; and the world may ere long be aroused to a perception of the fact that the Cycle now commencing is one of the utmost importance to all on Earth, because in the course of a very few years the whole world, whether it knows it or not will be obliged in a measure to take sides for or against the Higher Progress of the Human Race. People will gradually be found arrayed for or against the recognition of Human Solidarity as a Fact in Nature. For there is something in the nature of the cycle now breathing its Fire upon the world, something so compelling in its essence — withal so uplifting — that everyone will be as it were driven to make a choice within his own nature; he will become clearly aware of something within tending to ennoble and to imbue his soul with some of the lost “diviner drink” of soul-life.

The unrest of the world at its root and foundation (however varied the surface eddies) is a divine unrest, and belongs to a fresh summit gained on the great spiral stairway of progress. It is a Wind blowing into our hearts, the Wind of a better and purer life, destined to affect swiftly for good the advancing nations of the east and the west; although a touch of this Wind may complete the ruin of some decadent places.

Being is an endless cycle within the one absolute eternity, wherein move numberless inner cycles finite and conditioned. Gods, “*created*” as *such*, would evince no personal merit in being gods. Such a class of beings, perfect only by virtue of the special immaculate nature inherent in them, in the face of suffering and struggling humanity, and even of the lower creation, would be the symbol of an eternal injustice quite Satanic in character, an ever present wrong. It is an impossibility in Nature.

The cycles of the septenary evolution, in Septennial Nature proceed, then, as follows: the Spiritual or divine; the semi-divine; the intellectual; the passional; the instinctual, or *cognitional*; the semi-corporeal; and the purely material or physical natures. All these evolve and progress cyclically, passing from one into another, in a double, centrifugal and centripetal way, *one* in their ultimate essence, *seven* in their aspects. The lowest, of course, is the one depending upon and subservient to our five physical senses (which are in truth seven, however). Thus far, human, animal and vegetable life; each the *microcosm* of its higher *macrocosm*. The same for the Universe, which manifests periodically, for purposes of

the collective progress of the countless *lives*, the out-breathings of the *One Life*; in order that through the *Ever-Becoming* every cosmic atom in this infinite Universe, passing from the formless and the intangible, through the mixed natures of the semi-terrestrial, down to matter in full generation, and then back again, re-ascending at each new period higher and nearer the final goal — that each atom, we say, *may reach through individual merit and efforts* that plane where it rebecomes the one unconditioned ALL. But between the Alpha and the Omega there is the weary “Road” hedged in by thorns, which goes down first, then “winds up hill all the way, yea, to the very end.”

Starting upon the long journey immaculate; descending more and more into matter, and having connected himself with every atom in manifested *Space* — the *Pilgrim*, having struggled through and suffered in every form of life and being, is only at the bottom of the valley of matter, and half through his cycle, when he has identified himself with collective humanity. This, *he has made in his own image*. In order to progress upwards and homewards, the “God” has now to ascend the weary uphill path of the Golgotha of Life. It is the martyrdom of self-conscious existence. Like Viśvakarman he has to sacrifice *himself to himself* in order to redeem all creatures, to resurrect from the many into the *One Life*. Then he ascends into heaven indeed; where, plunged into the incomprehensible absolute Being and Bliss of Paranirvâna, he reigns unconditionally, and whence he will re-descend again at the next “coming.”

Our ignorance of the laws of Karma and of the scope of Cyclic Impression — which one portion of humanity calls the ways of Providence, dark and intricate; while another sees in them the action of blind Fatalism; and a third, simple chance, with neither gods nor devils to guide them — would surely disappear if we would but attribute all these to their correct cause. With right knowledge, or at any rate a confident conviction that our neighbors will no more work to hurt us than we would think of harming them, the two-thirds of the World’s evil would vanish into thin air. Were no man to hurt his brother, Karma-Nemesis would have neither cause to work for, nor weapons to act through. It is the constant pressure in our midst of every element of strife and opposition, and the division of races, nations, tribes, societies, and individuals into Cains and Abels, wolves and lambs, that is the chief cause of the “ways of Providence.” We stand bewildered before the mystery of our own making, and the riddles of life that *we will not* solve, and then accuse the great Sphinx of devouring us. But verily there is not an accident in our lives, not a misshapen day, or a misfortune, that could not be traced back to our own doings in this or another life. If one breaks the laws of Harmony, the laws of life, one must be prepared to fall into the chaos one has oneself produced. For the only conclusion one can come to is that these laws of

life are their own avengers; and consequently that every avenging angel is only a typified representation of their reaction.

Therefore, if anyone is helpless before these immutable laws, it is not ourselves, the artificers of our destinies, but rather those angels, the guardians of harmony. Karma-Nemesis is no more than the (spiritual) dynamical effect of causes produced and forces awakened into activity by our own actions. It is a law of occult dynamics that “a given amount of energy expended on the spiritual or astral plane is productive of far greater results than the same amount expended on the physical objective plane of existence.”

This state will last until man’s spiritual intuitions are fully opened, which will not happen before we fairly cast off our thick coats of matter; until we begin acting from *within*, instead of ever following impulses from *without*; namely, those produced by our physical senses and gross selfish body. Until then the only palliative to the evils of life is union and harmony — a Oneness IN ACTU, united to *self-control*, and *altruism* not simply in name.

Psychism, Ghostology, and the Astral Plane

A Student

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INTRODUCTORY

The purposes of this Manual may be broadly enumerated as two: firstly, to distinguish between Theosophy and the bogus imitations that pass under that name; secondly, to warn all students of mysticism and the public generally against false “occultism” and its dangers.

As to the first purpose, there are many forms of psychism, pseudo-occultism, spiritism, astralism, and so forth, which might be confused by the uninformed with Theosophy or with true Occultism. In our age there is a general ignorance on such subjects.

It will be well, therefore, to make quite clear what is the true purpose of the UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD AND THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, and what is the true meaning of the word Occultism. To do this, we must go back to the beginning of the Society and briefly trace its history.

THE REAL PURPOSE OF THE UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD AND THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

THE UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD AND THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY is a movement having as its avowed purpose the betterment of humanity. The benefiting of humanity is its first and foremost object — the reason for its existence. It is not, however, a mere philanthropic enterprise. It claims distinction from all other enterprises by its identification with Occultism. It teaches that Man is fundamentally a Divine Being, and that the welfare of humanity depends upon a due recognition by men of their Divine nature.

The purpose of the UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD AND THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY is to revive the Ancient Wisdom-Religion, which is the parent of all religions, and which teaches Man the practical Knowledge about the mysteries of his own nature, enabling him to live harmoniously with his fellows and to realize the true purposes of human existence. For the want of this Wisdom-Religion, humanity has, in the later ages, sunk into a condition of spiritual darkness and selfishness which threatened disaster to the human race.

H. P. Blavatsky, Founder of the Society, came “to plant the seed of Oneness in the soil of Mysticism.” The soil of Mysticism was already there, by reason of that law of cycles which, at regular intervals, brings the tides of thought and speculation over men’s minds. A cycle of renewed interest in things relating to the invisible worlds was already setting in, as marked by the great outburst of Spiritualism and other such movements. It was known by H. P. Blavatsky and Those whose messenger she was, that if this movement in mysticism were allowed to grow unchecked in an atmosphere reeking with selfishness and the vices of civilization, and among a race wholly ignorant of the true science of right living, the

consequences would be fraught with extreme danger to the integrity of that race and would menace the existence of civilization. This danger was by no means exaggerated; indeed it is impossible to exaggerate it. When we reflect that all the wonderful inventions of modern science, instead of making life easier and happier, as they should and could have done, have not diminished the problems of poverty and have put new weapons into the hands of luxury, fraud and violence; that insanity, drug-addiction, alcoholism, consumption, are growing with appalling rapidity; that the resources of wealth and property are often passing into irresponsible hands; that we are losing our religions and other old-time moral anchorage;— when we reflect on such things, all too well known, we can realize what might have happened had occult powers, such as mesmerism for instance, been allowed to develop unchecked. There have been periods in the world's history when mighty civilizations have gone down amid a horror of darkness owing to the abuse of powers and to the degradation of sacred rites to sensual purposes; and it was to avert another such calamity that H. P. Blavatsky was sent.

H. P. Blavatsky is numbered in the glorious ranks of many messengers who in various lands and ages have dared to stand forth and save a thankless world from itself. She was sent by Those who guard and preserve the Sacred Knowledge of the Ages, during the dark cycles, until the hour shall strike for it to become once again universally known; and who watch over the interests of humanity with eternal love, wisdom and patience.

The altruistic motive is the vital element in human life; its absence means dissolution. Who will dispute this proposition? But our civilization has put learning before ethics, acquisition before conduct. It was rushing into the realm of occult nature with the same careless indifference to rights and wrongs as it had carried into its other pursuits. It was indeed necessary to kindle anew the spiritual Fire of Compassion, the fount of all true knowledge.

From this it is abundantly evident that the purpose for which the UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD AND THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY was founded, was firstly humanitarian; secondly, humanitarian; and thirdly, humanitarian. What other aim could be had by the Great Lodge of Teachers, Guardians of the Wisdom-Religion, those in whom all worldly ambition, all personal motive, are things of the long-buried past, and who live for humanity alone? Again, what was the motive of H. P. Blavatsky, the messenger? She had roamed the world in search of Truth, meeting at last with her Teachers, and had qualified herself through their instructions to go forth and proclaim it. Without one vestige of personal interest, she sacrificed wealth, position, ease, fame, to fill this invidious, thankless, and most arduous position; and all through the history of her labors continued to spurn every temptation of power, profit, or popularity, in order to adhere

unflinchingly to the straight line of duty. It would have been easy for her to have founded an occult movement of vast dimensions with herself as its honored priestess, or to have achieved comfort and distinction in many another field; for great were her talents and personal advantages. But her motive was otherwise. It was to plough up the rough soil of Western materialism and in it plant securely the seed of the future growth of that great HEART DOCTRINE designed to save humanity from destruction by its own selfishness.

And, in pursuit of this object, she died, misunderstood but successful.

The Society, therefore, was not founded to teach magic to the cultured society of the West, nor to encourage curious studies. It was founded to do philanthropic work of a *new* — and high order; and such has been its consistent policy ever since.

In seeking for a suitable soil, H. P. Blavatsky looked around for some body of people whose minds should be open for the reception of unfamiliar truths. Just then the Spiritist or Spiritualist movement was prominent and contained a few people of a superior sort. She appealed to these; but before long it became evident that materialism and circumscription of ideals would prevent this movement from seizing the importance of the occasion. The Spiritists were then more interested in materializations, communications, and personal rivalries, than in promoting a great Cause. H. P. Blavatsky had to seek elsewhere for her suitable soil. For this she has been accused of having been a Spiritualist, and for having invented Theosophy afterwards!

Next she worked through a group of people in India who had open minds on many questions, but were not attached to any particular cult. But most of these showed themselves to be more interested in the question of occult phenomena than in the sublime teachings and noble Cause to which she was endeavoring to attach them. When it was seen that Theosophy could not stop by the wayside in order to foster clubs for private research in magic or dilettante societies for curious studies, but that its service demanded unflinching self-sacrifice and the subjection of personal interests, these inquirers largely dropped off and H. P. Blavatsky passed on to other fields of work.

The summing up of the matter is this. That the policy of the Society has never for an instant deviated from the strict original lines of pure philanthropy and devotion to the highest good of humanity. It has continued to flourish for over thirty years with its original purity absolutely. unimpaired, resisting every effort to divert it off on side lines. In order to preserve this straight course, it has frequently let pass the (apparently) brightest chances of self-advancement and popularity, and has sacrificed able and prominent workers sooner than retain them in its ranks after their aims had deviated from its own. Thus it is clear that the purpose of THE UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD AND THEOSOPHICAL

SOCIETY is not to teach people magic or occult powers, but that its aims are still, as ever, the advancement of the race.

WASTE-PRODUCTS OF THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

Since the Society has been composed of people of varying degrees of perfection and perfectibility, it is only natural that from time to time, there have been members who have found themselves unable any longer to keep up with the high standards required of workers in that Cause. Having entered the ranks with mixed motives, in which genuine devotion was undoubtedly mingled with private ambitions, they did not succeed in subordinating the latter to the former. Thus they eventually found themselves out of harmony with the Society and severed their connection with it in order to pursue private ends. While most of the deserters merely dropped quietly out, there have been a few of the more masterful kind who have sought to establish societies of their own in competition with the original Society and depending upon its name and influence. One of the chief of these occurred in 1894, when a certain prominent member attempted to lead off the movement along lines of modern Hindûism divergent from those laid down by the Founder. Opposed in this attempt by William Q. Judge, H. P. Blavatsky's successor, who saw the imminent danger the Society was incurring from such a departure, this member endeavored to oust Mr. Judge from his position by leading an attack upon him.

The result was that most of the Theosophical Society reaffirmed their devotion to its original objects, and severed any connection with the member in question and the few who held similar notions, leaving them to pursue their own objects. These latter thus constituted a factitious theosophical society, having the name and many of the forms of the real movement, but differing fundamentally from it in aim and spirit. It pursued a path of barren study and of "psychism" divorced from humanitarianism, which perforce can lead to little — if any — spiritual progress. A loosely associated band of dabblers in "occultism," phenomenistic spiritism, and other such things, can hardly climb the Olympian heights.

This particular movement has caused some trouble to Theosophists owing to the name which it brings upon Theosophy. For its leaders teach, under the name of Theosophy, many purely sectarian dogmas of modern (degraded) Brâhmanism and other religions; and are said to advocate matters which all sober minds must condemn.

This movement and others like it can be recognized by their fruits. Often they do not even profess humanitarianism; and when they do one looks in vain for the results. They have no visible results to show; no wholesome activities or constructive enterprises can, we presume, be the

outcome of such teachings, which minister, evidently, to curiosity and vain self-interests.

The public should be on its guard against misrepresentations of Theosophical doctrines. They can generally be recognized by their exposition, which does not reflect the broad Theosophical spirit.

OCCULTISM AND THE OCCULT ARTS

This distinction was drawn by H. P. Blavatsky between true and beneficent Magic, and false and selfish Magic.

Occultism is the science which teaches us how to use our Spiritual powers for the benefit of humanity. The occult arts teach how to use some of the secret forces of the animal or passional nature, for private and selfish purposes. The two are sometimes distinguished as White Magic and Black Magic. The former is beneficent, the latter maleficent.

What makes the difference between White and Black Magic is *motive*. Occultism can only be pursued with an unselfish motive. With any other motive it declines into Black Magic. This can readily be understood in the case of an actively evil motive. But there are many motives which are *apparently* innocent and guileless. These are what deceive people who purpose to study Occultism. They should be warned that in such matters, every motive that is not definitely unselfish is selfish, though the selfishness may be veiled. Mere curiosity, for instance, is not a beneficent motive; it is grounded in the desire for knowledge apart from right use of knowledge. Again, there may be some who imagine that they can use the occult arts, for example hypnotism, in the cure of disease or bad habits. These again should be warned that they are endangering both their patients and themselves. They are dabbling in unknown forces without having previously undergone the necessary purification; and, though their purpose may be on the whole beneficent, the *latent* defects in their nature will cause them to stumble unwittingly into Black Magic.

Thus selfishness and ignorance are both obstacles to the study of Occultism, and anyone who practices it without having overcome these obstacles is on the wrong path.

There are in Man certain mystic powers belonging to the lower or passional nature, which are *comparatively* easy to arouse. But, when once aroused, they must be controlled, or they will over-master the would-be magician. This is where the danger comes in. Desire is the great enemy; and the unguided practice of occult arts will arouse sleeping forces of great potency, intensifying the desires and menacing the moral stability of the practitioner.

It is very necessary to urge the fact of the *sacredness* of Occultism. Its employment cannot for a moment be divorced from the highest and purest motives. Indeed no human power can rightly be used with any but

an unselfish motive — this is the great lesson of life; but this truth applies with greatly enhanced force to Occultism. In that domain the issues between selfishness and unselfishness become much more sharply defined; also the powers evoked are far more potent for good or ill. All these powers must be enlisted in the service of humanity. They must be controlled by a wise control. Otherwise we shall find ourselves in the midst of a seething whirlpool of selfishness and corruption. Great is the misery already inflicted by abuse of science, wealth, and other powers. Far greater would be the menace, to individual and society, if occult powers were to be turned loose!

On entering the domain of Occultism, the adventurer throws off all his ordinary safe-guards. He renders his nature abnormally sensitive to influences against which the gross matter of the physical body normally shields us. He calls up all the latent forces of his nature and awakens all the sleeping powers whose seeds lie dormant in the ordinary individual. He must either master these forces or be mastered by them; and herein lies the danger. For the ordinary individual of Western civilization is not able to control all of the forces which he now has, but continually yields to their seductions. How then will he fare when these forces are magnified in intensity and subtlety? The story of the unwary magician torn to pieces by the genii he has invoked is no fable.

Western civilization is the outcome of centuries occupied with habits but little conducive to the development of an aptitude for occult studies. Our past history is one of fighting, and (from the Eastern point of view) gross living. Often we have been addicted to excesses in drinking. We have glorified those qualities which make people full-blooded, muscular, unimaginative, fond of material pursuits and pleasures. Our habits are self-willed and self-indulgent. We are nervous, restless, impatient. Intellectually, again, we have developed along lines ill-suited as a preparation for occult studies. Both in religion and in science we have been materialistic; for neither of these teaches us anything definite about our interior nature. In fact, it is not too much to say that by both it is almost totally ignored. Consequently we do not even know whether we have any interior nature, and there are no terms in our language in which to express the teachings of occultism. The ideas introduced by a study of occultism are so novel and strange that we are lost when we try to grasp them. In addition to this we have developed a peculiar mode of reasoning which seems to us to be the acme of logicity and commonsense, but which is really quite special; and our minds are stocked with a multitude of ideas and conceptions derived from *our* theological and scientific modes of thought. So there is a great deal of unlearning to be done.

But worst of all is our “individualism.” The accentuation of personality, which is the greatest bar to Occultism, is the very thing our civilization most fosters and prides itself upon. From earliest youth we are

trained in the spirit of emulation, which follows us through our school life and into the world of affairs, where competition is the watchword. Competition is so rife that people even declare it is essential to progress! They have not tried the other kind! The only alternative to strife they know of is stagnation. But in Occultism it is above all things necessary to sink the sense of personal separateness; because Occultism means the developing of those higher strata in our being where the sense of separateness vanishes. In the East the spirit of emulation has never been encouraged as with us. The people are more homogeneous and less separated in feelings and interests. The sense of personalism is not so strong.

In view of the above differences between East and West, it is clear that what may be harmless or even useful for the one may be extremely detrimental to the other. Most of our ideas of Occultism are derived from Eastern sources. To this must be added that the difficulties in the way of translation from a language containing innumerable terms that have no English equivalent are almost insuperable. Such a difficulty might not matter so much in a book of poetry or even history. But in a recipe book! In a book of instructions in a most abstruse and risky science! Think what might hinge on a trifling blunder!

Thus it is clear that to enter wholly unprepared upon the path of occult studies is extremely foolish and fraught with certain danger both to the individual and to society. The student will never be able to keep his balance, and will either wander off upon some foolish sidetrack or contract some infirmity that will ruin his life. If successful in any sense, it can only be in the sense of becoming a conscious black magician and serving the powers of evil.

All human powers if used selfishly, work harm to the individual and to humanity. But much more is this the case when the powers are occult. Hence it is clear that the road to occult powers must be carefully guarded against profanation by selfish use, unless the integrity of the human race is to be threatened. For this reason the path of true Occultism begins with the question of motive. Purity of motive is the only guarantee of success and safe use. No Teacher of Occultism will accept a pupil unless he has been securely tested as to the unselfishness of his motives and his ability to keep to them against all temptations. Unselfishness is the only guarantee that the student will not awaken the lower psychic powers instead of the spiritual, and fall instead of rising.

It will be found, therefore, that all who are following the true path make altruism the first object. THE UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD AND THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY is an agency for benefiting humanity, and it aims to use the awakened spiritual powers of its adherents for this purpose. But the adherents first show themselves ready to give up their life to humanitarian work; and such occult development as they may acquire comes to them in exact proportion to their trustworthiness. The desire for occult

growth as such will not bring it; for such a desire is selfish. But the honest desire for service will bring increased power for service.

Our civilization has over-emphasized the pursuit of personal interests, such as wealth, private pleasure, position. This spirit we are apt to carry into our pursuit of Occultism, thus making it a matter of acquisition and self-aggrandizement. The ambition to be one of an honorable brotherhood of Craftsmen, with ideals on an international scale, needs fostering. Spiritual gifts cannot be “cornered” or amassed like wealth.

The following are some quotations from H. P. Blavatsky on this subject:

From “PRACTICAL OCCULTISM”
[*Studies in Occultism*, Vol. 1.]

There are many people who are looking for practical instruction in Occultism. It becomes necessary, therefore, to state once for all:

- (a). The essential difference between theoretical and Practical Occultism; or what is generally known as Theosophy on the one hand, and Occult Science on the other, and —
- (b) The nature of the difficulties involved in the study of the latter.

It is easy to become a Theosophist. Any person of average intellectual capacities, and a leaning toward the metaphysical; of pure, unselfish life, who finds more joy in helping his neighbor than in receiving help himself; one who is ever ready to sacrifice his own pleasures for the sake of other people; and who loves Truth, Goodness, and Wisdom for their own sake, not for the benefit they may confer — is a Theosophist.

But it is quite another matter to put oneself upon the Path which leads to the knowledge of what is good to do, as to the right discrimination of good from evil; a Path which also leads a man to that power through which he can do the good he desires, often without even apparently lifting a finger....

Occultism is not Magic. It is comparatively easy to learn the trick of spells and the methods of using the subtler, but still material, forces of physical nature; the powers of the animal soul in man are soon awakened; the forces which his love, his hate, his passion, can call into operation, are readily developed. But this is Black Magic — Sorcery. For it is the motive, and the motive alone, which makes any exercise of power become Black (malignant), or White (beneficent) Magic. It is impossible to employ spiritual forces if there is the slightest tinge of selfishness remaining in the operator.... The powers and forces of Spirit lend themselves only to the perfectly pure in heart — and this is DIVINE MAGIC....

All Western education is instinct with the principle of emulation and strife; each boy is urged to learn more quickly, to outstrip his companions.... With such ideas “educated into” him from his childhood, how can a Western bring himself to feel towards his co-students “as the fingers on one hand”?... So strong has personality grown in Europe and America, that there is no

school of artists even whose members do not hate and are not jealous of each other. ... In the East the spirit of “non-separateness” is inculcated as steadily from childhood up, as is in the West the spirit of rivalry. Personal ambition, personal feelings and desires, are not encouraged to grow so rampant there.

When the soil is naturally good, it is cultivated in the right way, and the child grows into a man in whom the habit of subordination of one’s lower to one’s Higher Self is strong and powerful.

From “OCCULTISM AND THE OCCULT ARTS”

[*Studies in Occultism*, Vol. 1.]

Occultism differs from Magic and other secret Sciences as the glorious Sun does from a rush-light, as the immutable and immortal Spirit of Man — the reflection of the absolute, causeless, and unknowable ALL — differs from the mortal clay, the human body.

In our highly civilized West, where modern languages have been formed, and words coined, in the wake of ideas and thoughts... the more the latter became materialized in the cold atmosphere of Western selfishness and its incessant chase after the goods of this world, the less was there any need felt for the production of new terms to express that which was tacitly regarded as absolute and exploded “superstition”.... Therefore we have no terms in the English tongue to define and shade the difference of such abnormal powers, or the Sciences that lead to the acquisition of them, with the nicety possible in the Eastern languages... *Ātmā-Vidyā*, a term which is translated simply, “Knowledge of the Soul,” true Wisdom by the Eastern writers, but which means far more... is the only kind of Occultism that any Theosophist who... would be wise and unselfish, ought to strive after. All the rest is some branch of the “Occult Sciences,” *i.e.*, Arts based on the knowledge of the ultimate essence of all things in the Kingdoms of Nature. Alchemy, Astrology, Occult Physiology, Chiromancy, exist in Nature, and the exact Sciences — perhaps so called because they are found in this age of paradoxical Philosophies to be the reverse — have already discovered not a few of the secrets of the above Arts. But the clairvoyance symbolized in India as the “Eye of Śiva,” called in Japan, “Infinite Vision,” is not Hypnotism, the illegitimate son of Mesmerism, and is not to be acquired by such Arts. All the others may be mastered and results obtained, whether good, bad, or indifferent; but *Ātmā-Vidyā* sets small value on them. It includes them all and may even use them occasionally, but it does so after, purifying them of their dross, for beneficent purposes, and taking care to deprive them of every element of selfish motive....

True Occultism or Theosophy is the “Great Renunciation of self,” unconditionally and absolutely, in thought as in action....

There are those whose reasoning powers have been so distorted by foreign influences that they imagine that animal passions can be so sublimated and elevated that their fury, force and fire, can, so to speak, be turned inwards; that they can be stored and shut up in one’s breast until their energy is, not expanded, but turned toward higher and more holy purposes: namely until their collective and unexpanded strength enables their possessor to

enter the true Sanctuary of the Soul and stand therein in the presence of the Master — the HIGHER SELF! For this purpose they will not struggle with their passions nor slay them. They will simply, by a strong effort of will put down the fierce flames and keep them at bay within their natures, allowing the fire to smolder under a thin layer of ashes.

... Oh, poor blind visionaries!...

We are in the *Kali Yuga* (Black Age), and its fatal influence is a thousandfold more powerful in the West than it is in the East; hence the easy preys made by the powers of the Age of Darkness in this cyclic struggle, and the many delusions under which the world is now laboring. One of these is the relative facility with which men fancy that they can get at the “Gate” and cross the threshold of Occultism without any great sacrifice.

From “THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE”

{The following is a paraphrased collection of a few verses from the book,
with some added material.}

Saith the Pupil:

O Teacher, what shall I do to reach to Wisdom?

O Wise One, what, to gain perfection?

Search for the Paths. But, O Lanoo (disciple), be of clean heart before thou startest on thy journey. Before thou takest thy first step learn to discern the real from the false, the ever-fleeting from the everlasting. Learn above all to separate Head-learning from Soul-Wisdom, the “Eye” from the “Heart” doctrine.

Self-Knowledge is of loving deeds the child.

To live to benefit mankind is the first step.

To practice the six glorious virtues is the second.

‘Tis from the bud of Renunciation of the Self that springeth the sweet fruit of final Liberation.

Be humble if thou wouldst attain to Wisdom.

Hast thou attuned thy being to humanity’s great pain, O candidate for light?

Can there be bliss when all that lives must suffer? Shalt thou be saved and hear the whole world cry?

If through the Hall of Wisdom thou wouldst reach the Vale of Bliss, Disciple, close fast thy senses against the great dire heresy of separateness that weans thee from the rest.

Ere thy Soul’s mind can understand, the bud of personality must be crushed out, the worm of sense destroyed past resurrection.

Desire nothing. Chafe not at Karma, nor at Nature’s changeless laws. But struggle only with the personal, the transitory, the evanescent and the perishable.

Beware lest thou shouldst set a foot still soiled upon the ladder’s lowest rung. Woe unto him who dares pollute one rung with miry feet. The foul and viscous mud will dry, become tenacious, then glue his feet unto the spot, and like a bird caught in the wily fowler’s lime, he will be stayed from further progress. His vices will take shape and drag him down. His sins will raise

their voices like as the jackal's laugh and sob after the sun goes down; his thoughts become an army and bear him off a captive slave.

Kill thy desires, Lanoo, make thy vices impotent, ere the first step is taken on the solemn journey.

HYPNOTISM

Hypnotism is another form of Black Magic. It is the using of power over others for motives that are either selfish or ignorant. In the one case the Black Magic is conscious, in the other unconscious. Unless such powers are used with beneficence and knowledge, they are abused. Mere ignorant benevolence does not satisfy them. Hypnotists confess that the power they use is not understood by them and that it is very far-reaching and often produces unexpected effects.

When Hypnotism is practiced as an entertainment, on the stage or in the social circle, it is a dabbling in the occult arts, which, as said, is rash and dangerous. If practiced with the view of obtaining power over people it is of course deliberate sorcery. If practiced with the benevolent idea of overcoming alcoholism, etc., the benevolence of the motive cannot avert the injury that may be done by the ignorance.

When Hypnotism is done with the consent of the subject, the subject renders himself passive and tries to surrender control of his mind and faculties. The operator then exerts himself to assume the control thus laid down. If the matter ended here, not so much harm would be done. But it is found that a *rapport* has been permanently established between the two, the conditions and extent of which neither understands. Consequently there is unconscious interaction between the two natures, which may result in a transference of the faults of the one to the other — in either direction. Besides this, the subject has opened a door in his nature, as it were, and loosened the union between his will and his faculties. Through this open door may enter hostile influences, whose existence neither hypnotizer nor subject counted on. Every time the subject surrenders his control, he weakens still further his grip on his own faculties, paving the way to mediumship and obsession. The operator pours into his subject's opened organism influences from his own which he does not understand, and many of which may be injurious.

The folly of handing oneself over to a public hypnotist is simply inconceivable. Would anyone allow a doctor to experiment on him with powerful new drugs whose effects the doctor did not profess to understand? Yet in this case only the body would be risked; whereas the hypnotic subject surrenders body *and mind too*. The influences to which he so surrenders as much of his nature as he can are more powerful, more subtle and more unknown than any drug. The character of the operator is not known. Even should he have the credentials of an honest man, so far

as ordinary human judgment is able to assign them, might he not have secret defects? And even if he were honest all through, so far as he himself could determine, he still might be unfit to hypnotize anyone. For such fitness demands a greater purity than ordinary standards can measure. But often he is merely a public entertainer whose real character, good or bad, is wholly unknown.

It is not safe for anyone to practice hypnotism, whatever his motives. Even a benevolent doctor, trying to relieve a man of a bad habit, would not be justified. In the first place this is a mistaken way of trying to cure the victim. Instead of strengthening his own control over himself, it ousts his control and substitutes that of another man. Hence when this extraneous help is withdrawn, the victim must find himself as bad, and probably worse, than before. To cure bad habits the ordinary methods of careful supervision and help in institutions devoted to that purpose should be used; and the victim shown how to develop his own will and assisted to regain control over himself. Under the teachings of Theosophy this can be done; for Theosophy searches deeper into the causes of evil in the character and can show people wherein their mistake lies and how to overcome it.

In view of the uses which unscrupulous persons may make of hypnotism, it is certainly not desirable that its use should become generally known; for we cannot hope to be able to control the use of such a subtle power by legislation or police. But even those people who are regarded as harmless or even beneficent cannot be safely permitted to use this power, because they do not understand it, and as much harm may be done through ignorance as through malice. Not only is the practice fraught with danger to the subject, but also to the operator; for he puts himself in *rapport* with a large number of perverted natures which he is trying to cure, and soon the back-pressure of all this evil may flow in upon him and upset him, as many cases testify.

Thus, while Hypnotism used for personal ends is obviously maleficent, Hypnotism used for benevolent purposes is also maleficent, because it is an ignorant use of psychic powers. The violent interference with another person's will and faculties cannot be justified on any grounds. The supposed cure does more harm than good, and the real cure can be effected in normal and natural ways.

CLAIRVOYANCE

This word is usually employed to denote the ability to use the visual faculty of the astral double, without the intermediation of the physical eye, and the power of seeing forms in the astral light. It is true that in a certain stage of our development the astral or thought-world becomes objective to our psychic vision, and that we can see the thoughts of people objectivized as pictures, or perceive objects composed of astral substance.

This faculty is, however, a great danger and hindrance to real development, if forced and not allowed to develop normally. It merely increases our temptations, responsibilities and difficulties, without correspondingly augmenting our power to cope with them. If our desire is only to live the life of service, as is the case with all students of true Occultism, we shall have no motive for trying to develop psychic powers before the time when it is right and expedient that we should do so. That time is when we have so far purified our nature from all vanity, lust, curiosity, ambition and other forms of weakness, that the powers can be possessed with safety and advantage. If, however, we undertake to force the development of clairvoyance, it is a sign that we are actuated by undesirable motives such as those just enumerated. The presence of such motives and of our unconquered frailties will render the acquisition of our new powers, if we are successful in developing any, a curse instead of a blessing. Thoughts and desires which have haunted us will now appear as objective shapes; our attention will ever be distracted by the multitudinous occupants of a new and inexhaustible world; we shall not have the power of dismissing what is unwelcome or of not seeing what we do not want to see. In many ways life will be more difficult and dangerous for us.

The physical body is a protection to all who live in civilization and whose desires and weaknesses are not purified. To develop the astral senses we must render it much more sensitive, and this it is not safe to do without due protection and guidance.

The possession of clairvoyance would be of no use, either to ourselves or to society. Instead of adding to the number of our faculties, we ought to learn to make good use of those we have. But as it is, we are so lacking in self-control and poise that the senses and organs continually lead us astray. Much more would this be the case, did we possess the subtle power of clairvoyance. Unable to control the wayward currents of our thoughts, blown hither and thither by little winds of desire, emotion and caprice, we should most certainly fall an easy prey to the weird denizens of the new world into which we had so rashly poked our devoted head. That this is true can easily be seen in the experiences of people who endeavor to develop clairvoyance. In most cases they are fortunately unsuccessful; but in those cases wherein a measure of success is attained the result is not worth achieving, being usually nothing more than the ability to see vague casual pictures that float unbidden before the eye, coming and going at their own will. If the clairvoyant should be able to see things in other people's minds, we do not find that his powers are of such a nature as to be useful either to himself or the other persons.

There are some individuals, born naturally sensitive, who use clairvoyance for exhibition purposes; and what applies to hypnotism, mediumship, etc., applies to this also: namely, that the use of psychic powers for moneymaking purposes is an abuse, and leads sooner or later

to disaster in one form or another. Either the user becomes discredited or his nervous system breaks down.

There are a few people who possess natural clairvoyance in conjunction with a pure and disinterested character, free from all vanity, ambition and curiosity. They shrink from exhibiting their powers, which they keep secret as far as possible. They never abuse them, and regard them rather as a heavy responsibility than as an accomplishment.

Astral vision, together with other powers, will grow normally in the course of our progress along the true Path of Perfection, and when we have reached that point where it is both safe and useful that we should have them. Needless to say, our own personal judgment, grounded on desire and pride, is no criterion as to when this time shall arrive; the powers will not come in obedience to a desire for them, since the presence of that desire would disqualify us for their right use. Only when we are disinterested about the matter will it be advisable for us to be so endowed.

But there is a higher kind of clairvoyance than that of the mere astral senses. This is the awakening of the Spiritual Eye — the true Intuition — the faculty which enables us to penetrate beyond the false ideas thrown up by the delusion of separateness and to glimpse the true Life, the Life of the Soul. This faculty is the Divine Light spoken of by Jesus and the other World-Saviors, as coming to him who sacrifices his personal life to the great Cause of Compassion, and who purifies his heart from all the dross of passions and his mind from all the delusions of vanity and prejudice. Such a faculty does not peer into other people's private mental diaries, nor throw open the enchanted pleasure grounds of the inner senses. It enables us to discern our right path in life and to discriminate the true from the false. This faculty has its appropriate organs in the body; but it is not well to discuss this point, because it might lead to foolish and rash experiments. It is known as the "Eye of Śiva," and the "Third Eye."

In earlier Races of humanity there was a physical organ, the Third Eye, corresponding to this inner faculty. We have a mutilated historical record of it in the stories of the Cyclopes, and an anatomical representative as regards surviving animals in certain species of lizards.

The development of this true Clairvoyance cannot but be good; but it cannot be gained by occult arts. Spiritual powers are the reward of unselfishness and purity; cupidity in any form prevents their unfoldment. This fact holds good even on the physical plane, for lust and intemperance destroy the finer mechanism of the brain. Even in the mind, the presence of a desire would act like a flame, burning up the finer senses. Hence it is useless to try to develop this faculty by any ordinary mode of concentration or acquisition; for the efforts would defeat themselves. It must be allowed to grow spontaneously as the consequence of unselfish living.

SPIRITUALISM

Theosophists admit the reality of spiritualistic phenomena (though there are also cases of fraudulent phenomena), but deny the spiritualistic theories. One of the purposes of this Manual is to show that spiritualists are engaged in a most dangerous practice, which has been universally condemned by the wise in all ages, but into which we have ignorantly blundered in consequence of our ignorance on all matters beyond the physical plane.

Spiritualism is the modern name for the practice of communicating with the astral remnants of the dead and with certain semi-intelligent beings called “elementals,” which are not human. This practice has been known from all antiquity. It is mentioned by the Teachers of real Occultism as one of the dangers into which a rash neophyte is apt to fall if he enters upon the sacred Science without due purity of heart and life. Immediately beyond the physical world lies the astral world, the lower stratum of which, being nearest the Earth, is filled with the basest elements of human thought and passion, and also with the “shells” of recently deceased persons, which shells are in process of dying out. Anyone who, by nature or practice, is able to dissociate to some extent the astral body from the physical, is apt to come in contact with this dangerous and undesirable realm, against the assaults and contamination of which our gross physical body normally protects us. This is the case with mediums — persons whose astral body is loosely connected with the physical.

When these practices were revived in America and England about the middle of last century, ignorant people imagined that they were in communication with the actual immortal Spirits of deceased people! Hence the name Spiritualism. The phenomena may have served to convince some materialists that there is *something* which survives the physical body and that there are certain laws of Nature unknown to science; but the practice has not elevated the ideas of its adherents as to the nature of the “spirits” and their postmortem destiny.

It is important that we should fully understand that there is nothing new about *postmortem* “communications.” Under the name of Necromancy this intercourse was known to medieval sorcery. In India it is known and feared as Bhûta-worship — Bhûts being the astral remnants of the deceased. It has always been regarded as a practice to be shunned and as belonging to the “Black Art.” Its revival in the last century under the guise of a blessed revelation is due to the fearful ignorance of people concerning their own history and to the materialism fostered by both religion and science.

The *genuine* phenomena of Spiritualism are of course admitted by Theosophists. They may be roughly divided into communications, materializations, and other physical phenomena.

Firstly, as to communications. The nature of these shows the inferiority of their source. No new revelation has been given through their means. Once in a long while, perhaps, we may have had something of a superior quality, though even then nothing striking or original. But the great bulk of such communications are of a very inferior kind: platitudes, wordy disquisitions, weak moral injunctions. There is nothing said that could not be better said by many still embodied spirits. It is clear that such utterances do not proceed from the freed Spirit of man unless we are to believe that that Spirit loses in intelligence after its disembodiment. They proceed from one or more of the following sources: the thoughts floating about in the astral light; the minds and subconscious memories of the sitters; the lowest part of the mind of the deceased. When the medium becomes entranced, he may simply read the subconscious minds of his circle or transmit any thought-current which may chance to drift his way. Or, if he comes in contact with a shell, he may act as the mouthpiece of the automatic “mind” of that shell. The fact that a communication is received in an unusual way does not guarantee its high or worthy origin. The astral light and the subconscious memories of people teem with ideas of all sorts, mostly of the motley order that fit through our minds in the dream-state. The hand of the entranced medium may be guided over the paper by the entity which has obsessed him. His vocal organs may be used in the same way. Sometimes a person is able to write “automatically” without being entranced. Again messages may be communicated by a code of raps. In all cases the matter communicated is usually of a vague or very ordinary type.

Next, as to materializations. These may be effected in various ways. To quote from William Q. Judge, late Leader of the THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AMERICA, a man of great knowledge and experience:

Materialization of a form out of the air, independently of the medium’s physical body, is a fact. But it is not a spirit. As was very well said by one of the “spirits” not favored by spiritualism, one way to produce this phenomenon is by the accretion of electrical and magnetic particles into one mass, upon which matter is aggregated as an image reflected out of the Astral sphere. This is the whole of it; as much a fraud as a collection of muslin and masks.... The second method is by the use of the Astral body of the living medium. In this case the Astral form exudes from the side of the medium, gradually collects upon itself particles extracted from the air and the bodies of the sitters present, until at last it becomes visible. Sometimes it will resemble the medium; at other times it bears a different appearance....

Some so-called materializations are hollow mockeries, as they are but flat plates of electrical and magnetic substances on which pictures from the Astral Light are reflected. These seem to be the faces of the dead, but they are simply pictured illusions....

Three explanations of materialization are offered: First, that the astral body of the living medium detaches itself from its corpus and assumes the appearance of the so-called spirit; for one of the properties of the astral matter is capacity to reflect an image existing unseen in ether. Second, the astral shell of the deceased — wholly devoid of his or her spirit or conscience — becomes visible and tangible when the condition of air and ether is such as so to alter the vibration of the molecules of the astral shell that it may become visible. The phenomena of density and apparent weight are explained by other laws. Third, an unseen mass of electrical and magnetic matter is collected, and upon it is reflected out of the astral light a picture of any desired person either dead or living. This is taken to be the “spirit” of such persons, but it is not, and has been justly called by H. P. Blavatsky a “psychological fraud,” because it pretends to be what it is not. And, strange to say, this very explanation of materializations has been given by a “spirit” at a regular séance, but has never been accepted by the spiritualists just because it upsets their notion of the return of the spirits of deceased persons.

Thus ignorant man may cooperate with disembodied intelligences of a very low order, or with intelligences that never have been embodied, in order to produce either a “psychological fraud” or an obsession. Elsewhere the nature of the *Kâma Rûpa* or Spook or Shell has been described. These entities are above all desirous of physical sensation, of which they have been deprived; they often obsess weak persons against the will of the latter, causing insanity and crimes; but the (ignorant) medium positively encourages them, and mediums and sitters thus lend their bodies to the purposes of these too often unclean beings.

Next, as to the other phenomena, such as levitation, apportion, slate-writing and the like. There are powers in man and in Nature not recognized by modern science, able to produce such phenomena; but they are quite indifferent as to moral worth, and their production is no guarantee of sanctity. If we could disengage our astral form normally, as the future man will be able to do, we should be able to produce such phenomena intelligently and voluntarily. As it is the medium disengages his astral form by an abnormal process, and produces the phenomena without being able to direct or understand them.

The effects of mediumship are always ultimately disastrous. It involves a yielding up of one’s organism to the control of extraneous influences; and such surrender of our throne is in itself hazardous. For into the open door rush all kinds of influences against which we are normally shielded, but to which we have now given access without waiting to acquire the necessary knowledge and power of self-defense. Such practices render one unbalanced and liable to obsession. But when we add that the influences to which the door is thus opened may belong to a conscienceless and often positively vicious type, the danger becomes even more obvious. Such a consorting with the denizens of *Kâma-loka*, and that too in the bonds of a union of no common closeness, is certain to work injury to the whole nature, physically and morally. Thus it is that many mediums fall a prey to disease physical and mental or lose their moral balance. The effect upon the sitters is the same in a less degree.

Humanity must have been deeply despairing if Spiritism could afford them true hope and satisfaction. Its few grains of promise are mixed up with a great deal of chaff. Many whom it may have benefited by introducing them to the idea of higher possibilities, have left it to seek those possibilities elsewhere; for a continuance in it means a repetition of a dreary round. The atmosphere of a *séance* is not inspiring. One asks if the mental fiber of those to whom it appears to appeal can be high. H. P. Blavatsky tried to lead the Spiritualists on to something better, but they were steeped in materialism — of all things! Their idea was, not to spiritualize life, but to materialize, if possible, the spiritual.

If we had the slightest idea of the wonder and extent of the powers latent in our nature, we would not allow ourselves to be victimized by beings which often belong to the lowest astral stratum and whose object is merely to prolong their life at our expense.

It should be kept in mind that the remarks on these and other subjects throughout this Manual are made as simplified statements of Theosophical doctrine, and with no desire or intention of willfully attacking any sincere ethical beliefs, however mistaken and erroneous the writer may consider them in the light of Theosophy.

PSYCHIC FADS

Theosophy teaches the dynamic power of thought. Many people have found out the power of thought for themselves. In their ignorance and Western vanity they have regarded it as a new and wonderful discovery, and have attached the idea to all sorts of religions, sects, cults and philosophies.

Theosophy discountenances all such movements, because their followers are either floundering ignorantly, or else — consciously or unconsciously — misusing the occult powers of nature. The power of thought is good or evil according to the motive. If the motive is in any way selfish, even though *apparently* innocent, harm will result.

Is not the motive of those who practice mental healing and self-culture almost invariably a selfish and personal one? Regardless of their merits and deserts, they crave ardently for better physical health or a more peaceful state of mind. Could they see more clearly, they might know that their illness is perhaps a blessing in disguise, as being a purgation of the soul or a means of acquiring fortitude and self-restraint. By removing a disease from the physical plane, we may drive it inwards and impair our mental or moral nature. The art of the ordinary physician is wholesome, because it applies physical means to overcome physical complaints. It does not drive the disease in, but removes it. But when we apply the powers of the will and imagination, we are invoking powers which we do not understand and cannot control; and, further, we may be guilty of degrading high powers to questionable uses.

There is no doubt that psychic healers can often perform cures, temporary ones. Thought has a great power, and sickness is often the result of delusion. But nevertheless they are guilty of violent interference with the course of Nature, and we are bound to point out that the risk in doing so is very great. This is no idle bogey, such as has sometimes been used to discourage truth-seekers; it is a warning issued by those who are aware of the dangers of dabbling in occultism.

Let us enumerate some of the dangers. First, when a man arouses the latent powers of will and imagination, he arouses a great deal more than he bargains for. He may banish his physical symptoms, but arouse worse symptoms on other planes. Our unregenerate nature is full of sleeping dogs which should be let lie. How many would-be psychics have found this out to their cost! Again, he has aroused a power over which he has not perfect control; and any moment when he is under the influence of anger or lust, he may do damage. Again, the powers which are aroused are essentially wrong powers, for the simple reason that they respond to the call of desire and impatience. They may proceed from the lowest centers of the organism, and will work mischief, even though the motive and intention of the evoker is apparently innocent and laudable.

When there is a large body of people practicing these processes, we have a band of dabblers in magic arousing the latent forces that may produce results of far-reaching evil effect on humanity. A maleficent force may be generated by their *collective* action, and this force can be, and is, utilized by other minds actively maleficent, for destructive purposes. A motley and miscellaneous horde of people, of all shades of character, are united together by a psychic tie, and there is no guarantee whatever against the wholesale psychic evils that may flow from it.

Neurosis is a characteristic disease of the present day. Neurosis may be greatly promoted by such psychic healing. The intense accentuation of self-consciousness, the vividness of moods and sensations, the absorption in oneself and one's feelings — all these disagreeable symptoms characteristic of the neurotic are found rampant among the "new-thoughtists."

Where the intention is to cure oneself, the motive is obviously personal; and such a motive, however harmless in an ordinary way, is not admissible where occult powers are concerned, because selfishness colors the energy with the Kâmic or *desire-principle* and renders it destructive. Where the intention is to heal somebody else, the same remarks will apply as were made in speaking of Hypnotism. The power invoked carries with it more than the invoker knows of or intends. It may carry, from his unregenerate nature, influences of which he is unaware, that will be harmful to his subject. Besides, equally with self-cure, it is an indiscriminate interference with the course of Nature, like an ignorant prayer

to God that our own foolish wishes may be granted. In short, it is simply a form of hypnotism, open to the same objection.

Among the psychics of many kinds we have a mixed crowd of people who have learned to use “influences”; and it seems inevitable that we shall have, if we have them not already, instances of strife, personal and party, which will disrupt those bodies. They contain no binding principle other than that which binds people together in a community of self-interest. So long as desires do not conflict, all is well; but when interests clash, there will be strife.

The reason why these movements have gained some popularity is because they do really in many cases enable people to evoke some power and produce results beyond the normal. And because these results are beyond the normal, people in their ignorance of the mysteries of human nature imagine that they must be holy and beneficent. But there are many powers which, though from the viewpoint of our ignorance they can be called “occult,” are nevertheless forces of the lower nature. The power of desire is very great; and when to it is added the power of the imagination, we get a dynamic agency that may produce results. But in all cases where the use of this power is selfish, or where it is merely ignorant, the forces evoked are dangerous. The power of desire, once awakened, may prove our master. We are apt to mistake it for the voice of God. The history of so-called religious movements is full of cases where some great “prophet” has begun with a “divine” message and ended in disgrace. The power evoked was simply his own desire, which speedily transmuted itself into its lowest aspect and brought about the ruin of his moral balance.

It is indeed high time that people knew of the Higher Nature and of true Occultism, whose keynote is not desire but unselfish love and compassion; which knows no anxiety about the condition of the body or the mind or the circumstances, but has faith in the great Law it serves.

There is about the whole field of these new fads and theories of many kinds a something that is not healthy, a morbid atmosphere of introspection and circumscription to self, which must surely repel healthy-minded people. If the evil of life is self-consciousness, then it can surely never be cured by methods which only intensify it. The only way is to forget self in disinterested work for others.

CONCLUSION

In these days, when humanity has become so intimately knit together by the invention of means of intercommunication and by the expansion of commerce, we can no longer, with safety to the interests of the race, live exclusive lives and confine our studies and activities to a private sphere. Our actions are far-reaching; we influence the world and the world influences us, as never before in history. It behooves each individual to

recognize more fully, both in his aims and acts, his position as a part of the whole.

Hence we cannot consider the present question as a purely private pursuit, but are bound to take into account its influence on humanity as a whole. The question is, what will be the result of a general diffusion of interest in the study and practice of the occult arts? For answer we have only to look around and see how humanity has used the powers put into its hands by modern science, and we shall be ready to admit that what is most needed just now is not greater knowledge of science, but greater self-control and moral responsibility. Whatever excellence may be claimed for any science, we have to reckon whether that science is likely to be abused or not; and if so, we must condemn its indiscriminate diffusion.

People do not realize yet what they have already been saved from by the work of Theosophy. Without this work, we should now be in the midst of a pandemonium of "occultism" such as cannot be described. But Theosophy has turned most of the interest in occultism into right channels, associating it indissolubly with Altruism; at the same time forcing those who will not recognize Oneness as their guiding principle, into paths that lead to naught. The work of Theosophists will be valued in the future, when the conditions in the world will call for champions of the Truth, and there will be forthcoming a body of workers trained in the noble traditions of true Wisdom.

10

The Astral Light

A Student

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INTRODUCTORY

In this Manual the Astral Light will be treated, not as a subject of curious study to minister to intellectual enjoyment or personal ambition, but as a topic of vital importance to every human being and the human race generally. The subject belongs to that vast region of knowledge which has been left unexplored by, both religion and science, yet which is so necessary for all who wish to live aright. It is surely essential that man should understand his own nature; yet concerning the nature of the Soul, the real man, we have nothing but maxims and dogmas from religion, and from science only confession of ignorance. From Theosophy alone do we get definite teachings about the inner nature of man and about the higher planes of Nature.

In view of this ignorance, it is obvious that it will be impossible to write an accurate treatise on the Astral Light. Current notions on the range of ideas involved are far too vague. We must be content with a somewhat shadowy outline. Nevertheless even this outline will suffice to open up a new world to those for whom the subject has been hitherto unfamiliar.

It may as well be stated here that the term “Astral Light” is used vaguely and loosely in this Manual; for the range of subjects herein considered is so unfamiliar to modern thought that any attempt at accuracy or detail would be confusing at this introductory stage of the inquiry. In *The Secret Doctrine* H. P. Blavatsky gives the term a restricted meaning, and distinguishes the Astral Light proper from other things that have been confused with it. Those desirous of fuller information are therefore referred to that source. It may briefly be stated that the Universal Substance is called *Prakriti*. *Âkâśa* is *Prakriti* in its primary state. The Astral Light is only the seventh plane, the plane immediately above physical matter. *Âkâśa* may be called the Soul of the Astral Light, and the Astral Light the body of *Âkâśa*. The Astral Light is connected with the lower mind and its psychic activities; the *Âkâśa* with spiritual activities. Yet in some introductory writings *Âkâśa* and Astral Light are confused, the whole being loosely denominated “Astral Light.”

A ROUGH IDEA OF THE ASTRAL LIGHT

We may get a rough idea by comparing the Astral Light with the scientific conception of Ether. This Ether is (hypothetically) an omnipresent and all-permeating fluid or medium, which is the vehicle for the manifestation of various forms of energy, such as light and electricity. It is supposed to be matter, yet can have none of the properties of ordinary matter; indeed ordinary matter is by many believed to be a particular condition of the Ether. Thus we get from science a notion of a substance that is all-permeating, without weight or other perceptible quality, and yet

the basis of all manifestations of energy, if not of all materiality. Though the Astral Light is not the Ether (indeed the Ether is only hypothetical), yet to some extent the two overlap.

Again, we may speak of the Astral Light as “thought-substance.” Taking thoughts to be things, we say they are made on the lowest plane of this thought substance, just as material objects are made of physical matter.

Still again, we *may* call it the Soul of the World, though, as explained farther on, that term includes vastly more than the term Astral Light properly includes; the Astral Light being strictly only the *lowest* plane of the World-Soul. But, using the phrase roughly, we may say that it is the soul of which the *material* world is the body. In this soul are the ideas which in the physical world becomes manifest as forms. From this point of view it can be seen that the Astral Light corresponds to the Astral Double or *Linga-sarîra* in Man, being the model-form of Nature, on which the atoms of her outer crust are shaped.

It may be asked: why Astral *Light*? Because it manifests itself visibly to the inner eye of the clairvoyant. The power of exhibiting its stored impressions as pictures is one of its salient properties, and it has often been described by this property, though it has many others.

Having thus given a preliminary notion of the subject, we shall proceed to discuss and elaborate it from various points of view.

THE ASTRAL LIGHT AND RELIGION

For want of such a conception, religion has left us wandering in darkness, feeding on the empty husks of dogma when we should have definite knowledge. For want of it the word Soul is a mere abstraction. For want of it we cannot trace the workings of Divine Law and are obliged to regard them as supernatural and contrary to science. With a knowledge of it we shall find many of our religious beliefs authenticated and confirmed scientifically: the theories of religion will become facts in life; righteousness will cease to be a mere state of mind and become a dynamic power: Man will be a responsible worker and former instead of a helpless suppliant.

As the Astral Light forms the bridge between matter and mind, so it forms the bridge between science and religion. It raises science to the plane of thought and feeling, and it brings religion down into the affairs of daily life. In this realm of study, the accuracy of science and the reverence of religion are blended into one. It is Theosophy, which is neither religion nor science, but both.

Under the teachings of religion and science, Man has imagined that he lives a separate private life, all shut up in his own thoughts. Consequently he has not troubled to guard those thoughts or to learn to direct them. True, we are taught that hatred and lust committed in thought are as

good as already done. But this is a mere assertion and does not convince us sufficiently for practical purposes. The Astral Light supplies the missing link. Every thought that we think stamps its impress on the Astral Light and passes away from our ken to be launched on the ocean of thought-substance, where it will influence other minds, for good, for ill. For we live in the Astral Light, as we live in the atmosphere. All breathe it; it is private to no one. Our so-called privacy is not so private as we think. It may be private in so far as other people are not able to recognize which of their own thoughts have proceeded from us and which not, and cannot tell what we may be thinking. But it is not private in the sense of exclusive property. We interchange thoughts, sentiments, etc., from mind to mind. When a thought or an emotion floats into our mental sphere, we absorb it and attribute to it a quality of originality, whereas it may have come from another mind. Perhaps we may just look at it and pass it away again, perhaps we may take it in and digest it, perhaps we may reject it altogether. Marconi has shown us how a tube of iron filings can be mounted on a tall pole and receive messages from the ends of the Earth, copying the vibrations to which it has been attuned. How is this explained? The brain is a far more wonderful mechanism than the wireless telegraph instruments.

This thought-life that we lead is more important than our outer life. The mental life makes more for weal or woe than the circumstantial life. This is universally admitted. How foolish then to have no science of this thought-life! How necessary to know as much as possible about it!

The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.

Man who man would be
Must keep the empire of himself, in it
Ruling the changes.

Every human being carries about with him, wherever he goes, an atmosphere of a certain quality, which influences all with whom he comes in contact; and which, by its action on the finer forces and substances of Nature, determines to a great extent his fate and fortune. This atmosphere he has spun around himself by his thoughts. No matter how well-intentioned and amiable he may be at the time of his intercourse with others, the atmosphere which he has generated in his private thoughts will, if it is a noxious one, be felt by them and will influence them against him. Here then is the explanation of instinctive antipathies and sympathies. Again, our influence upon the weak, upon women, or upon children, may be injurious, despite our outward behavior or even our excellent intentions; for we may carry with us an atmosphere of impurity generated by our

covert acts and private thoughts, which may harm those whom we desire to protect.

This topic could be enlarged upon indefinitely, and has been so by writers on the power of thought. But it should not have been left for the dabblers in “occultism” and “New-Thoughtists”; our religious teachers should have instructed us in it. This huge domain of moral hygiene has been neglected, and preachers are battling with conditions much as a doctor in the old days might have battled with the plague amid filth and reckless living. We allow our children to mix with all sorts of people, and many of these people must, according to the law of probabilities, be moral lepers. What sort of guarantee do parents ever demand of the worthiness of a person’s inner life, before entrusting him with the care of their children? Again, what supervision do they exercise over the minds of their children, over what they read and see and hear and ponder over?

The Astral Light is the great agent of Karma, which is the Divine Law of Justice. For our acts and thoughts create impresses on its substance which afterwards react upon us. Thus are we makers of our own destiny and our own rewarders or executioners. When we remember that the Astral Light, using the term in its widest sense, includes grades of cosmic substance extending up through finer and finer gradations to the very vesture of Deity, we shall realize that this retributive action is not merely mechanical; for these higher grades of substance are better described by the word “Soul,” being conscious and endowed with intelligence and wisdom. Thus, in the wider sense, the Astral Light is a veritable God, and as such is represented in the old mythologies.

The events of our life are determined by causes for which science has no explanation, and which theology attributes to the will of God. Of course everything that happens is under the will of Being, so this explanation is not sufficient. Our actions are determined by various emotions, ideas and caprices — our own or other people’s — and these again are determined by the latent or stored up proclivities in our minds and those of others. It is in the Astral Light that these proclivities are stored up. Hence it forms the link between our doings and their fruit. We set a pendulum in motion and it swings back on us. So the Astral Light may appear as guardian angel or avenging demon, according to circumstances. And, though it is of course an agent of the Supreme Deity, we are not forbidden to use our own god-given intelligence in trying to understand and control its action. Heaven helps those who help themselves. Our duty, then, in this respect, is to recognize our fate as the equitable outcome of our merits, and to avoid, as far as we can, generating any more of the undesired kind.

THE ASTRAL LIGHT AND SCIENCE

Is the Astral Light matter, or a kind of space, or a force? The answer must be that none of these words is sufficiently well defined to admit of a definite reply.

The words “matter” and “force (or motion),” as used by modern science, stand for abstractions — that is, for *concepts* having no real existence except as attributes of something else. All that we can discover in the physical world is Life — matter in motion. Everywhere is matter in motion; nowhere is matter without motion, or motion without matter. The Ether itself cannot be thought of except as vibrant with energy, nor can any form of motion be imagined otherwise than as taking place in some medium or form of matter. It has been demonstrated that the terms atom, force, motion, and the like, have no meaning in themselves. Abstract matter is utterly unthinkable, as is also abstract motion or force. The only real entity in the world of our observations is a mysterious something which we can only call “life,” or “matter in motion”; once try to analyze this into component parts, and those component parts cease to be independent entities and become abstractions,— much as if we should try to analyze a red cow into a compound of redness and bovinity.

Hence it is absurd to try to denominate the “Astral Light” by such vague terms. We can only, for present purposes at least, speak of the familiar physical world as a “plane” of existence, or a “plane” of manifestation; and then call the Astral Light another “plane.”

What is meant by the word “plane”? It is a question of sensory cognition. The physical plane is that much of the Universe which is perceptible to our physical senses. There is no physical world apart; no separate independent physical world. This is a common error. We take the physical world to be something separate, with a real existence of its own; and then we imagine the Astral world, or perhaps the “soul,” to be something superadded, something separate from the physical world, or interpenetrating it, or hovering over it. But the Universe is all one, and the limitations of our senses and minds alone divide it into departments. The limits of the physical world are more or less arbitrary limits imposed by the sense and imaginations of humanity collectively. Nature is a vast, fathomless, prolific mystery; we see but her outermost veils; but to the discerning eye of the Seer those veils are penetrable as by the *x-rays* of a higher science.

The point, then, is that in order to reach another plane, we have to develop other faculties of perception, and see more of Nature. The whole is present, but we see only parts. To speak of anything as being on the Astral Plane would mean that it was in a condition in which it could not be perceived by the ordinary senses.

As taught in Theosophy, the Universe is analyzable into three hypostases: Spirit, Substance, and Life; the last being the result of the interaction of the first two. What the ultimate Universal Spirit — the All-Father, or Divine Fire, etc. — is, we cannot know. Only its manifestations are knowable; and it has many manifestations. Through Eternal Substance does it manifest itself, in endless forms and degrees; and Eternal Substance is capable of many grades, from the finest to the grossest. Even in the physical world, we see the Eternal Spirit manifesting itself through the outermost layers of Eternal Substance and kindling the fire of life and growth in every atom. We may study its endless effects and manifestations, its own essential nature ever eludes us. In our minds the same Spirit manifests itself, giving rise to the countless feelings, emotions, incentives, thoughts, etc. The highest vehicle in Man through which the Spirit acts is *Buddhi* — the Spiritual Soul; and it also acts through other and lower vehicles, giving rise to our mental life, our physical life, etc.

Philosophically, things are analyzed into a duality, variously called Subjective and Objective, Spirit and Substance, masculine and feminine, Action and Potentiality, etc. In the physical world there is the same duality, Energy (manifested as heat, chemical action, etc.) and Substance — the active side and the formative or receptive side. The interaction of the two produces the objects of the physical world, or what science calls “matter.” The final substantial basis of our physical matter escapes us; so does the ultimate energy that animates it. In the world of our ideas, in the thought-life, there is the same plan and process. Our thoughts are entities produced by the dynamic molding power of Spirit upon Substance. This is a fact not sufficiently realized, though some philosophers have recognized the duality of thought.

There is a thought-substance, and a mental energy which actuates it; and the two together constitute Thought. This must be borne clearly in mind. Thoughts are things, indeed.

Now these thoughts are the objects which exist on the Astral Plane (more strictly on several planes, of which the Astral is one). The Astral Light is the space or theater of their existence. So the Astral Light may be compared to an atmosphere in which float thought-forms. We live in this atmosphere like a fish in water; and, like a fish, we breathe it in and out through mental gills, taking from it and adding to it. Truly everyone will admit that this thought-life of ours is at least as important as our life in the physical world; yet how little have we studied it. Science and religion cannot or will not tell us anything about it. But this plane is as real and as complex as the physical plane. There should be a full and luminous science of it, if humanity is to be able to rule his life intelligently and not be an irresponsible animal or a blunderer.

Clearly a scientific study of the Astral Light or thought-world would demand new conceptions of space, force and kindred subjects. When we

speak of space, we usually have in mind the ordinary threefold extension which is characteristic of the physical plane; and consciously we infer that extension is an essential property of space. But this is an error. If we abstract from space every property belonging to matter, the idea of extension vanishes. Emptiness has no dimensions, no size, no boundaries. Most people, when they think of space, imagine only a mass of points or a very large room with walls. So the space in which thoughts exist has nothing in common with a threefold extension. Some help may be derived from the familiar transcendental idea of the "Fourth Dimension," if one is clear-minded enough to use it *only* as mathematical symbolism. It may enable us to understand better how distance may be annihilated, and how much more complicated and various may be the interrelations possible among objects pertaining to such a space, than is the case with objects limited by the exigencies of ordinary matter.

Our thoughts evidently do not obey the laws of ordinary physics. The thought-world is fluidic, protean, infinitely capacious and flexible. The memory is a store-house, with a capacity and convenience of access such as no filing cabinet can boast.

The physical body is the mere shell of the man within. Anatomy reveals nothing but structure. There are cells, the walls of which are again cells. It is only a question of high-power microscopy, and we find that all apparent solidity seems made up of spaces. In the spaces are liquids which move about and change in chemical composition. We suspect the presence of an intelligent being somewhere behind all this machinery; but we see him not. The gap would be filled, could we perceive the Astral man within; for, though even the Astral man is (in his turn) but the instrument of what is still more interior, yet he stands in a causal relation to the physical body. Hence we may regard our physical organism as the creation of our thoughts, the Astral plane as more real than the physical, and the Astral Light as the actual material out of which atoms are built, from which vital substances are born, into which they vanish again.

It is scarcely realized how very much science stands in need of a conception like that of the Astral Light, to complete its thoughts. For want of this link, all sorts of absurd hypotheses have to be formulated. The essential properties of manifested Nature are traced back through the chain of their effects until we reach the limits of observation, and then we are obliged to postulate some "atom" or "ether" to account for them. These hypothetical elements necessarily fill the positions which should be occupied by the Astral Light and other things which science does not know of. Under the head of the *Linga-śarīra*, in the Manual on *The Seven human principles*, something has been said as to the position occupied by the Astral Double as the link between mind and matter. It is impossible to account for the preservation of the integrity of our physical form and of our memory, unless we postulate the existence of something that remains

intact throughout the continual death and birth of the physical atoms; nor can any explanation be given of the reproduction from a seed of the original tree in all its identity of perfection. To account for this, in scientific lights, we have to suppose that the physical matter of the seed contains in some way all the potentiality of the future growth; a supposition which stretches our conceptions of the possibilities of the atoms beyond reasonable limits. But, once admit that the whole tree is ready beforehand as a fully-formed tree on the astral plane, and that the growing is merely a material weaving of physical atoms upon a ready-formed pattern, and we have a comprehensible explanation. The difficulty is to conceive of the possibility of a kind of matter so different from that with which we are familiar. We cannot eliminate from our mind the notion of three-dimensioned extension, and those other limitations of space (which we call properties of space). We think that space occupied by physical matter is quite full and can contain no more; but space is of indefinite capacity. The thoughts and pictures in our mind exist in total disregard of the geometry of physical space.

We must bear in mind, then, that physical matter and the geometrical spaces between it do not by any means fill the capacity of the Universe; and that there is plenty of room for other things.

In ordinary waking consciousness the Astral plane is not objective to our perceptions. Our attention is centered in the physical sense-organs, and these are out of relation with the Astral World, which consequently is not perceived. But if the physical senses should become inactive and the astral senses awaken, then the Astral World would become objective to our perceptions.

We also get a glimpse of this state of affairs when we cross the borderland between waking and dreaming. In dreaming however, we exist rather in a little world of our own, peopled with the images of our own brain; hence it is regarded as less real than the waking life which we share in common with other people. But there is a thought-world that is as real and as common (more so) to all as is the waking life. In it, however, we should be like a new-fledged bird, flapping about amid dangers, unable to guide or protect ourselves.

Many scientific experiments and speculations favor the idea that every form in Nature is continually throwing off atoms and receiving new ones; so that the material is constantly changing, while the shape remains the same. In fact solid bodies would be rather of the nature of eddies in a stream or lantern pictures on a moving screen. It has been shown by physicists that solidity, rigidity and the other properties characteristic of solids, can be given by a fluid in rapid motion. For instance, a long flexible chain, made of very small brass links, is passed over the rim of a wheel, so as to hang from the wheel in a long loop. The wheel is then rotated with great velocity, and it can be shown that the chain will behave like a rigid

body; any dent made in its catenary will stay in the same place, while the links of the chain flow around the dent. There is also the “vortex theory” of atoms, which supposes atoms to be eddies in a perfect fluid.

But if integrity of form and persistence of qualities inhere, not in the atoms which pass in and out, but in the form — then what is the form? Clearly it will not do to make it a mere attribute of the atoms themselves. If the flowing atoms, when they reach a certain place, take on a certain shape, there must be something in that place to make them take that shape. What is it? Referring to our illustrations, we find that in the case of the eddy in the stream, that which makes the particles of water follow each other around the whirl is “momentum” or the laws of equilibrium in fluids. But this is merely a mathematical expression of the observed *results*. Inertia and gravitation are at the bottom of the matter, and what these are in themselves — we do not know. The actual state of the case is that the physical particles are following a pattern, and are actuated and guided by forces which, though manifest in physical matter, do not originate there. The eddy cannot be both cause and effect of the movement of the particles. In the case of the pictures on the moving screen, we know that the pictures originate in the lantern and have an independent existence apart from the screen, though the screen brings them into another degree of manifestation.

The idea that such an abstraction as a pattern or a certain arrangement of particles can have any existence as such, apart from the material exhibiting it, is a logical fallacy to which some physicists and biologists seem liable. A *memory*, for instance, cannot be a mere *arrangement* of particles; for what is an arrangement? Theosophy puts realities in place of the abstractions with which science fills the gaps in its reasoning.

THE ASTRAL LIGHT AS THE WORLD-SOUL

In the broad sense the Astral Light is the Soul of the World, containing all the invisible forms of life, astral, psychic, mental, spiritual. In the more limited and correct sense it is only the lowest plane of this World-Soul, the one immediately above the physical plane.

It constitutes a kind of mental atmosphere that broods over the Earth and envelops humanity. It acts upon man, and man acts upon it; it acts upon all life. The condition of the Astral Light determines the character of the thought-atmosphere in which we live; it constitutes the “spirit of the times,” the mass of prejudices, habits of thought, and tendencies. We little know what slaves we are to this power; how we suffer it to direct our ideas and desires, molding them to the conventional pattern; how what we think to be original conceptions are simply impressions derived from the mental atmosphere that envelops us. We talk of freedom from visible powers, but

think little of the question of freedom from mental and psychic habits and enthrallments.

As the impure thoughts of men continue for a long time, the Astral Light gradually gets more and more contaminated, and hangs like a pall over humanity. If this process were continued indefinitely, it would result in a poisoning of the human race by its own emanations. But the forces of good which are ever at work on the higher planes — those Great Souls that watch over humanity — by their presence and effort tend to purify the Astral Light. Nevertheless, despite all they can do, the evil is precipitated, in accordance with cyclic law, in the form of cataclysms. From the Astral Light also come epidemics of crime, epidemics of disease, animal and plant epidemics, earthquakes and floods. These are the final result of the impurity of men's thoughts, and in them the evil vents itself and a purification is the result.

It has often been observed how diseases follow man. For instance a certain new epidemic attacks the grapes in a place, shortly after the settlement of that place. The potatoes in one country all mysteriously rot in a particular year; in another the wheat is attacked. The plants live on the Astral Light, which we poison; hence we poison ourselves. So we are responsible for the health of animals and for their character. These inferior beings use up the products that man generates; their psychic nature is derived from man's cast-off psychic clothes, so to say. We all know how the character of a dog depends on that of his master. The ferocity of the tiger, the voracity and sloth of the hog, the treachery of the serpent, all depend upon man. Man is the responsible being in Nature, with power to govern himself, and these lowlier creatures look to him for guidance. If our thoughts were pure, their natures would change. We talk of the faults of Nature, not realizing the extent of our responsibility for them; and wonder why "God" does not remedy them, when we ourselves are his own negligent ministers.

Man cannot sin alone. His thoughts pollute the Astral Light, and injure others. But there is a power to counterbalance this evil; for man has the power to rise to the higher levels and think pure thoughts, thus becoming a sharer in the beneficent work of Nature. By so aspiring he comes in contact with the minds of those Great Helpers of humanity, and forms a link between them and the world of men. He thus becomes what man was meant to be — a Former, a shadow of Deity. Escaping from the dream of personality, which is but a sorry illusion with the mockery of freedom, he enters the larger life and becomes a disposer and director of all those emotional forces which before enslaved him. Thus he realizes his destiny and becomes a true Man. This is the end to which we are all tending, to free ourselves from the attachments which impede action and knowledge and to control the lower laws by our observance of a higher Law.

OTHER NAMES FOR THE ASTRAL LIGHT

Attention must be called to a certain peculiarity of the human mind, by which it confounds the unusual with the miraculous. When we come across any unusual phenomena, such as thought-transference, astral vision, or spiritualistic phenomena, we are struck with awe, and think it necessary to invent some new theory to explain them. But we forget that the familiar facts of life are equally in want of explanation. We cannot explain how we are able to crook our finger, what is the bridge between mind and matter, what is life, and many other things; but we are so accustomed to them that we have ceased to wonder. But what is more important — we allow ourselves to think that these familiar facts have all been explained! But they have not been explained, and they are as miraculous as the more unusual phenomena. Therefore there is no special need of a new theory to account for occult phenomena, as they are no more inexplicable or wonderful than ordinary happenings.

Reichenbach propounded a theory of “Odic Force to account for certain phenomena which he was able to study by means of his sensitives”; but he might just as well have propounded it to account for ordinary facts, without doing any experiments with sensitives at all. The existence of a conception like the Astral Light is absolutely necessary as an explanation of the phenomena of ordinary life; and there is no need, in discussing it, to open up the question of occult phenomena at all.

Nevertheless the human mind is so constituted that it needs the unusual to arouse it to thinking; and so we find that the theories about the Astral Light have generally centered about some form of occult phenomena. A few of these speculations may be mentioned.

Reichenbach, in 1845, announced a so-called “imponderable,” or influence, developed by certain crystals, by magnets, and by the human body, and associated with heat, chemical action, and electricity, which he called *odyl* or *odid force*. This influence was visible to his hypnotic subjects as rays of light streaming from the ends of magnets, crystals and fingers. It was dual, having a positive and a negative aspect, which he called *ob* and *od*. A third or equilibrating force was called *aur*.

The ancient alchemists spoke of *Azoth*, *Anima Mundi*, etc. “Eliphas Lévi” (the Abbé Alphonse Louis Constant), a French Kabbalist of the last century, writes a good deal about the Astral Light, but confuses it with *Âkâśa* and makes other mistakes, as H. P. Blavatsky points out in *The Secret Doctrine*.

If we had time to go through the history of magic, we should find that the Astral Light has been conjectured and described under a great variety of names in all times. Much will be found on this head in *The Secret Doctrine*.

THE ART OF SELF-CONTROL

The Astral Light is a great magic agent, by means of which man is able to use his will upon Nature, thus moving it and molding it and fulfilling his function of Former. By the word "Nature" is meant everything which is subject to that Will, whether outward Nature or our own interior Nature. All our actions are accomplished through the power of our will acting upon the Astral Light; the link between our volition and the mechanism of our body is the *Linga-sarîra* or Astral Double, which is that principle in man which corresponds (in a sense) to the Astral Light in the world. But, though we thus use the Astral Light in our ordinary life, our power over it is very limited in comparison with what is possible for us.

The reason why we are unable to avail ourselves of the fuller extent of our powers is because we allow ourselves to be controlled by the currents of the Astral Light, instead of controlling them. In order to command a force, we must first disentangle ourselves from that force and become independent of it. But what are the facts?

We find the ordinary man a constant victim of the currents of the Astral Light in the shape of thoughts, emotions, tendencies, and fancies, which he neither resists nor controls. He is a slave to his likes and dislikes.

The subtle power by which this great Serpent of the Astral Light is able to ensnare us is the force of attraction and repulsion — one force, though dual in its manifestation. By this force we are pulled to and fro and kept involved in an endless chain. To become master of the Astral Light, therefore, it is necessary to render oneself independent of this force of attraction and repulsion. Hence the familiar religious injunction of dispassion. But, whereas religion teaches us to become dispassionate as a sacred duty, Theosophy goes further and gives us also a scientific reason for it. For we see that unless we do become dispassionate, we must remain bound and can never become free in the true sense.

At this point it is advisable to allude again to the subject of Black Magic. As elsewhere stated, it is possible to study magic with an evil motive and to acquire a certain amount of power. In this pursuit, the lesser desires are subjected to some greater desire, such as ambition or lust, and the operator, while becoming more powerful in some things, binds himself in servitude to these greater desires. And in magic, no half-measures are possible; the operator has to decide one way or the other; for, if his intentions are uncertain, he will be too weak to control the forces he has evoked, and will succumb to the manifold perils of his enterprise. So, to become a Black Magician, one makes up his mind to devote himself whole-souledly to the cause of evil, and to kill out all such feelings as compassion and compunction. Then he may, at the cost of ultimate loss of the Soul, obtain for a limited period a certain amount of power, subject to

the dictation of those who stand above him in the hierarchy of evil powers. Anything short of this — any mere dabbling in Black Magic, will be dangerous on account of its insincerity; and, if we are not prepared to join the ranks of evil (!) we had better at once enroll ourselves with the good. It is our only safeguard.

It is assumed, then, that the reader is one who wishes to study Nature in the noble cause of light and progress, and who is not actuated by selfish ambition or idle curiosity.

The Astral Light has always been symbolized by a Serpent — a symbol with a curious double meaning, for sometimes it represents evil and at other times good. In theology the Serpent or Devil is always represented as evil and the enemy of humanity. Milton, in his *Paradise Lost*, allows his poetic intuition to get the better of his theological training, and perforce gives his Satan a nobility that compels our admiration and enlists our sympathy. The truth is, as pointed out by H. P. Blavatsky, who emphasized the point by calling her magazine *Lucifer*, that Satan is the intelligent freewill of man, and is therefore either an enemy or his best friend, according as it is against, or under the control of, his Higher Nature. In the old allegory, Satan rebels against God, is driven out of Paradise, and endows man with freewill and independent choice; man loses his powers and has to go through a long pilgrimage in the world until the day when his redemption is accomplished by the “Son of God” — his Higher Self. Then the Serpent is subdued and becomes his servant. Theology depreciates Satan; and how often Theology has been found disparaging intellectual aspirations and withstanding the advance of science and art, history can tell. But, according to the true teachings, these things ought to be cultivated as means of progress. In other words the Serpent is not to be feared and shunned, but studied and mastered.

The Astral Light manifests the dual quality attributed to this Serpent, for it is the great Ensnarer. It possesses the quality attributed by some people to Woman and by others to Nature, of loving to dominate and ensnare man, and yet always cherishing a secret desire to be mastered and being ready to become the eternal devoted servant of the man who can show himself strong enough to master it against its own will. There is a fine poem in which a man is represented as fighting with Satan, who throws him again and again, hundreds of times, until at last the man gets so strong that he throws Satan; and then Satan embraces him, calls him his dear son, and says he has been waiting for this glad day. Even so with our lower nature; cringe before it, and it worsts us; grasp it firmly, and it is our friend. This therefore is the attitude we are called on to assume before the Astral Light. We must be prepared for allurements of the strongest and subtlest kind; but we must resist them. What did Jesus say to the Devil?

The devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

Then Jesus said unto him, Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

And so with many similar allegories. We have to take our stand firmly on the basis of our Divinity, and from that rock tell the tempter that he cannot give us what is already ours, and that what we want we are able to take without his leave.

The slavery of man is due to this everlasting weakness in letting himself be seduced by the charms of Nature. Again and again he succumbs; and, when he finds himself tied up tight in the flowery chains now hardened to hardest steel, he complains to heaven.

The mental delusion of personality, called in Occultism “The Great Heresy,” is what binds us to the wheel of Earth-life. We have to learn the illusiveness of personality and step out into Deity’s free Life which is “Peace that passeth all understanding.”

Man has lost many powers which he had in the past, through his lapse into selfishness and materialism; and through his re-emergence from these clouds will he regain those powers. Is it not written in the Allegories of Paradise Lost and Regained, where the Serpent is the tempting lower nature, and the Son of God is the Divine Spirit incarnate in Man? By yielding to personal ambition and voluptuousness, Man has put himself into subjection to the powers he should control. The will is limited in power in proportion as it is selfish, for the selfish will opposes itself to the Universal Will. Thus power is proportioned to purity of purpose. Of the perils that await the rash adventurer into the unseen realms, we have a graphic description in *Zanoni*:

In space there are millions of beings, not literally spiritual, for they have all, like the animalcule unseen by the naked eye, certain forms of matter, though matter so delicate, air-drawn, and subtle, that it is, as it were, but a film, a gossamer, that clothes the spirit.... These races and tribes differ more widely, each from each, than the Calmuck {Kalmyk} from the Greek — differ in attributes and powers... some of surpassing wisdom, some of horrible malignity, some hostile as fiends to men, others gentle as messengers between earth and heaven. He who would establish intercourse between these varying beings, resembles the traveler who would penetrate into unknown lands. He is exposed to strange dangers and un conjectured terrors. That intercourse once gained, I cannot secure thee from the chances to which thy journey is exposed. I cannot direct thee to paths free from the wanderings of the deadliest foes. Thou must alone, and of thyself, face and hazard all.... The very elixir that pours a more glorious life into the frame,

so sharpens the senses that those larvae of the air become to thee audible and apparent; so that, unless trained by degrees to endure the phantoms and subdue their malice, a life thus gifted would be the most awful doom that man could bring upon himself.

And the sequel shows how Glyndon did thus open the invisible world to his own undoing, though he afterwards escapes through unselfish love and self-sacrifice. It is well that we should learn to “subdue the malice” of these “larvae of the air” in their ordinary manifestation as lusts and passions, before we take the step that renders them visible and tangible. The history of occult research is full of cases of people who have realized for themselves the truth of the above warnings. Most of us have failings which we with difficulty keep within bounds; and to have these greatly intensified would certainly upset us. And besides these failings, there are sure to be other faults still latent, whose existence is not suspected, but which would spring into life under the vivifying influence of the elixir.

Zanoni advises the young aspirant to let occultism alone and devote himself to art. Art, he says, will lead the spirit away from ambition and personal schemings, into an atmosphere of impersonal contemplation of the beautiful and creation of beautiful forms. Thus the nature will be purified so that one day it may blossom forth into power and knowledge normally and naturally. But Glyndon enters upon the Quest with his heart full of ambition and desire, and fails. So it should be our first endeavor to adjust our lives into harmony with the fellow-lives around us, and to establish health — physical, mental and spiritual. Nor indeed will anyone with a sense of the real problems of life wish otherwise. It is the delusion of separateness that causes our unrest; and we have to seek the true center of our Being and study the relation of our Self to other Selves, as illustrated in conduct and action. Thus shall we, in due time, attain to such knowledge of the unseen as it is necessary and wise for us to have, without unduly forcing our growth and wasting time in dangerous *detours*.

A recognition of the existence of the Astral Light will help anybody who is desirous of leading the life of service to humanity, so long as he is not bitten by the desire rashly to develop his astral senses. There is so much that can be learned and practiced in the ordinary course of living, without exposing oneself to such risks. In the conquest of our desires, the mastery of our weaknesses, the subduing of our minds, we can gain so much help from an understanding of the Astral Light. It makes the work more real, renders our responsibilities more clear.

DENIZENS OF THE ASTRAL LIGHT

There are beings that have no physical body and hence cannot manifest themselves on the physical plane, but which have an astral body

and so can manifest themselves on the Astral Plane. These beings are of various grades and kinds. Some are the astral remnants of deceased persons, in process of dying out, but sometimes kept alive by vampirism, sometimes by the aid of spiritualistic circles, etc. Again there are orders of beings to which has been given the name of "Elementals." We are conscious of the influence of these Elements when we feel the impulse to perform any habitual act. Habit, and the tendency to repeat familiar acts, are explained by science in the usual scientific way of giving a mere summary of the effects instead of an explanation of the cause. The physical cells, or whatever it may be, have a tendency to repeat acts so we are told; and there we are left. Now this impulse to repeat is due to the existence of the Elemental, a being whose whole life and purpose is summed up in the performance of that one act. We created him by our creative powers of will and idea; and now he continues to exist and to go on doing indefinitely the thing for which he was created. He is, as it were, an atom of our mind, an energized thought. Normally we ought to be able to turn him off when we do not need him, like a stop in an organ, and turn him on again when we do. But sometimes he gets out of hand and takes the bit in his teeth. Here, then, is the explanation of tyrannous habits, tricks of manner, and all those undesirable propensities that range all the way from harmless mannerisms to complete loss of control. Habits are familiar facts of experience; science shows us some of the mechanism of them; here we have a complete explanation. Every mechanical explanation must have a psychic explanation to complete it; no action can take place in Nature without there being a mind at the back of it somewhere. No cell or nerve can act unless there is a being in it. Thus every cell is the body of some little "sprite," a little intelligence.

The vast importance of understanding the rationale of instinctive actions will be seen. It enables us to understand more about our own nature and how to control it. Many of our actions are simply the result of these tendencies we have set up, and we go on repeating them after they have ceased to be useful, merely because we do not take the trouble to change them. Obviously it is practicable to get rid of one set of habits and create another. But the process may take time. It will be necessary gradually to cut off from one set of habits their supply of life until they die, and as gradually to create the new set.

This might be called an atomic theory of the mind; the mind being made up of countless separate parts, each having an independent existence and at the same time being subject to the whole. The mistake we make is to attribute *self* to these mere stupid elementals. They float into our mind and set up their activities, and we say, "*I* want to do this," or "*I* am angry"; whereas the impulse may be only an elemental from some other mind or from the back of our own mind. Our emotions and projects often have no worthier origin than this — mere currents flowing our way and sucked in

instead of resisted. Think of the importance of knowing what they are and of being able to dismiss them!

Now the Astral Light is of course full of these little “action-souls,” as we might call them; and they go about seeking human organisms through which they may enact their parts; impelling people to all kinds of action and thought. Some of us keep loose tongues already wagging in our mouths, ready to babble out any idle thought that may happen to lodge on the idly-flapping cilia of our brains; and, when we have allowed this elemental to express itself, we wonder why on earth we said that, and protest that “we didn’t mean it,” and then we do it again. And in many other ways besides speech we allow ourselves to be the passive instrument of these forces; so that we may do anything from winking an eyelid to falling in love (!) on the strength of a thought current from the Astral Light.

And to talk about freedom and servitude! “Oh give me a vote and get out of my way; I want to stand on the top of a hill and exercise my freedom.” Clearly, the wise man will see the real way to freedom; and verily, if he can but pursue it successfully, men will give him all the votes he wants and more power than he can use. All the world is ready to obey the elemental forces of the Astral Light; and he who rules these rules the world. The way to freedom is within thyself.

A magician is one who does not allow himself to be played upon. As a consequence he makes servants of all these beings. Read the stories of the magicians; they always have a train of spirits at command. What is it but the elemental forces which they have learned to control?

We will not enter into an inquiry as to the exact structure of the elementals, as that would but lead us off the useful track. What we need to do and can do is to learn to control them as we find them in our minds; the other knowledge will come soon enough without seeking.

In the Astral Light are also “Monads” or elementary souls that inform the lower kingdoms of Nature; and other beings too numerous to describe here.

A source of misunderstanding arises here from the fact that our unphilosophical habits of thought lead us to make an artificial distinction between beings whom we call living and beings which we call dead. But philosophically all organisms must be classed as living beings, whether they be human, animal, vegetable or mineral. Hence, when we speak of living beings inhabiting the Astral Light, we do not necessarily mean beings endowed with a high degree of intelligence. Though they are intelligent in a degree, their intelligence may be more of the nature of that which animates the vegetable and mineral kingdoms than of that which animates man. The elemental forces of the Astral Light may range all the way from what is virtually little more than an automatism to a comparatively complex intelligence.

Some of the denizens of the Astral Light have been recognized in antiquity as the little souls that animate Nature, under the name of nymphs, fairies, etc.; and though we may now in our ignorance and vanity laugh at what we call the superstitions of “primitive man,” these beliefs do really represent a well understood science and knowledge of Nature’s laws. Doubtless our skepticism is favored by the circumstance that the echoes of this ancient knowledge are often largely mixed up with mere superstition and popular belief, and that we have not the key to the *symbolic and figurative language* used by the ancients in speaking of such matters.

More dangerous than these non-human beings, are certain human remains that exist in the Astral Light. For, after the decease of the body, an entity called the *Kâma-rûpa*, or spook, or shade, is formed, which contains the lowest elements of the carnal nature, embodied in the *Linga-śarîra*, and is soulless, for the Soul has gone to *Devachan*. This shade would normally gradually fade out, surviving the body for a shorter or longer time, according to the strength of the desires by which it is kept alive; but in the case of very evil characters, it may last a long time and haunt the Astral Light, doing harm to living people by its contact with them on the thought-plane. Hence the danger of executing criminals, thereby turning them loose in the full tide of evil passion, to obsess weak natures and thus repeat their crimes. Hence too the advisability of cremation, which helps to destroy this spook.

CONCLUSION

Though the above cannot be called more than a collection of hints, yet enough has been said to show the thoughtful mind that behind the public teachings of Theosophy there lies a practically fathomless ocean of knowledge as to the mysteries of Nature. The obtaining of this knowledge has, partly by inherent conditions and partly by the wise guardianship of Those who guard it, been rendered conditional on worthiness of conduct; even as through unworthiness it was formerly lost. We have seen, in some measure, how it can illuminate the dark places in religion and in science. We have seen how the attempt to gain it without the passport of a worthy motive will land the adventurer in trouble, and how helpful it can be to one who pursues knowledge as a means to noble service only. And finally one of the chief purposes of this Manual is to counteract the false notions spread by those people who have misused Theosophical teachings and terminology to further their own ambitious schemes. For these teachings are most sacred and were originally given out by H. P. Blavatsky in the spirit of an earnest love for humanity.

This misuse has caused the words to become associated with a class of ideas that do not appeal to serious minds, and it is necessary to rescue

the Theosophical teachings from this unworthy association. They appealed to her for instructions and she gave them. Some have tried to found schools for private study on these teachings; others have rejected them because they would not adapt themselves to current religions or scientific authority; the wise have profited by them.

Psychometry, Clairvoyance and Thought-Transference

A Student

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POWER OF INNER PERCEPTION

In all ages and in all countries the student of history finds well-authenticated and persistently recurring accounts of the obscure prophetic and perceptive powers comprised under the general terms of Clairvoyance or Second-sight, and including Clairaudience, Psychometry, and Thought-transference. All these terms may be correctly applied to the perception of events of the past, the present, or the future, to the reading of character, or to the obtaining of knowledge through other means than the ordinary physical senses.

According to the Eastern schools there are seven broadly divided states of consciousness in which man may live, “think,” and remember, and Clairvoyance belongs to *Jñāna-Śākti*, the power of intellect or wisdom; but its degrees range from a low, material and illusive form up to the most refined spirituality. The ordinary phenomena of clairvoyance, including psychometry — that subdivision of it which reads the subtle impressions and pictures clustering around inanimate as well as animate objects; clairaudience — the faculty of hearing sounds commonly inaudible; and thought-transference — the perception of thought-pictures sent out by another mind, are not considered by students of Theosophy to be of a *spiritual* nature, but are, with a few extremely rare exceptions that may be safely neglected at first, only imperfect evidences of the possession of astral senses by the inner astral man (not the Higher Ego) which are more or less latent in all of us and which do not necessarily require the qualities of purity or unselfishness for their manifestation. As a matter of fact even many animals show well-marked clairvoyance. H. P. Blavatsky, in *Isis Unveiled* (Vol. I, p. 467) reports some curious examples of clairvoyance on the part of monkeys and a tiger, which she saw in India.

It is the custom for modern Western materialistic psychologists to ignore the existence of clairvoyance in any form, but what is called psychology by our scientists is but the study of externals; the *psyche* or soul is ignored. The difficulty of inducing them to consider anything which points away from their pet theories was well proved when Dr. Alfred R. Wallace and Professor W. Crookes brought forward their extremely careful observations of certain psychic phenomena. The important evidence of those distinguished scientific leaders was either totally ignored or treated with gross contempt. H. P. Blavatsky remarks: “If the scientists had studied the so-called ‘miracles’ instead of denying them, many secret laws of Nature comprehended by the ancients would have been discovered.” Bacon says: “Conviction comes not through arguments, but through experiments.” And yet the moderns, who profess to follow the inductive method, when questions of abnormal phenomena such as clairvoyance arise, stultify their own position, prejudging the case by arguments not based on observation of facts, but on theories of what must

or must not be in order to harmonize with their preconceived views. This was the attitude of the Schoolmen of the Middle Ages who discussed abstract propositions *ad nauseam* without any facts at all to support them.

To appreciate clairvoyance in the true light we should have to comprehend the heredity of man, astrally and spiritually, as well as physically, as a being who knows, reasons, and feels, through the body, the astral body, and the soul — using these terms very broadly; and that every impression, however slight, produces a picture in the Astral Light which endures, and that a connection may be made between the individual auras of persons and these pictures. This is not easy, for the majority of men have no conception of their own real nature; but yet without this full, practical knowledge of the principles of man even a theoretical acquaintance with Theosophy provides a really philosophic basis for the examination of psychic questions as far removed from the credulities of superstition as from the negations of materialism.

The study of clairvoyance from the Theosophic standpoint shows the erroneous or exaggerated nature of many popular beliefs; for instance, a large number of the stories of the appearance of ghosts are cleared up by an appreciation of the part that psychometry and thought-transference play in such manifestations. It has often been asked sarcastically why so few ghosts are seen, but as only a few people are sensitive to the subtle pictures hanging around us in the Astral Light — the ethereal medium and storehouse of impressions — it would be strange if there were many more of such appearances. The writer knows of a remarkable case which occurred in a watering-place in Hampshire, England, a few years ago, when what was thought to be the ghostly apparition of a suicide was seen by a sensitive, but which was quite probably the psychometric picture impressed upon the surrounding walls. She was attending a ball in the Town Hall and was in perfect health, when she saw the figure of a man suspended in a dark corner of the main staircase. This was the exact spot where a defaulting official had taken his life by hanging, a couple of years before. The lady was a stranger to the town and was entirely ignorant of the circumstances of the death, but the figure was perfectly visible to her for several minutes. Thousands of cases like this have been recorded and carefully tested, and at the present day it would be the height of irrationality to reject the evidence for the existence of a subtle plane of substance which preserves the images of every event, and of a perceptive power in the mind which can observe them under favorable circumstances. The study of such evidence (to a limited degree in the light of Theosophy, comes within the present scope of Theosophical activities, because it helps to destroy superstitious fears and enlightens us upon certain obscurities in our nature which cannot be neglected by those who wish to understand life as a whole. By the credulous, anything of a psychic nature is put down as being necessarily of a *spiritual* order; but Theosophy analyzes more

closely; it penetrates beneath the seeming, and under its searchlight the world of true Spiritual life and the lower psychic or astral world are seen to be far apart. To confuse the fitful and unstable sights and sounds of the lower astral plane, which seem so wonderful to the novice, with the steady, pure radiance of the Divine Spiritual Light is a profanation! For an account of the composite nature of man, which needs to be carefully considered when comparing the lower clairvoyance and the higher intuitional perception, other Manuals should be consulted. It is needless to say more here than that all the great religions and ancient philosophies have recognized the complex nature of man's make-up, whether they divided the principles into groups of three, or the generally recognized seven. The early Christians and many classical teachers found either three or four a more workable classification. (Heb. iv, 12, etc.)

THE ATTITUDE OF THEOSOPHY

Theosophy warns us emphatically against wasting health and life in the attempt to develop the lower psychic faculties, either for power or for curiosity and undirected experimentation. It urges all to devote that strength which can so easily be wasted in psychic dissipation, to the helping of humanity out of the slough of animality and selfishness in which it is now wallowing. Whatever may have been the methods in the past and whatever may be suitable for other races, at present and for Westerners at least, active exertion in the use of the normal and wholesome means of regeneration — such as the true education of the young and the spreading of the knowledge of the higher nature of man — is the only way to attain the beginning of spiritual wisdom. In that brotherly work it must be the deeply-felt desire that all humanity, the “other selves,” should rise to higher and more impersonal states that prompts to action, not that one shall be paid for humanitarian work by a reward. The reward lies in the opportunity of service, of expressing the inner urge; it brings peace, strength, and joy.

To reach Nirvâna one must reach Self-Knowledge, and Self-Knowledge is of loving deeds the child. — *The Voice of the Silence*. {p. 31} (H. P. Blavatsky.)

If it is not unselfish love that urges the would-be Theosophist, he is in no better position than the blind and egotistic follower of some old creed who deludes himself into believing he can earn heavenly bliss by “imputed righteousness,” lip-service, or deeds of carefully calculated charity. As Heaven is within — a *state* which will stay forever once we have attained it — it is clear, as Paul expresses it in the exquisite and purely Theosophic thirteenth chapter of I Corinthians:

And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

If some of the energy that is now wasted on so-called pleasure-seeking — in which we must include the craze for hunting after psychic phenomena — could be utilized for the prevention of the *causes* of crime there would be no need for our elaborate machinery of detection and confinement; and if the work sunk in the desperate attempts to cure disease were devoted to the destruction of the mental and physical breeding-places of it, what an immense amount of time and suffering would be saved!

Theosophy faces things as they are and shuts its eyes to nothing in Nature. Its students have to become aware of facts, and so a general conception of the scope, the perils and the limitations of ordinary brain-mind clairvoyance is necessary for their protection, and to qualify them to help those who are in danger of being carried away by the fascination that the unusual and mysterious exerts on some natures.

THE UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD AND THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY is not a dogmatic organization demanding the acceptance of any creed or formulary as an essential to membership; the desire to raise human feeling to the broadest lines of noble thought is the only *sine qua non*; nor is the teaching of Theosophy itself dogmatic. Though it is studied and accepted by the majority of the workers it does not profess to be absolutely final in its present form. The claim of infallibility has wrecked many systems because they have all overlooked the important fact that the human mind cannot grasp absolute truth, any more than a quart of water can be squeezed into a pint vessel. The blasphemous hair-splitting about the nature of Deity which has been the pastime of many so-called Christian sects is a crying example of the evil of attempting to force the reason to formulate what is beyond its reach. Luther saw this when he said: “God is invisible and indefinable; what we can define or see is not God. Men desire in their speculations to apprehend God; they apprehend in his place — the Devil, who would also pose as God.” Theosophy tells that Truth will be our ultimate heritage, but that the self-made limitations of our minds are so great that it would be absurd for us to expect to enter into our birthright of wisdom until we have freed ourselves by self-control. Then *we shall use higher methods than the five senses*, and learn to understand things as they really are and not only as they appear to be.

It cannot be too often repeated that the teachings of Theosophy are primarily to be regarded as *stimuli* to the thinking and meditative faculties from which right action must proceed, not as final dogmatic statements to which nothing can be added; and with respect to blind faith, H. P. Blavatsky herself said, “no Theosophical book acquires the least additional value from pretended authority.” In the opinion of students who

have made Theosophy a life-study it is the highest expression of ethics and the most complete statement of truth about our human nature and the Universe at present available or knowable to us; but the idea of laying down a set of cast-iron dogmas and asserting “That is Theosophy, take it *en bloc* or have nothing to do with THE UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD AND THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY,” would be absurd, and as repugnant to the spirit of the Movement as contrary to the rules of the Society. Yet this does not imply that Theosophy is a backboneless, nebulous system of thought and action. It is demonstrable, but it demands that each one shall search for himself for proofs; it shows how to begin in one’s own life and without leaving one’s own duty. Theosophy is the great thought-provoker, and as the candidate for Light lifts himself towards it by the practice of altruism, *i.e.*, devotion to the service of others, he begins to gain a little self-knowledge and self-mastery.

Theosophy, *per se*, therefore, is the absolute truth about man and Nature, but its presentation at any given time is limited by the capacity of understanding and of application possessed by the humanity of the day. Theosophy is progressive in the sense that it reveals itself more and more as humanity becomes capable of understanding it. In times of mental and spiritual darkness very little can be understood, though when the shadows are heaviest a new effort is always made to arouse the latent good.

“I produce myself among creatures, O son of Bhârata, whenever there is a decline of virtue and an insurrection of vice and injustice in the world; and thus I incarnate from age to age for the preservation of the just, the destruction of the wicked, and the establishment of righteousness.”

— Krishna, the Divine Spirit, in the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*.

The present time is one of great conflict between the forces of progress and inertia — of light and darkness — and the age has made a demand for help strong enough to obtain the response now afforded through the work of the Theosophical Movement, an influence which has ramified very widely already. Veil after veil will fall, bringing man nearer his real self, the Higher Ego. This is the object of evolution.

The light thrown by Theosophy upon the subject of clairvoyance in general is briefly reflected in this little essay, which has been derived from the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom received through H. P. Blavatsky, William Q. Judge, and Katherine Tingley, the principal bearers of the esoteric philosophy in this cycle. It is only a very general sketch, of course, but if the hints given here are followed by deeper study of more advanced works, and reflected upon in the spirit of compassion for humanity in its present state, the light will grow. In studying the clairvoyant powers in man the investigator is really exploring the action of some of the faculties of his little known *inner*, though not necessarily, nor in fact, usually,

higher nature. Owing to the ignorance of the complex nature of man on the part of the scientists, whose researches are trammled by their materialistic bias, and on that of the theologians, who have lost the esoteric key to their systems of belief, real guidance is not to be found in them, and so H. P. Blavatsky turned our attention to the deeper interpretations of the ancient philosophies and religions in which the real clues are hidden. She says:

The whole question of phenomena rests on the correct comprehension of old philosophies; whither then should we turn, in our perplexity, but to the ancient sages, since, on the pretext of superstition, we are refused an explanation by the modern?

She was commissioned to give some fuller elucidations of the teachings of the ancients, and to explain difficulties hitherto considered insurmountable in their answers to the ever-recurring problems of life.

From the above considerations it will be seen that although a tone of conviction is adopted here for the sake of brevity, the teachings of Theosophy are primarily accepted by students on account of their inherent reasonability, proofs following in accordance with each one's opportunities, capacities, and desires.

THE SCIENTIFIC BASIS OF CLAIRVOYANCE

Scientists must either deny facts, accept the “miraculous” intervention of a personal god, or believe, with Theosophists, that immutable Law reigns in the psychic as well as the material world. Ages ago the phenomena of clairvoyance were investigated by prepared and trained observers, and the foundation stone of the explanation is, as Theosophy teaches today, the existence of a subtle stratum or state of matter, interpenetrating and surrounding the material world of our five senses, possessing qualities of vibration different from the physical, and having a highly developed capacity of retaining the impressions of every event that has occurred on the Earth in such a manner that they can all be recalled with the freshness of life. This property is similar, in a degree, to the power of the sensitized salts of silver in the photographic plate, which hold the image in a latent condition until development. No one has yet given a plausible explanation of the working of the photographic developer, and the coming into view of the astral image seems to be little more astonishing. A few, who ought to know something accurate about the existence of the “Astral Picture-Gallery,” have doubted it, Spiritualists among them, and for such it is not out of place to quote this extract from Vol. viii of *The Path*. William Q. Judge was writing about certain

spiritualistic messages received from an intelligence calling itself “Jim Nolan”:

In replying he upheld the old views about the astral light, only calling it “magnetic light.” As he was speaking of memory he went into an explanation to sustain his position and said: “In ancient times men called a certain light surrounding and emanating from every person, the astral light, and upon which, they taught, was imprinted or impressed every thought or act of the individual. We, the spirits, call this emanation a magnetic light.... All the acts of life are photographed upon the astral light of each person... the astral light retaining all those peculiar things which occur to you from day to day during life.”

William Q. Judge goes on to say:

All these remarks of Jim Nolan’s spirit we commend to the attention of Spiritualists and Theosophists.... And when we find, as in the case of Nolan, a great deal of Theosophical and Occult wisdom displayed through his medium, who was unconnected then with the Theosophical Society, giving explanations which accord with what many a Theosophical student knows to be true, his opinions are of greater weight than those of such spooks as deal in platitudes or continue to crystallize more deeply the preconceptions of the medium or the sitters.... In many of his replies he says that which if attended to would long ago have purged Spiritualism and made the cult of value to the world. He urged purity of mediums and their non-contact with the world. He demanded a cessation of wonder-mongering, of seeking for gratification of curiosity, of selfish questioning for business or other temporary purposes; he insisted on intelligence in question and investigation; he found his requests refused, his suggestions ignored, and then — he disappeared. There are some who think, and perhaps with reason, that he was no disembodied spook, but the spirit of an intelligent living person who sought, near the descending arc of the cycle of Spiritualism, to inject a new method and bring about if possible a revival of true psychic investigation and demonstration in a body of people already largely prepared. But he was denied and ignored.

This “true psychic investigation” would of course have been on the Theosophic and altruistic lines indicated above.

Speaking of psychic phenomena in general it is still fashionable in certain circles to ignore or ridicule them all. This is largely because of the fraud and outrageous claims of many mediums, but there *is* a true lower clairvoyance, and it is nearly always accompanied by cataleptic conditions, arterial or venous congestion, changes of pulse or other abnormalities of an undesirable nature. Much of the success in ordinary clairvoyance also depends upon the condition of the astral plane at the time. As the Earth moves in its orbit it enters into new regions where the conditions of the ether (the lowest division of the Astral Light) are under

varying stresses, owing to the relative changes of distance from the planets, etc.; and as the Sun carries his family onward through the abysses of space it is clear that a closer approach of the Earth to one of the fixed stars, say a red one, is bound to modify conditions in the Earth's ethereal surroundings. But it is impossible to go into details about the astral plane in general here; for further information the reader is advised to read the Manual specially devoted to that subject. It is necessary to remember that the lower astral plane is not a high spiritual state and that communications coming from it are most frequently trivial and almost always confused and misleading. The clairvoyance of the Higher Ego is on a very different plane; it is pure, orderly, spiritual, and lucid — qualities in which the ordinary "sensitive" is deficient as a rule, but as it is the lower kind of clairvoyance that is most usually meant when the subject is referred to, we must confine the main part of our attention to it.

HISTORICAL INCIDENTS OF CLAIRVOYANCE

The pages of history are crowded with examples of clairvoyance, though most modern historians have minimized their significance and weakened the records for fear of being thought superstitious. The classic writers and the Jewish and Christian Scriptures are filled with accounts of prophetic dreams and other clairvoyant phenomena. St. Paul's account of being caught up to the third heaven, ("whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth") is interesting as a confirmation of the Theosophical views of the ascending states of consciousness, for that was a really spiritual experience similar to those of the Buddhist and Hindû ascetics, the Sufis, and many of the ancients, such as Proclus, the Neo-Platonist, who declared he had been "united to his god" but six times during his long life. Although he claimed to possess ordinary clairvoyance to a degree, yet he knew that the rarer divine illumination was of an infinitely higher order.

The vision of Scipio Africanus Minor in B.C. 149 as related by Cicero, is a remarkable example of fairly high astral clairvoyance, but it is curiously confused. Scipio declares he was taken to a great height above the Earth, from which he saw the temperate zones and the broad tropical zone, the snowy poles at the ends of the Earth, and the people standing in various parts of the Earth with their feet pointing in the different directions natural to their situation, some with them pointing exactly the opposite way from those of the antipodeans, etc. Plutarch also relates many curious anecdotes showing that the most profound thinkers among the ancient Greeks and Romans gave credence to certain forms of clairvoyance. The prophecies of the Seers among the Jews were supposed to come from God, but the lower forms of divination were opposed to the letter and the spirit of the Law of Moses.

In this hasty survey we must not overlook the historical record of Apollonius of Tyana, who lived about the time of Jesus and who was reputed to be able to survey the past and future as in a mirror, in consequence of his “abstemious mode of life.” Among the many curious things told of him it is said that once when he was giving testimony in a court of justice in Ephesus at the moment when the tyrant Domitian was being attacked in Rome, he cried “He strikes again,” and declared that he could see the assassination taking place at that very moment by means of his inner vision. Apollonius had traveled as far as India, where he received instruction from the wisest teachers of antiquity, and afterwards he established a school of philosophy which helped to keep the esoteric teachings alive in the hearts of the people in a dark period.

Curious anecdotes of clairvoyant insight among the Sufis in Persia, Arabia, etc. — whose principles are the esoteric heart of Islam — are entered in their histories. Most of their visions were not concerned with trivial terrestrial matters but were of an exalted spiritual nature, and while in this state the Sufi Adepts considered that they were united with Allah — not a personalized Deity, but God in all, Âtman-Buddhi, or the Higher Self of Theosophy. Sufism is not extinct in the East though it is not so outwardly active as in the middle ages, and many examples of the lower forms of clairvoyance are to be found in Egypt at the present day. Lane, in his *Modern Egyptians*, relates some curious accounts of experiments he saw performed by native hypnotists or jugglers who could induce clairvoyance of a sort in young children by getting them to concentrate upon a pool of ink in the palm of the hand. This is a form of crystal-gazing, and is one of the methods of obtaining the negative passivity of the mind necessary for the ordinary clairvoyance, but which is well known to be the open door to many injurious influences.

The Hindû, Chinese, and Japanese literatures teem with accounts of clairvoyant experiences of all kinds, and many a weird tale has been told of the powers of the medicine men of America and Africa, and the Voodooos of the West Indies.

We must not overlook the well attested prophecies of Joan of Arc as to her career and fate, even to the nature of the wound she received before Orléans. Some of these visions were used against her in the infamous trial by the ecclesiastics at Rouen.

Harvey, the discoverer of the circulation of the blood, was imprisoned by the governor of Dover to prevent him embarking for France in a ship which was immediately lost with all hands. The action of the governor was taken in consequence of a significant clairvoyant dream he had. Goethe relates that he once saw his own double riding on horseback under peculiar circumstances that were realized literally eight years after!

What are we to say about the extraordinary case of Frederika Hauffe, the “Seeress of Prevorst,” a chronic invalid after her childhood? She was

born in 1801 and her case was studied by careful physicians for a long time after the breakdown of her physical health. Dr. Justinus Kerner {*The Seeress of Prevorst: Being Revelations Concerning the Inner-Life of Man*, 1845.}, an eminent man of science, admitted her into his household and had the opportunity of watching her closely for several years until her death. Her clairvoyance was remarkable; she could see many things quite invisible to those around her, such as the condition of the inner organs of sick people, and various things that were taking place at a distance. At times she showed a high order of spiritual intuition and gave valuable teachings of a Theosophical nature. In her periods of real illumination she insisted strongly upon the septenary division of the human principles, and her description of the glimpses she had of superphysical states corresponds closely to the Theosophical classification. Her clairvoyance went far beyond the ordinary, and we may find a clue to the reason when it is mentioned that she had no personal or money-making end in view.

Lord Lyttleton's well known clairvoyant warning of death as related by Lord Westcote was accepted by Dr. Johnson as inexplicable on ordinary lines; and no successful attempt has ever been made to explain away Swedenborg's vision of a fire in Stockholm seen by him, and related to many witnesses, when he was a great distance away. Other records are preserved of his remarkable psychic powers. We might fill volumes with the observations that have been collected of late years showing the existence of the various forms of clairvoyance, and, although there is still a school of scientists who call themselves psychologists — a strange misnomer for those who are skeptical as to the existence of a soul, *psyche* — who are loud in denying the possibility of clairvoyance, unprejudiced investigators who are getting first-hand knowledge of its reality may easily ignore their assumptions of infallibility, for it is not forgotten that eminent scientific authorities have at first denied and ridiculed almost every new discovery, such as the circulation of the blood and Galvani's electric pile, Daguerre's photographic plate and the phonograph. Even the evidences for the fall of meteoric stones and of the existence of prehistoric flint implements were rejected contemptuously by the learned but obstinate savants until the facts could no longer be stifled.

The Western hemisphere in these latter days seems to have suffered from an obsession of unphilosophic doubt as a reaction from the credulity of the Middle Ages, but a perceptible change has taken place since the advent of the Theosophical Movement in the last quarter of the Nineteenth Century, and now we find a large and rapidly increasing number of intellectual persons accepting the rational and time-honored explanations of Theosophy concerning the curious phenomena of the astral planes. The learned but not over wise Nineteenth Century cherished the illusion that the laws of Nature were at least approximately known in general outline to the scientists, and that it was possible to draw lines of demarcation

beyond which the Unknowable — not the *Unknown* — reigned supreme. This attitude has received many severe blows lately, and we may be grateful for hearing less dogmatism nowadays about the Unknowable and the so-called foolishness of the ancient philosophers! The tide is creeping up, and the dry sand-banks, both of ecclesiastical bigotry and of materialism, are slowly but surely disappearing under the flowing stream of more liberal thought.

Truth is great and does prevail — ultimately, but its course reminds one of the fable of Hercules and the wagoner, for it needs a strong push to drive it onward through the mire of ignorance, into the mind of man, inflamed by passion and blinded by prepossession. Still as this is an age of Transition, as we are told by Those who have kept the records of millenniums, it is a favorable time to bring forward truths that have been obscured or fossilized; and the impression Theosophy has made already, and the increasing demand for its help in practical life made in all quarters, show that H. P. Blavatsky's attempt to "break the molds of mind" was successful.

SENSE PERCEPTION IN GENERAL

While it has been found impossible to force the pace and compel scientists too suddenly to admit the logical results of the multitude of well-attested records of psychic matters, the knowledge of the true philosophy of life which includes these things in its scope is gradually spreading. The phenomena of clairvoyance are as much under law as the phenomena of electricity, though little more is known of the laws of one than of the other; yet they are not "supernatural" or outside the scheme of the Universe. We have been hypnotized by the fear of the word "supernatural." Theosophy expunges it, for there is nothing above Nature. "Supernatural" has an ecclesiastical sound, and has been a bogey to frighten people from inquiring too closely into matters which were claimed as being the particular concern of certain classes.

In the Roman Church the effort has been made to imply that psychic powers are the supernatural graces with which the saints are endowed, or occasionally, as in the witch persecutions, gifts from the Devil! As an ordinary clairvoyant is inhibited from seeing beyond a certain degree of astral matter, although deeper truths are there, so most people have inhibited themselves from seeing profoundly into philosophic truth, by carelessness and prejudice.

Theosophy says, however, that while the existence of ordinary clairvoyance is not of importance to the spiritual development of the world, it does make manifest that there is something beyond what can be apprehended by the physical senses, and leads by analogy to an understanding of the possibility of higher spiritual perceptions. The laws

of the so-called “supernatural” will be found in time by those who need to know them for their work of philanthropy and not for curiosity, and then they will be found in perfect accord with the rest of the laws of Nature, for the knowledge of a Law is only the recognition of things as they are, and Nature will never deceive by allowing two and two to be four at one time and five at another. Though the lower psychic perception may be manifested through the senses of smell, touch, sight, taste, or sound, in the higher order they are one. Even now a few clairvoyants have an inkling that the psychic senses are interchangeable, and that a sound can be seen, and vice-versa, but the higher faculty of the Higher Manas, illuminated by Buddhi, discerns all as a whole and not in disjointed parts through the limitations of senses however sublimated.

Popular folklore and mystical traditions are often fanciful enough, but when carefully sifted they are found to contain traces of the Ancient Wisdom, or of present-day reality. For instance in Ireland and Wales, and in the Scottish Highlands, etc., within a stone’s throw of the highly civilized British Metropolis and among people of no “inferior” race — thousands of them of the highest culture and education — the belief in the existence of “second sight” or other forms of clairvoyance is widely spread. In other parts of Europe and in America we find the same, and in the immemorial East, where civilizations have endured for millenniums, the knowledge of its existence is practically universal. In the East generations of acute reasoners, brilliant intelligences, have been giving their best energies to the study of a real human psychology. If there had been nothing in clairvoyance those investigators would have exploded the notion long ago, but the fact is that the most comprehensive generalizations about the spiritual powers and nature of the Real Man, the Higher Ego, as well as of the confused and imperfect psychic attributes of its emanation or reflection, the lower personal man, have come from the East. While the ancient Celtic peoples and the classical nations had their share of the archaic Wisdom-Religion, Theosophy, it was the East, Egypt, and the “East of Suez,” that carried it down in purest form from the destruction of Atlantis.

In making experiments in clairvoyance and so forth without guidance, the would-be discoverer can do no more than investigate very imperfectly a few of the properties of the astral plane and determine the existence of the astral senses, things which have always been familiar to those who have a right to know. It is practically impossible for the ordinary experimenter, however acute his intellect or untiring his energy, to learn anything new about them if he has no higher motive than curiosity, even though it be only apparently harmless curiosity. The Wise who know the facts have gained their knowledge by looking down upon the astral planes from above, free from the delusions of passion.

Help Nature and work on with her; and Nature will regard thee as one of her creators and make obeisance.

And she will open wide before thee the portals of her secret chambers,... Unsullied by the hand of Matter, she shows her treasures only to the eye of Spirit — the eye which never closes, the eye for which there is no veil in all her kingdoms. — *The Voice of the Silence*. {p. 14} (H. P. Blavatsky.)

UNCERTAINTY OF LOWER CLAIRVOYANCE

The first thing we are told about the astral planes, at least the lower ones which are accessible to the average person, and the first thing that all find who investigate, is that they are regions of intense confusion; that things are reflected in them upside down, inside out, and that to the unprepared neophyte who has no guidance the bewilderment is so great that there seems to be no law and order. It is a general experience that numbers and forms are reversed in the lower astral light, 123 would be read as 321, but sometimes they are re-reversed back to the right form. The perception of time is equally uncertain on these planes, events that really belong to the future may be seen as if they were in the present or in the past, and so on. Then again for a time everything may appear to be working regularly and smoothly, when, Presto! an utterly unexpected change takes place and all is confusion, or worse. At times, try as hard as they like, ordinary clairvoyants cannot see certain things, and the reasons for the appearance or disappearance of the images are quite unknown to them.

And yet there is method in every department of Nature; layer after layer of different orders of clairvoyance exist, such as what W. Q. Judge calls “the positive side of sound,” the “symbolic plane” (a high one), “the positive and negative aspects of the regions corresponding to the epidermis and its emanations,” and so on, octave after octave, but the laws are not easily discoverable, for they are interwoven with physical correspondences which if misused, would produce great evils. The correspondences between the forces on the different planes have been kept very carefully from the knowledge of rash minds by those who know the keys, and for a lack of these clues, which connect the different planes of being, numbers of seekers have, fortunately for them, given up the pursuit of the psychic will-o’-the-wisp in despair after wasting many fruitless years. Besides the waste of time there is the greatest and unavoidable danger in the exploration of the astral without the protection that comes from the fundamental purification of the whole nature, not danger in the ordinary sense only — bodily and perhaps financial risk — but very real and horrible peril to character, life, and reason, not to speak of sundry unpleasantnesses that will have to be faced in a future incarnation as one result of dabbling in things better left alone until properly prepared. The delusions

and dangers of the astral plane are so well known to the Helpers of Humanity, that it is not only for the sake of the incautious and unguided or misguided but also out of compassion for humanity at large that they earnestly advise them to beware of running in “where angels fear to tread.”

For ages the illuminated Teachers who could see behind the veil of illusion that enwraps humanity have studied the phenomena of the inner world, and when the learner has passed in his character-building beyond the place where such things are dangerous — to most aspirants a hard matter — he also sees that there is law and order in the astral. To such a one, though it may not be until after many incarnations, the way opens of itself naturally. It is safe to say that while there is the element of fear or undue wonder present in anyone coming upon these things for the first time in any one life, that is a proof that he is not prepared to understand the meaning of them. To the student who asks for advice upon this subject H. P. Blavatsky says:

The name of Hall the second is the Hall of LEARNING. [The Hall of *Probationary* Learning. The astral region, the psychic world of supersensuous perceptions and of deceptive sights, the world of mediums.... No blossom plucked in those regions has ever yet been brought down on earth without its serpent coiled around the stem. It is the world of the *Great Illusion*.] In it thy Soul will find the blossoms of life, but under every flower a serpent coiled.

William Q. Judge gives warning:

There are no competent guides in this pursuit (clairvoyance) to be found here or in Europe who are willing to teach one to acquire it without danger.

The qualifications such a guide should possess render the finding of one difficult if not impossible. They are: the power to look within and see clearly the whole inner nature of the student; a complete knowledge of all the planes upon which clairvoyance acts, including knowledge of the source, the meaning, and the effect of all that is perceived by the clairvoyant; and last, but not least, the power to stop at will the exercise of the power. Evidently these requirements call for an adept....

But what shall Theosophists do? Stop all attempts at clairvoyance. And why? Because it leads them slowly but surely — almost beyond recall — into an interior and exterior passive state where the will is gradually overpowered and they are at last in the power of the demons who lurk around the threshold of our consciousness. Above all, follow no advice to “sit for development.” Madness lies that way. The feathery touches which come upon the skin while trying these experiments are said by mediums to be the gentle touches of “the spirits.” But they are not. They are caused by the ethereal fluids from within us making their way out through the skin and thus producing the illusion of a touch. When enough has gone out, then the victim is getting gradually negative, the future prey for spooks and will-o’-the-wisp images.

“But *what*,” they say, “shall we pursue and study?” Study the philosophy of life, leave the decorations that line the road of spiritual development for future lives, and — practice altruism.

THE SELF WITHIN

Of course in studying the philosophy of life the psychic occurrences that happen to force themselves upon the attention may sometimes need examination, for they have their place in the scheme of the Universe, and the clues that have been given to the world through the Theosophical Movement enable us to form a general idea of some of the laws governing them. Modern Science has totally failed to include this factor in its speculations, and for want of it all the scientific answers to the riddle of the Universe current today are vitiated from the beginning. For a complete presentation of these laws the world will have to wait until it has learned the meaning of universal oneness.

To grasp the meaning of what is given, the student is supposed to have an acquaintance with the Theosophical division of the seven human principles, and the general evolutionary scheme of progress through Reincarnation as taught by Theosophy. In considering ordinary clairvoyance we are dealing with the lower man, the astral and Lower Manasic consciousness functioning through the brain. It is the light of the lower Manas combining with certain “sheaths” or grades of consciousness of the astral body that is chiefly concerned with the ordinary manifestations of clairvoyance, psychometry, and thought-transference; the Higher Manas, the immortal reincarnating soul, is not involved, its clairvoyance is of an entirely different order — of a spiritual nature. The Intuition — a very much overworked term — is the nearest word we have to express it. What a blunt tool the English language is when we wish to deal with a real psychology! A Great Teacher of Theosophy once said that having to employ it was like trying to do fine carving with an ax.

Once the idea of the existence of the Higher Ego and its potential dominance has entered into the calculations of the leaders of thought the whole atmosphere will change. At present there is no alternative in accepted thought between the conception of an autocratic Personal Deity separate from the creation, and that of a concatenation of blind forces out of which, somehow, the wonderful harmony of the Universe has “happened” to come! The teachings of Theosophy avoid the Scylla of Anthropomorphism as well as the Charybdis of Atheism; but this is not the place to pursue this important subject further.

The Higher Being is like a light veiled with many thicknesses of obscuring matter. It is the root of human consciousness, and the brain-mind is only one of the aspects of this permanent underlying unity, differentiated for the gaining of experience in terrestrial life. It needs

organs, such as the mind with its physical senses, to bring it into touch with the material world; but there are other methods by which this Higher Being, of which our ordinary personality is the instrument, can obtain information from planes utterly unknown to the brain-mind. It uses intuitive methods so recondite as to be meaningless when translated into the terms of common life. The astral senses are not in themselves more spiritual than the physical. Psychometers and other clairvoyants are persons born with constitutions so exceptional that the perceptions of the astral senses are able to register themselves on the physical brain with more or less ease. The frequent transference of susceptibility of sense-perception to unexpected places, such as the power of some clairvoyants to read with the solar plexus or the tip of the ear, proves that lens, retina, and optic nerves are not essential elements for coming in touch with the outside world, though probably the knowledge obtained by the inner astral sensorium through its own channels is subconsciously transformed upon its entry into the brain into impressions of sight, sound, etc. In the case of the clairvoyant reading of something invisible to the physical eye, the impression of the page must be received by the astral senses and thrown by reflex action *from within* upon the retina, where the optic nerve deals with it in the same way as with an ordinary impression. The five physical senses are the product of evolution, *i.e.*, differentiation, and the astral senses are not intrinsically different. It is a truism in Biology that sense-perceptions are displayed by low protoplasmic, structureless forms, like the amoeba, which show discrimination in their choice of food, color-preferences, taste, etc., without any corresponding differentiation of organs of sense. The specialization of the sense-organs, which has been the work of evolution, into our present material conditions, is, in large measure, the *limitation* of consciousness, and the future and more perfected humanity will, Theosophy teaches, outgrow the conditions needing the separation of the senses. It is strange that our philosophers have not perceived that the evolution of the senses as separate faculties implies the previous possession of them in unity, as the amoeba so plainly suggests. Ordinary clairvoyance is a kind of weak reflection of the one higher sense peculiar to the Higher Ego, in which, as it were, the separate senses are combined into something much greater than we can conceive. As Browning says in *Abt Vogler*:

That out of three sounds he frame, not a fourth
sound, but a star.

ORDINARY CLAIRVOYANCE ONLY ANOTHER SENSE, AND NOT SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION

Clairvoyants are much mistaken if they think their faculty proves they are on the path to the supreme goal of spiritual perfection, for they have merely obtained an uncertain, incomplete and erratic use of senses which are no higher than the physical. It has been clearly pointed out by the Teachers that these attributes of the lower mind either perish at death or leave undesirable mediumistic tendencies for future lives. The Theosophical teachings do not exclude the possibility of something from a really spiritual source occasionally reaching the mind of a clairvoyant as well as of anyone else, but the passive condition of the average mediumistic seer is actually a hindrance to the attainment of the higher realms of being, which demand long-continued, positive, and purely impersonal effort for their realization. The fact of a person having been born with a psychic aptitude is no reason for supposing that he is a bit more brotherly, noble, or serviceable to humanity than anyone else. In many cases marked clairvoyance is an affliction, and, being abnormal at this time, is often accompanied by weakness of body, or mental peculiarities; and there is the ever-present danger of the seeds of vanity being stimulated by the illusion of being specially favored by heavenly gifts! William Q. Judge emphasizes the important Theosophical teaching that the pure-minded and the brave who use common sense can deal with the future when it comes far better than any clairvoyant who trusts to the uncertainties of astral vision for protection. A heart filled with brotherly kindness and a complete reliance upon the Divine Law of Justice is the only support that will not fail.

In studying the records of astral clairvoyance one of the most striking things the careful observer notices is its unreliability. That clairvoyants, psychometers, and thought-readers make many successful hits is undeniable; but their failures stand out more prominently. Besides the reversal of numbers and forms such as previously referred to, the seeing of small things enormously magnified and large ones reduced to nothing, summerly surroundings transforming themselves into winterly ones, and so forth *ad infinitum*, there are numerous cases of strongly marked thoughts in the aura or thought-atmosphere of the investigator being mistaken for actual spirits of the dead or for mystic communications! An example occurs in an early volume of *The Path* where an account is given of a clairvoyant who told the seeker that the name of his guardian spirit was written all around him in the air! When the name was mentioned he found it was nothing more than a trademark on a packing case he had just previously been puzzling over; the clairvoyant had simply read his thoughts without in the least understanding what she saw! Cases like this,

while they establish the *bona-fides* of the seer, utterly discredit the usefulness of the clairvoyance.

The great number — forty-nine — of the different “sheaths” or conditions of the astral body are limitations and natural divisions of the astral perceptions. The natural-born clairvoyant has seldom more than partial control of one or two of these divisions, and as each is *en rapport* with a corresponding and different plane of consciousness, only the most incomplete version of what is looked for can be expected. For instance, as W. Q. Judge tells us, a clairvoyant may have developed the clairvoyance corresponding to the right hand — say the positive side of touch — while all those important and indispensable qualities corresponding to the other organs are unknown and unsuspected by him.

A remarkable effect of one kind of clairvoyance has been a source of great surprise to the French hypnotists. It is that in which the personality and whole character of the subject seems to be changed in an extraordinary way in alternating periods, even the memory being dual. All sorts of wild theories have been started to explain these abnormal conditions, but the fact is that the lower mind is functioning through different astral sheaths successively, each one having its own memories and qualities, some possibly brought over from a previous incarnation. In the normal life they would unite to form a blend, the “false personality,” the lower ego; but when the balance was upset by ill-health, hysteria (whatever that very convenient word may mean) or hypnotism, a temporary separation of portions would occur, each one looking like a different person. When the patient was cured the normal blend appeared, though the memory was not always complete. Cases of entire loss of memory may be explained this way, such as those of persons awaking to find themselves in a strange city, leading a new life under a new name and without the slightest idea how they got there. H. P. Blavatsky says:

Memory — the despair of the materialist, the enigma of the physiologist, the sphinx of science — is to the student of the old philosophies merely a name to express that power which man unconsciously exerts and shares with many of the inferior animals — to look with inner sight and behold the images of past sensations and incidents.

After years of experiment and discussion clairvoyance has only been able to establish two things satisfactorily: the existence and some of the qualities of the astral light, and the fact that we possess astral senses corresponding to this condition; and after all, the scientific world has not been convinced! But apart from the details, the general broad fact of the existence of such a faculty as clairvoyance, the reflection of the higher powers of the soul, gives a plain hint that we are disinherited children of Royal strain — disinherited by our own foolishness; and, finding ourselves

to be more wonderfully made than we thought, a scorn for meanness or impurity should arise and be helpful in temptation.

PSYCHOMETRY

Psychometry is the branch of clairvoyance that has given perhaps more satisfactory results than any other, for it has been frequently practiced with some success by persons in normal conditions, that is to say without bringing in the undesirable trance state with its physiological disturbance; and many people show more or less conscious possession of it in what are called natural antipathies and sympathies. The peculiar and otherwise inexplicable cognizance and horror of the presence of a cat in the room, although unseen and unheard, and hidden away in a box or cupboard, which many people have, is a common example of psychometry.

Nature has been eternally photographing everything in indelible colors. Not a leaf stirs nor a ripple moves, not a star twinkles nor a cloud passes but a record is imprinted upon all the surroundings. In *Isis Unveiled* H. P. Blavatsky gives a remarkable description of the fixing of a psychometric image upon a plate of metal, which was done in her presence in Bengal. Where cities of the past have stood, their ethereal pictures subconsciously impress newcomers to build again. Germs of moral contagion hang around localities where crime has been rife, and purification by fire seems to be the only way of counteracting such influences. This may give a clue to one reason for cremation. The human mind is so sensitive that the most chance encounter engraves an indelible impression, though it may not be brought up in normal consciousness until the time of death, when every detail of the past is reviewed. In the recording atmosphere carried by a mother there are multitudinous pictures of many generations past, some of which receive their "development" as the children come along, their Egos requiring just what is waiting there for them.

The psychometrist in attempting to read in the astral light is exercising a faculty which can hardly be distinguished from the power of recollection, only the astral picture gallery he is trying to examine is not of his own collection. The psychometrist usually places the specimen to be studied, such as a coin, mineral, letter, etc., in contact with the forehead or the epigastrium, or may even hold it in the hand. After a minute or two the external surroundings disappear and a series of pictures, more or less correct and more or less tintured with the workings of the imagination and with the thoughts of other persons, begin to unfold themselves to the inner sight. Sounds too are heard, perfumes smelled, and even the sensations of heat and cold, dryness and moisture, are often reproduced with surprising clearness. Sometimes the object being examined has

passed through so many vicissitudes that the pictures seem to fly with the speed of lightning and then it requires the greatest mental effort on the part of the seer to hold each one for the time necessary for a careful examination. At other times few, but long-continued, influences have affected it and the reading is, of course, easier. Psychometric vision, like all other branches of clairvoyance, is subject to great error owing to the imperfection of the human subjects and the general ignorance of the laws governing it, but for those who are skeptical as to the reality of clairvoyance, psychometry affords the most easily verified form. Different psychometrists agree generally in the broad delineation of an object, though when it comes to the details wide divergences are often found. Different seers apparently perceive the surroundings of the specimens from very different points of view, and the pictures are greatly modified by their individual prepossessions and the vividness of their imaginations, the "personal equation," it would be called in scientific language. Occasionally psychometrists agree in every detail, but there are always unexpected difficulties in getting perfect satisfaction and complete demonstration. It is a singular and well-known fact that hardly any "sensitive" takes the slightest interest in the careful and painstaking study of the laws of the astral plane under which the phenomena are taking place. They are satisfied to accept things as they come, and unfortunately, usually regard their psychic sensitiveness as a means of making a living by "telling fortunes."

The experiments of Baron von Reichenbach conducted in Germany in the middle of last century are classic, and have been largely corroborated by subsequent researches. Reichenbach found that numerous persons could see colored flames issuing from, and surrounding the poles of magnets, particularly in dark rooms. His experiments, which were conducted with great skill and care to avoid fraud or mistake, confirm the statements advanced by Theosophists of the uncertainty of clairvoyance; for the resulting descriptions, though agreeing in the main, differed in detail. In proportion to the sensitiveness of the clairvoyant, differences were seen in the brilliancy and size of the flames. Many of the subjects were invalids and it is noteworthy that with the recovery of their health the clairvoyance rapidly diminished, resulting in an apparent diminution of the radiance given off by the magnets. Some of the sensitives could see other astral things as well, and for those who wish to examine unbiassed scientific evidence upon the subject, Reichenbach's treatise is valuable.

About the same time Professor W. Denton of Boston spent many years and immense pains in collecting first-hand records of psychometry, which he published under the title of *The Soul of Things*. His sensitives were his wife and son and a few friends, and any suggestion of conscious fraud seems uncalled-for. He took many precautions to prevent the imagination of the clairvoyants from leading them astray, sometimes even

grinding to powder the specimens to be psychometrized so that their nature should not be known; and to obviate the possibility of unconscious reading of his thoughts the psychometrists were caused to pick out the objects from a large heap wrapped in tissue paper, the particular one chosen being unknown to anyone until after the delineation. Yet despite all the precautions against imagination and thought-transference, etc., Denton's psychometers usually described the origin and surroundings of each specimen with surprising accuracy in the main, and in some cases mentioned things which it was impossible to verify until afterwards, when they were found to be true. In other attempts, such as the alleged description of life in the planets, it is fairly certain that the imagination played the most important part.

When a bit of lava from California gave a correct picture of a locality in that State, unknown to the seer, with the details of an antique volcanic eruption; and a fragment of plaster from Pompeii rendered snatches of photographically realistic glimpses of ancient Roman life, some of which can be verified, as well as a strong impression of the terrors of the ruin of the city; or an old letter depicted the character and incidents of the life of the writer, a person quite unknown to the clairvoyants; or a thousand other objects were the exciting causes of vivid scenes which were repeated with more or less agreement on different occasions and with various psychometrists, it would appear useless to deny that the evidence is very strong in favor of material objects preserving the images of all that has occurred, and that certain persons are so constituted as to be able to see them in a fragmentary way under favorable conditions. Denton's psychometrists described certain degraded races of men in terms that strongly resemble the account given by H. P. Blavatsky of the lower offshoots of the early Atlanteans. They also had intimations, from prehistoric remains, of high antique civilizations, but these were not so clearly defined, probably because Denton was not looking for anything but "primitive savagery" in the extremely distant past! His experiments while classic, are still open to objections.

The writer had the opportunity once of investigating the claim of a friend who believed she possessed psychometric faculty. She was not trying to exploit it financially and even disliked that it should be known outside her family circle. Among other experiments she was given a small bit of wood showing no marks by which it could be identified, and, to avoid the possibility of thought-transference, the writer, who handed it to her, had been careful not to inquire into its history when borrowing it from another friend. Immediately that she took it up, she saw and described a terrible scene of men fighting for their lives in a confined place close to some water, followed by an immense public funeral in a flat and marshy locality. The owner of the specimen confirmed the delineation. It was a piece of the wreck of the *Royal George*, which sank with nearly all the

crew below deck off Portsmouth, England, about a century ago. The funeral took place in a spot which answered to the description. The bit of wood may have been a portion of something carried to the funeral from the ship, or the original owner may have impressed it with what he saw. Although the experiments were often fairly successful, all concerned found that it would be wiser to discontinue them, as being conducted without direction, and without special purpose, they did not lead anywhere, and the effects were soon found *not* to be beneficial.

The waterfinders, or “dowsers,” who sometimes discover hidden springs and veins of metals, have faculties closely corresponding to the psychometric, but they do not claim to see the object of their quest; and the stories of Talismans and Amulets are not irrational in view of the fact that as sensitive persons can be consciously affected by the pictures carried by inanimate objects, it is extremely likely that all must receive *some* impression from them.

It has been proved that in the system of the Universe the law of periodicity, or cycles, is of primary importance. This law reaches from the lowest physical to the spiritual worlds. In *The Secret Doctrine* H. P. Blavatsky puts it forward as one of the fundamentals of Theosophy. Now it is well known that in the accounts of “haunted houses” it is often mentioned that mysterious noises or apparitions are observed on the anniversaries of the events that caused the trouble. Naturally sensitive persons, or those made so by fear and expectation, may see these pictures of the past in the hues of life, and there are soon the materials of a full-fledged ghost-story. At times a state of stress in the mental atmosphere caused by trouble or sickness develops the psychic photographs and then a warning vision or sound may be perceived. It is impossible to deny that there must be some cause for the many well-authenticated accounts of such things; but when the law of cycles is considered it becomes more than probable that the images of the past, with which the atmosphere of old houses is crammed, are vivified at certain periods, such as anniversaries, when physical conditions are similar and mental expectancy has raised the tension — and can then be perceived by other persons than psychics. Psychometry, combined with thought-transference, gives a rational interpretation to many of the tales that have been considered unworthy of notice by intelligent people. There are, however, certain occurrences, for which there is very strong evidence, that cannot be explained in this way, but to consider these would transcend the bounds of this Manual.

The stories of “supernatural” goings-on in haunted houses usually tell of horrors and crimes. William Q. Judge explains that the lower astral planes upon which the impressions are made and which are the field of ordinary clairvoyance are more easily impressed by the images of passion because of their semi-material nature. The more spiritual emotions are

recorded more vividly upon higher planes, which are not in such close contact with the physical, and so are less accessible to the ordinary man.

THOUGHT-TRANSFERENCE

By a careful examination of the records of Thought-transference it will be seen to be a factor of the greatest importance in the unraveling of many puzzling accounts of apparitions, especially those wraiths seen sometimes at the moment of death. Since wireless telegraphy came into use there has been less difficulty in accepting the possibility of thought-transference, but there is one fundamental difference between the two — as far as at present ascertained — which shows that the laws operating on the astral plane are not precisely the same as those manifesting upon the physical. While electric waves spread out in all directions, weakening in intensity inversely to the square of the distance, like gravity and light, thought-vibrations reach their destination in full intensity, even from the antipodes. They travel in the determined direction as if attracted by sympathy. The action of thought-transference differs from that of psychometry chiefly in requiring a human brain as the transmitter; we should not call anything like the reading of stored-up records by that name. The psychometrist reads the passive emanations from objects, the thought-reader receives active impressions from another person who usually, though not always, knows he is trying to communicate.

Mark Twain relates a curious experience he had, among many others of a similar nature, in the receipt of a plot of a book. It came into his head in a steady stream of thoughts at an early hour one morning, and he thought it an excellent subject but much better fitted for a friend to write. Shortly after, while arranging to send the general outline to this friend, who lived far away in the West, he received the very same thing from the man himself, with a letter asking advice! It turned out that it was the intense thought of the friend that had projected itself across the continent against his brain, and that he had mistaken the stream of thought for something original of his own!

How often the act of letter-writing produces a reply that is not a reply, for it has been written at the same time! With some people the occurrence of letters crossing each other is so frequent as to be a source of annoyance. H. P. Blavatsky says:

As God creates so man can create. Given a certain intensity of will and the shapes created by the mind become subjective; given a more intense and intelligent concentration of the will and the form becomes concrete, visible, objective. — *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I, p. 62.

The sympathy of twins, even at a distance, is well known, and, in a lesser degree, of mothers and children. So many experiments have been made of late years in thought-transference that no intelligent person who has given a proper amount of consideration to the subject can doubt that it is a fact, but we may safely neglect the claims of boasters who assert on public platforms their ability to read all the thoughts, however private, of anyone in the audience!

Much of the success of experiments in thought-transference depends upon fixed concentration by both sender and receiver. It has always been noticed that when the sender wavers in concentration the image disappears or at least becomes confused. The images are subject to the same uncertainties as are found in all clairvoyance; they are frequently reversed in transmission, they appear and disappear incomprehensibly, and are very little under control.

There is a higher kind of thought-transference by which those who have passed into the Devachanic state (the heaven-world of rest between incarnations) are able to help their friends on Earth by sending them pure and holy ideas and enveloping them in a protective atmosphere of love. The living are rarely able to receive these blessings knowingly, but on awaking from sleep a faint memory is sometimes retained in the form of a beautiful dream. Anyway the influence is not without its effect. The advanced Helpers of Humanity are also constantly throwing out beneficial ideas for receptive minds to feel and carry out, ideas that seem to come into the head spontaneously. This communion of thought or overshadowing must on no account be confused with what is called "spirit-return" or "trance-messages," or anything of that sort. Spirit-return is considered by Theosophists as a highly undesirable, and fortunately a very rare, possibility, not to be encouraged by anyone who loves his fellows; and the usual kind of "spirit" messages, when not complete fakes, are so unsatisfactory and twaddling that it is impossible to believe they come from sources of even moderate intelligence.

Without the explanation of thought-transference we could not understand the rapid spread of epidemics of revolution, such as in 1848, and outbursts of suicide, crime and fanaticism; for the ordinary theories are notoriously inadequate and puerile. Many criminals and lunatics have asserted most earnestly that their excesses were absolutely objectless, but that they could not resist the impulses that seemed to come from some external source. Though this is no real excuse, it is perfectly comprehensible that the terrible pressure of ugly thoughts that humanity is continually evaporating into the invisible planes will leak through the thinnest and weakest places. Man is truly his brother's keeper on every plane, and his responsibility is unmeasured.

THE “BOOK OF THE RECORDING ANGEL”

As the Astral Light or Plane has been considered in another Manual it is unnecessary to touch upon it in any detail here; it will be enough to draw attention to a few thought-provoking points which throw light upon the phenomena of clairvoyance. It is very difficult for us, with only the few faculties we have specially trained, to comprehend the existence of this peculiar state of being and substance, separate from, yet interlocking with and even interpenetrating the material world, throbbing in alternating currents of positive and negative impulses, capable of being concentrated into tangible form under rare and peculiar circumstances, and carrying the images of everything that has been and a great deal that will be — in embryo — in the form of potentialities that can be instantly developed into the glowing hues of life under proper conditions. Even our established conceptions of time and space have to be modified when considering its problems. The lower portion of the Astral Plane is a great hypnotizing machine, so full of filth that the task of purifying this Augean Stable seems almost hopeless. But its purification is the only hope of humanity, and by noble deeds, unselfishly performed, those who love the better side and are devoted to the uplifting of the world can project into the air winged hosts charged with dynamic force. In *The Little Philosophers*, a Symposium written for children by Katherine Tingley, the Leader of the UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD AND THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, one of the characters laments the limited number of really impersonal warriors ready to lift the stumbling blocks out of the way of humanity, but the next speaker cheerily responds: “That is the very reason why we should wait no longer to begin!” Fortunately the will-directed and brotherly thoughts of the few who are enlightened, in comparison with the heterogenous confusion of base ideals and hideous images in the astral plane, can be likened to a disciplined force in presence of an unruly mob. Though the soldiers may be few they have a definite aim and a leader working with the Law, while the crowd is undirected or misdirected and wastes its strength aimlessly.

The Higher Ego has the power of acting without the coordination of the physical organs and brain; it sees things by means of its higher clairvoyance, and is sometimes able to impress them by a sort of thought-transference to the lower brain-mind if the latter will permit. In sleep the Higher Ego makes great efforts to inform the brain-mind with knowledge of many kinds, including that of coming events, in order that it may not be altogether unprepared, but it is seldom that the brain can carry these intimations back into waking life; and as the Higher Ego does not use physical language its symbols are not always understood nor recognized in their true importance. If, as is the case so frequently in this materialistic age, the symbolic teachings are persistently ignored and no effort is made by aspiration in wordless meditation to draw sustenance from that Source

which possesses real wisdom, the symbolic suggestions and guidance will disappear. The symbolic dreams created by the imaginative faculty of the Higher Ego are seen, once their clue is obtained, to be exceedingly apt, and oftentimes not destitute of the keen edge of humor. Although there seem to be certain types of dreams bearing definite meanings, and much truth in the old proverb that “dreams go by contraries” (a popular appreciation of the reversal that so often takes place in the astral light) each one must, for himself, learn the symbolic language of his own higher nature.

The Astral Light is not only the storehouse of forms, colors, sounds, etc., but holds the records of all the ideas that have ever been evolved out of man’s brain. The thinkers of today have very few original thoughts; nearly all the philosophies of modern times are little more than modifications of those that were existent at the time when “Solomon” said there was nothing new under the Sun and that to the making of books there was no end! Herbert Spencer’s fundamental principle of Evolution, *i.e.*, that the Heterogeneous proceeds from the Homogeneous and back to it in endless succession, was worked out in ancient India millenniums ago in the philosophy of the “Ever-Becoming,” by thinkers who had more spiritual insight and more departments of Nature open to them than those of the present day — even if they had not all our exquisite mechanical instruments and opportunities of obtaining statistical information. But if we go back to much earlier periods we find that our boasted inventions are old and are largely derived from the astral storehouse of Atlantean or Lemurian antiquity where the principles that our inventors look for are preserved in germ. When the time is ripe, or in other words when the cycle has come round again, the principle breaks through into the seeking minds, and the last link desired for success comes in a flash, or by what is called “a happy accident.” In America the rush of invention has been especially active, one reason being that the people are more receptive to the pressure of the stored thought of the past than Europeans. Then, again, sometimes men originate brilliant ideas but have not enough education or opportunities to push them to perfection; in such cases a receptive and well-qualified mind will pick them subconsciously out of the astral light by a kind of thought-transference and utilize them for the benefit of humanity.

TIME AND SPACE

In a discussion on the will, in the *Parerga*, Schopenhauer, who derived much of his philosophy from the East, makes some curiously suggestive remarks upon the supersensual world in general, and his words apply perfectly to the Astral Planes, lower or “infernal,” and higher or “Divine.” He says that there is quite a different order of Nature from that

with which we are commonly acquainted, with its ordinary laws of space, time and adaptability, an order that goes far deeper, for it is nearer the Original. In this order, which is imperfectly shadowed forth in clairvoyance,

Changes may be wrought by quite a different course than the course of physical causality.... Therefore the peculiar action of all the aforesaid manifestations is vision and action at a distance in its relation to time as well as in its relation to space. Such an action at a distance is just what constitutes the fundamental character of what is called *magical*; for such is the immediate action of our will, an action liberated from the causal conditions of physical action, viz., contact.

From this the consideration of Time in its relationship with clairvoyance and the astral plane is a natural step. In the clairvoyant state and in dreams, which are often partial incursions into the astral consciousness, Time and Space unmistakably enlarge their borders and take on new relationships. For instance a dreamer will undergo experiences in a moment which would require a long time for the waking mind to pass through, and in prophetic dreams the future practically becomes the present. In this connection it has been ingeniously advanced, and not without reason, that as an immense experience may be packed into an instant in a dream, so a whole long life is but a moment in the sight of a higher Being, unrolled, like a scroll, out of another order of time of almost infinite rapidity into our deliberate system of existence, to enable our slow-acting faculties to appreciate in an illusory succession events that are practically co-existent. We must not dwell on this metaphysical idea too long, but neither can it be overlooked, for H. P. Blavatsky enunciates this difficult proposition for our consideration:

The Human spirit, being of the Divine, Immortal Spirit, appreciates neither past nor future, but sees all things as in the present.

— *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I, p. 185.

H. P. Blavatsky here refers to the Higher Ego, but in a minor degree the same thing applies to the personality.

Under the influence of anesthetics, past and future, space and thought are seen under very different relationships from the normal, and many people speak of the sensation, when coming to, of returning from a superior condition in which the spirit has explored the bright, illimitable fields of eternity. In reality the experiences have been very limited and mostly imaginary, but they have demonstrated to the subject that our ordinary consciousness is intensely and painfully cramped; they have demonstrated to him that life has infinitely larger possibilities, and that if we once escape from the prison of self to which we have condemned

ourselves, the kingdom of heaven would indeed be at hand. The door is not barred, but men are afraid to turn the key, which is unselfishness in act and thought.

Another way of regarding the Time question in clairvoyance, is to look upon the causes of the events of the moderately near future as being already in existence. It is therefore reasonable to suppose that to one who could penetrate behind the veil of Karma and could distinguish all the causes of action, the effects would be as calculable as a problem in mathematics, and it is probable, therefore, from this point of view, that some of the failures of ordinary clairvoyance arise from limited perceptions of the enormously complex interaction of causes. In a simple matter like the mailing of a registered letter there is the highest probability that it will reach its destination, and the prophet who declared that it would arrive on a certain day would run little danger of losing his reputation, because the factors in the problem are fairly certain, though of course there would always be a percentage of uncertainty. That this simple argument can be applied to clairvoyance of events in the far distant future is doubtful; in such problems knowledge of the recurring cyclic periods of manifestation is apparently a necessity, as in astronomical calculations, and only the broad outlines can be established by any ordinary kind of clairvoyance.

Putting on one side the fact that the transcendental perception of the Higher Ego is of a higher order than the sensual, the probability of the lower clairvoyance being an extremely rapid deduction of probable effects from causes sensed by the faculties akin to it and reflected into the brain-mind, is sufficient to show that Voltaire's objection to clairvoyance, *i.e.*, that there can be no knowledge of what does not yet exist, is very superficial. Upon this point Gorwitz quotes some very suggestive remarks made by a boy named Richard who showed considerable clairvoyant faculty. He said:

When in my present state [clairvoyant] I see into the future; I see the interlinked causes *all at once*, and the spirit of destiny stands before me!... Only you call it *seeing beforehand*; but it does not appear *beforehand* at all, it really is.

Leibnitz says, "The present is pregnant with the future," and, "He who sees all things in that which is, sees that which will be."

This fascinating problem of the co-existence of present, past and future is closely linked with the difficult Fate and Freewill question and turns largely upon the definition of terms, for Freewill on a higher plane may be compulsion on a lower. As the extraordinary rapidity of working of the image-making faculty in dreams and the existence of clairvoyance shows there are deeper powers within us than are commonly manifested,

so we may rightly expect that as the higher faculties of the soul appear, through the elimination of selfishness and personal desire, we shall understand the how and the why of the manifestation of the Eternal, the One Life, in the limitations of our Time and Space.

INTUITION

Clairvoyance gives us plenty of food for thought on the Theosophical concept that the world of the senses is illusory when seen from a higher standpoint. In dreams we get a hint of the higher experiences of the Ego upon planes where our time and space relations are unknown. Theosophy, when its teachings concerning the impersonal nature of the true Self are understood — that Individuality that knows no fear and desires no reward — renders the current notions of an eternal personal heaven or a personal eternity of punishment unthinkable. Once realize the existence of the overshadowing Higher Ego in all its grandeur and beauty, the Pilgrim that is gaining certain needed experience through reincarnating in many “false personalities” — ordinary humans — and the puerile concept of the eternity of the limited personality as taught by the theologians takes its place with other exploded superstitions.

Happily man is much greater than he dreams; the brain-mind of which he is so proud is only one facet of the jewel of the soul, and not a very bright one either; the selfish, limited, and generally rather contemptible personality — not the Man that “was made a little lower than the angels” — is only a mask for the real Man “for whom the hour shall never strike.” A glance at the psychic faculties is useful in a limited degree for materialistically-inclined persons to see how very slightly modern science has sounded the depths of human nature, and what fallible guides these certain ecclesiastics must be who are so ready to lay down the law upon the subject and to enforce their views by every means in their power. The orthodox teaching is founded upon a false premise, *i.e.*, that the personal, everyday man is he who is to be “saved.” This anti-Christian idea has ingrained a subtle form of selfishness into very many of the professed followers of Jesus, whose whole teaching and example was opposed to anything like “personal salvation.” He told his disciples and the people over and over again that a man must disregard his self-centered, limited life, and that by striving to kill out personal desire and by leading the life of altruism he would in time become one with the Father in Heaven — “the kingdom of heaven within you.” The lower personality is for the real man to use as “an instrument for grave experiment” toward this great end. This subject cannot be pursued further here, but it is fully considered in *The Key to Theosophy*, *Light on the Path*, and elsewhere in Theosophical literature, and should be carefully studied by inquirers, for it is fundamental.

One of the most serious dangers in the hunt after psychism arises from the desire to make money by it. The temptations to commit fraud are constant, for even when astral clairvoyance is genuine it is a very unruly servant, and will not always work; then the persons who have paid their money for a phenomenon demand to see something in return, and the unfortunate psychic finds himself on the horns of a dilemma. The rules for the development of the higher and only *true* clairvoyance *cannot be divulged* to the merely curious or the self-seeker, for they depend upon inner spiritual growth; and Those who know perfectly the laws governing the *lower* clairvoyance will never teach it, thus to put edged tools into the hands of the ignorant and careless. The intense selfishness of the age prevents the possibility of many things being the common property of ordinary humanity. As Jesus expressed it, in very forcible language, it is foolish to throw pearls before swine; not only because of the waste of time and profanation of sacred things, but above all for the protection of humanity in general, including the unprepared themselves. That “hard saying” of Jesus which has puzzled so many students of the Bible, was really an example of his exquisite compassion, for how few there are who could be trusted with even the power of thought-transference! How few there are who would never pry into other people’s business, under the strong temptation that they would frequently have, and the certainty that they could not be punished or even detected by human law! How few could resist the temptation of using their power under the pleasant self-delusion that they were “setting things right” and doing beneficial work, while they were really only flattering their own vanity! How few could face with equanimity the revelation of the events of their own future if they gave absolute credence to the vision! As things are, the uncertainty of the lower clairvoyance is so enormously great that no sensible person can give entire credit to any so-called prophecy emanating from such a source, and so we are protected.

It is fortunate, as things are, that the clairvoyance known to the world is generally discredited and ignored, for it leads away from real spirituality and practical service for humanity by encouraging the seeds of vanity and personality to grow. Another danger that the unprepared are exposed to in dabbling with psychism is that of the confusion of the mind — a most real danger. The mind is startled and unbalanced by having strange things forced upon it without the knowledge of causes, and the Intuition, the noblest faculty of man, is hindered in its development by the false glamor of the psychic senses. The Intuition, though so little used, is the Master Faculty which is destined to lead humanity to the heights. When these are reached, even in part, the vast reservoir of past impressions will begin to become accessible, and the higher Psychometry will reveal to all what is now open to the Initiates only. With its present purely intellectual ideals, cold, unmoral science will make no progress into the causes, but must

confine itself to the region of speculation and laborious collection of facts. William Q. Judge says:

No aid will be given to science until she looks at man and life from the moral and spiritual side. For this reason those who know all about the psychical world, its denizens and laws, are proceeding with a reform in morals and philosophy before any great attention will be accorded to the strange and seductive phenomena possible for the inner powers of man.

In *The Path*, 1887, the following is quoted from an anonymous Theosophical writer:

One who is thrall'd by the concerns of this life, hungers for the love of fellow beings and dreads their hatred, still cares for wealth and honor, still lusts for physical life and separate existence, had better not intrude upon that other field of illusion, the astral world. Astral perception in itself is not a thing to be desired; it should come in the normal course of development. Nothing is gained by turning from one set of illusions to pursue another; and so of all pursuits phenomena-seeking is most to be deprecated. The knowledge comes only to those who strive to realize unity. He who, beginning upon the lowest plane of life by self-renunciation and devotion to the interests of others, realizes this truth upon each successive plane, attains Nirvāna. He who seeks knowledge with any other motive than the unselfish desire to benefit all living creatures is drifting upon the sea of rebirths unpiloted and starless.

It has been falsely taught by certain *soi-disant* Theosophists that the higher wisdom, the "Knowledge of Divine Things," was *only* to be obtained by withdrawal from the clash of the world's life and by entry into the study of one's own private and personal states of consciousness. This has not been, and is not the teaching of the Leaders and earnest workers in Theosophy, nor of the Helpers who sent H. P. Blavatsky to "sow the seed of Oneness in the soil of Mysticism," and those who have not felt the cry of the world for help deeply enough to be willing to sacrifice something, have never been able to keep pace with the stately march of the Theosophical Movement, but have found themselves stranded upon some sandbank of thought. While it is undoubtedly necessary for students to live a retired life at certain times, when they are preparing themselves for some new or greater work for humanity, it is all the more important at such periods of seclusion that no element of personal gratification should enter, but that all should be done with the object in view of "the welfare of their other selves." In Theosophy the only heresy known is the "Heresy of Separateness," the heresy that blinds the selfish to the basic fact in Nature that universal oneness is a reality upon every plane and that one cannot advance alone. Universal Oneness does not need to be artificially built up; it exists; but we have to realize it and to act upon it. The existence of Unity,

or Oneness, at the base of all things, like the existence of Beauty, is there for all to see, but if the eyes are deliberately closed or turned downwards how can it be found?

Innermost Being is One. Differentiations occur more and more widely and illusion increases as the inner becomes the outer; but the unity begins to grow in strength as the learner practices the impersonal life:

And now thy *Self* is lost in SELF, *thyself* unto THYSELF, merged in THAT SELF from which thou first didst radiate.

Where is thy individuality, Lanoo, where the Lanoo himself? It is the spark lost in the fire, the drop within the ocean; the ever present Ray become the all and the eternal radiance.

— *The Voice of the Silence*. {p. 20} (H. P. Blavatsky.)

The Angel and the Demon

A Student

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VOLUME I

THE NEED OF THE STUDY

This Twentieth Century will not be merely the continuation of the last. In many ways it will be a reversal of old currents, thoughts and methods. In other respects it will pick up anew the threads of a past that has been long forgotten.

The forces that have made modern life what it is are about to exhaust themselves in final expenditure. They are to a large extent visibly condemned in their results, and civilization risks to perish under the weight of its own products. Not to be regretted will be the destruction of many of its methods, teachings and aims. Their root is selfishness; their philosophy, tacit or proclaimed, is a false individualism; their fruits are misery, despair, doubt, denial, ignorance, indifference. The absorption of energy in vast armies and armaments, wars, pacts pregnant with coming war; a polished unintellectuality, a luxury and effeminacy *that recall the days of dying Rome*; political and private corruption; dishonest and grasping conflicts of trade; starvation, suicide, insanity, and a shortening life-length; vice, 'natural' and unnatural; monstrous crimes — all these are elements of an ever-darkening picture.

There is no space for, and no need of, figures and proofs. Those who want to doubt, lest stern fact should upset their blindly optimistic or selfish quiet, may do so. To a mind capable of confronting facts at all, it will be proof enough, and index enough, that the armaments of nearly every 'civilized' nation on Earth are growing year by year, and absorbing more and more of the life and *soul* of their people; to which may be added the picture of the march of suicide, insanity and preternatural crime.

External conditions, social and national and international relations, social and political frameworks, institutions and organizations, are effects, not causes. It is not with these that reform can commence! It is the *characters of the men who make up the nations* that we have to examine. The organizations reflect the men who live in them. A conscienceless monopoly only embodies and makes actively visible the consciencelessness of the people among whom it grows up — not merely, be it observed, that of the individuals who unite to make it.

The drug houses only provide *method* and opportunity of indulgence for the increasing numbers who desire to reduce their souls to stagnation with drugs. So with liquor stores and the drinking habit. Going one layer deeper, we can say that the drug addict, the alcoholic, the elemental sub-human criminals and *roués* are only the focal units in the general human consciousness to which converge and where accumulate the tendencies to those things existing in many men. Five per cent of vicious (though possibly checked) thought in twenty men causes a whole vicious act in the

twenty-first. Him alone do we punish; but in passing we might ask, is there not a Law and insight deeper than human which will apportion to the twenty their share of punishment? Prisons, reformatories, psychiatric wards, the graves of suicides, drug houses and inebriate homes are filled with the integrated results of these unnoticed 'five-per-cents' in you and me.

So on all hands we are committed to an inquiry into human character — its elements, its why, its destiny, its possibilities; an inquiry as much demanded by the conditions of civilization as by the conscious and unconscious painful questioning of humanity.

The answer must be new — new, that is, to this age. Of old current answers this age has had enough. The bread, if it ever was that, has petrified into a stone.

And the answer must bear its own warrant of truth; it must be easy of comprehension, like all deep truth; and it must be easy of application to the hour-by-hour life of the man who goes forth to his business. It will be all that if it conveys a true picture of the human soul and of the forces whose contention make of it a battleground.

To and fro, to and fro, between the Light and the Shadow, between peace and unrest, faith and doubt, moves the troubled, questioning soul of man. He understands, in the fuller sense, nothing of the world, of life, nor of himself; he knows no path to steady peace, nor if there be such a path.

On these deep questions, spoken or unspoken, Science throws little light; the theories of the psychologies yield nothing for the man of toil; and religion, as he hears it, holds his attention less and less as the years go by.

Men begin to feel they have no ground for hope in life or after death — no base, standing on which they may say, "I know." For a little while the sunlight may come, they know not why or whence; it may not last the years of youth. At some time all must face, if only for a moment, the great question.

Many try to believe, some succeed in believing, that after death they will receive a heritage of joy and peace. On that they realize a small present loan. But these are fewer and fewer.

How to sink a well into the Deeps of Being and find the ever-flowing river of eternal life, eternal joy, eternal hope and peace — that is what men want to know. But they have wanted so long that faith even that the river exists is waning fast.

It is the pain, the monotony, the impermanence of the joy of life, its apparent uselessness, that arouses men to questioning. Some seem even beyond the point of question, so narcotized are they by the pain, the joylessness, the monotony and uselessness. For these things *are* a narcotic and often carry their victims — even a whole oppressed nation — almost beyond the point, not only of complaint, but of wish for release.

And the question itself is changing. Passing from the primary search for an answer, it is becoming: Can there *be* any answer?

Psychology, when it transcends a mechanical and objective physiology, offers but a weary, sterile, hedgeless path of speculation — a path whose anemic and spectacled travelers have for many centuries proclaimed their arrival at a multitude of invisible goals of arid truth.

Religion has only offered formulas, faith, and sometimes lofty feeling, as the path. Disconnected from a living science of the soul, these do not give the universal answer. If they did, the world would not be where it is.

As for Science, confining itself almost entirely to the world of objective phenomena, it remains self-proclaimingly ignorant of what lies beneath, of the nature of life, of the consciousness of man save as its effects move out into terms of force and matter.

Let us examine more closely some facts to which we have already referred.

The armaments of nearly all nations are increasing on sea and land. In some countries every male individual spends or has spent a portion of his time in military training. If one nation builds a warship, another must build two to maintain its lead.

Where is this to end? In a great convulsion and clash? Possibly; but there have been such before, and when the storm subsided each party resumed its efforts with increased zeal to become impregnable in attack and defense.

Yet all fear war. Diplomacy, whilst it is the art of coming as near to it as possible to gain an end, is also the art of avoiding it by the breadth of a hair. Lest they should break into war amongst themselves, the Great Powers have more than once stood around and permitted the massacre of thousands of Armenians, which the emphatic protest of one might have stayed.

But fear of war is not love of peace. How long would one army stay un-mobilized if the nation were sure of victory?

He who thinks of an action is developing a force within himself that will presently make him do it. War is constantly in the thought of every nation. Because of wars in hand, near or far, because they see their own armaments and have pride in them, because they have to serve, because they read and talk of war, by the head of force generated by their much thinking they make war inevitable.

So every individual of every nation has to do a harder day's work and to gain less by it to keep up its army and navy. And with every additional fraction to the taxes made necessary by an additional ship or regiment, some few, already at the border, are pushed over into pauperism or starvation.

In war, therefore, and the preparations for it, is one factor that continually increases the sum of human misery, continually fosters the worst passions, and continually withdraws human energy of thought and feeling from doing higher work. And this factor of de-civilization is a growing one.

Another root-fact is the increase of suicide in nearly every civilized country since last century began. Putting aside cases due to insanity proper, to fear of disgrace and similar causes, we confront the fact that a weariness of life is increasing. As life stands, it is a possession not desired by an increasing number of persons. A collateral fact is increase in insanity. Either the stress of life is getting more terrible, or the human intellect is getting less able to bear it.

And the years of human life are shortening decade by decade, once that infancy is passed.

Placing these facts together, they make up an arraignment of modern civilization against which it will have to defend itself. It does not appear to be in line with evolution. Where is the point of divergence?

Even assuming that the evolution of the individual may once have progressed through conflict, the sharpening of faculty through rivalry, and the survival of the fittest — who can deny that the further, higher evolution of humanity lies in the power of union and of altruism? Who will dare to maintain that the destruction of a battleship of a small nation by two of a larger necessarily subserves any purpose of evolution? or that war is not a retrogression? or that universal peace is not the best atmosphere for ripening all the nobler qualities of men?

Yet modern civilization includes the universal multiplication of armaments.

Evolution would seem to prescribe that the richer and fuller becomes the consciousness of individuals, the more should life be desirable and pleasurable.

Yet modern civilization includes the advance of suicide.

Evolution of intelligence, promising to bring wider knowledge of life and the methods of Nature, should include a lengthening of individual life.

Yet modern civilization is shortening adult life and increasing the number of those whose intelligence has departed or become turbid. It would appear also to be increasing child criminality and crimes of causeless mutilation.

So present civilization is out of line with evolution. Men feeling this, clearly from thought and study, or dimly as a pain and an uncomprehended sense of lack, groan and question. But the years go on and the time is at hand when the Great Law will have gathered its mighty forces of readjustment so that, out of the turmoil, wisdom and understanding may arise.

These pages are no more than a study of the action of this Law and of the two opposing elements in human consciousness wherewith it works. Balanced and cooperative in nature, in man they are out of gear, and from this fact arises the perturbed and darkened picture of present human life. We have called them, for the purposes of our study, the Angel and the Demon — the forces of oneness and of separation, of Light and of darkness, of evolution and of decay.

We shall try to show that pain is no essential of life, that peace and joy are its proper conditions — the very spirit in the deeps of human nature.

Facing then the picture of present human life we must search for the redeeming lights, for the ground of hope of a new future out of line with the past, for the basis of new action. What force is at hand to hold back the clouds from rolling in, gray and dark over the whole sky? Among all peoples are traditions of a long-past golden age of peace and happiness on Earth; may we reasonably reread the tradition as a prophecy?

In the Eighteenth century a great cry went up in Europe — Liberty, Equality, Fraternity. By accentuation of the first two the third was forgotten; in their name the third was outraged and the soil of Europe drenched in blood. A new day had dawned, men thought; their hopes ran high and then died in despair and horror.

But how if the full stress had been thrown on the third and the other two had been allowed to take care of themselves; how if altruism had been made the keynote? “Good,” says A; “I would be brotherly to B if he would be so to me.” And B says the same of A: so all goes as before; the brotherly impulse of neither is more than of the surface. Equally futile must it be, evanescent like all emotions, doomed to reaction if, as then happened in France, it arise as, or be allowed to become, a fit of sentimentality, of hysteria. In the man for whom it is a real power, it will transmute his whole nature into gold, strengthen his will, sap the life of his baser impulses; in the nation which contains many of such men it will act as a preserving shield.

Let us make a new study of human solidarity, and then learn that it does not imply sentimentalism, communism, anarchy or assassination. Neither is the last the path to liberty, nor communism and anarchy the associates of liberty; *while the doctrine of human (moral and mental) equality emanates from blind foolishness*. Because these things were not understood, the celebrated formula of the 18th century, however profusely and rhetorically and emotionally presented, failed to avert any of the evil of the time, and therefore has humanity since then gone a little farther downhill.

Altruism must now be preached and practiced in a new way. It must be based on intelligent conceptions and manifested in intelligent action. A call is made; who will answer it, and know how to work?

Those who arise in response must be such as have, by strong search, found the Angel and consciously work with it. They alone have obtained the key to the necessary force, the necessary power of utter self-effacement in the interest of others, the necessary inaccessibility to personal ambition. The time is ripe for their work; unless that were so, unless humanity were secretly looking for a message, secretly aware that it had come to the end of old things and methods, had loosed from old moorings, nothing could be done.

Let those who feel discouraged at the few-ness of real workers look back through history at the work done by *single men* working opportunely and fired by unquenchable enthusiasm based on intelligence. Look by way of example only at Luther, Wesley, Peter the Hermit, Bernard of Clairvaux, Muhammed; not thereby implying similarity, or equality of importance or beneficence in the work of these leaders, but as showing the power of one voice, the magnetism of intense conviction. Where today are those who have this same fire, the same power of arousing men from stupor?

Now is the opportunity of great souls. What could not be done by some few, or one only, among the heads of nations, their natural and placed leaders, their builders, who would arise and sound the redeeming note? Could such a man not alter the current of *the world's thought*, and make it set for ever away from the causes of misery?

Let us be ready, for the time is moving quickly. Men are souls, and must henceforth be led by *those who know it*, who feel themselves as souls in every cell of their bodies, and whose minds work as the servants of the Law. Great civilizations have arisen, have crystallized into institutions, have reached a mighty prime, and have then passed away in blood because men would not learn this truth, would not see that Oneness is the law of life.

Yet life is eternal; men cannot die if they would; returning again and again to Earth, taking new bodies, making anew and with added touches the old civilizations, conquered by or conquering with the perennially arising empires, they have moved through the long pains and brief exultations, the triumphs and humiliations of life after life toward the fuller and fuller learning of the lesson. Their memories of the past have vanished, but the impress remains. Humanity may seem what it was, but the ages of glory and disgrace, of loving and hating, of tension and relaxation, of luxury and misery, have mellowed it to a readiness for the reception of the new-old message. Upon those who can feel the steady heart-pressure of this message from the Gods, who can hear the deep cry of waiting humanity to receive it, rests the responsibility for its deliverance.

The World-Soul stirs in every heart; everywhere is an expectancy. Men are turning anew to the old religions, thinking that therein may be lying what they need; they dig again at the old philosophies; they broaden research in every corner of the field of science. Whether they do it in hope,

or to dull the edge of their sense of the emptiness of life, they do it in vain until they find the golden key which they seek knowingly or unknowingly, and shall find when and how they least imagine. The joy, the wisdom, the shining secret of life cannot be known until the Light of TRUTH has cleared away all mists from before the eyes of the soul, until the Angel has become the Self and the Demon the servant.

But upon him who has thus changed and glorified his nature comes a great power: his mere presence can lift the weight from the heart of others; he can speak so that they will listen; he can point and make swift the living arrow of Truth; his words will now bring hope and peace, and the message which is for the healing of all nations.

THE DEMON IN HUMAN LIFE

The medieval Devil has been for some time banished from the pulpits. He had become useless as a bogey, however convenient and easy as an explanation of evil. It does not follow, for all that, that the medieval conception had no relation to a fact, both in human and cosmic nature.

If we take the smallest care in examining what goes on within us, we find two perfectly distinct centers and activities of consciousness, classified from time immemorial as the upper and lower natures. The brain is really a keyboard for thought, at the disposal of *either* of the two combatants in human life. The one pole originates all the impulses that aim at the welfare of others, at serving and giving; the other all that aim at getting, getting enhancement of sensation and the means to it. One looks out to others, the other in to self. Both employ the instrument of thought to secure their ends. When man finally allies himself, absorbs himself, with or in one or the other, he becomes either one of the saviors of humanity or one of its curses.

In the animal kingdom below man, it is mainly the lower, the matter-born, of the two forces which appears in consciousness. On the whole the animal's consciousness is selfish. Selfishness is the motive power that drives it to all, or nearly all, its activities, and leads to the perfection of its powers. But by now, with us, it should have finished its work. All that it can do can be better done by a higher force, spiritual, beginning to appear in man's consciousness as the altruistic impulse, compassion, love, oneness, friendship. Under that impulse man can go on perfecting every power, including many — the highest — to which the other is an absolute bar.

Most men accept both impulses in themselves as they come. An appeal to their sympathy, if it does not require too much imagination to understand, or too much self-denial, gets a response. They are willing to help and to give. But the whole transaction is something of an interruption to their ordinary current of action and purpose, whose trend is taking,

getting. If the two tendencies are in this ordinary blend, we have the ordinary man. He takes up no definite attitude towards them, not seeing the larger issues behind and establishing no fixed habit. If the point is pressed upon his attention, he will bestow his abstract approval upon the policy of giving; but he will doubt whether life could be lived on a common-sense basis, or even preserved for long, if that were exclusively pursued by society. Selfishness he admits to be reprehensible in its extreme forms, but considers as in the main necessary for continued existence.

Yet it is possible to make life one entire gift to humanity, and to be deeply giving while superficially taking. Money may be amassed; but to be given back in various attempts to promote the general welfare. Comforts, even luxuries, may be secured; but in order that work, because of such surroundings, may be bettered and facilitated. Recreation and pleasure may be used as means instead of ends. Health may be carefully developed and protected; but only as the necessary basis for the best work. In all these gettings, a man may have the welfare of others as his single final object. In the same spirit the inventor may invent; the musician and poet compose; the artist paint: the cheerful will *to give* underlying all that is done. The whole of the pains and evils of human life come from the opposite, the self-seeking, motive. The other and higher, competent to ensure the whole future of human evolution, is becoming a more and more active power. To believe that evolution will continue to depend upon the lower, upon that one according to which Nature perfects her types and the powers of her children up to man, is to have a picture of ultimate society as an equilibrium of fiends — an equilibrium momentarily yielding and then readjusting itself when one of them happened to slip his foot or be for a moment off his guard. To take, with intent to give nowhere present in the mind, is now an affront to the spirit of evolution. It is a reversion to animalism.

Western psychology has never properly understood man's mind as a creative power. There is no 'creation' anywhere in Nature, in the sense of making something from nothing. 'Creation' is the working of the formless into form. That, man's mind does without intermission. The formation of every habit is the creation of an entity in consciousness, alive then until it is killed or let die, and with a power growing as long as its requirements are obeyed. It is a constant presence, in some cases asleep between the intervals of periodic demands for gratification; in others never asleep. It is an entity in the subliminal consciousness, the field of which is full of them, hierarchies of them. There are also habits which the mind did not create, but found present when it came into the body; for example, the impulse to eat. But upon some of these the mind seizes, creating them into potencies of unnatural vigor. Each habit created *de novo* by mind, or accentuated by it, by thought, has access to it and uses it with more or less pertinacity and

skill. The habit is in fact intelligent, knows what it wants, practically knows and cares for nothing else, thinks out in the mind the ways of getting what it wants, and may finally dominate and even kill its creator. *And it may then survive the body.*

Every victim of, for example, the drug or alcohol habits knows that he is in the grip of a *will* too often stronger than his own, coming upon him at *its* pleasure, which in the end *is not his*; a conscious entity sweeping in irresistibly upon his consciousness, and often using his mind with supreme cunning to secure the poison. He knows all this as soon as his attention is called to it. Otherwise, because he created the habit, because it uses his mind, because in early years he concurred fully in its wishes, he will regard it as himself. Theosophy, which teaches Reincarnation, teaches also that some of these habits may follow their creator from birth to birth, attaching themselves to him as he incarnates, and gradually manifesting as physique and opportunity permit. Many mysteries in human life thus find their explanation: the sudden development of alcoholism, sudden changes of character, sudden outbreaks of criminality, total duality of character. Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* pictures a fact in human life. Because the Hyde at times displaced him was no proof that Jekyll was a hypocrite. A new and better life may begin under the black shadow of old evil, and the shadow may for long have its hours of terrible alternation with the light. It is still a living presence in the outer field of consciousness, always awaiting its opportunity. It was strong enough to survive the time-space between death and the following birth, and is the Dweller on the Threshold of its once creator and now victim.

Unless we understand and accept Reincarnation as a fact in Nature, we cannot understand a process going on in our midst, with whose results, later, humanity will have to reckon.

Not only may habits be created, but *habit* — a permanent direction of thought and conduct. There are many who are gradually allying themselves more and more fully with that light shining throughout Nature, which will ultimately be the sole guide of human action — the tendency to give. They are creating from the substance of this force, as it flows through them, a vestment, a habit, a diviner self-sheath. At each opportunity they let this self come in and rule their action. It grows stronger and stronger. It begins to tincture the whole mind. It becomes a constantly felt presence. The entities connected with ordinary habits push into consciousness only periodically, and between-whiles remain latent and inactive.

The man has the welfare of others more and more constantly in view in all he does. He places more and more of his mental energy at the service of the Angel, and attracts to it more and more of that conscious energy of Nature. Though the man grows nobler and nobler, his ideal is always rising, and beyond him. He has created it, yet it is also part of the soul of

Nature. It is receptive of much in Nature of which he knows nothing. It begins to embody her idea and ideal of the future man. It passes beyond the care of its creator, in a sense, growing now by force of its own vitality whilst he sleeps and works. It is nourished by the Oversoul, since it was at the first a seized droplet, a detained ray, of That. And it is nourished by all the divine and compassionate thought and feeling that the noblest men have ever thought back to the Higher Self, the Christos. The man may know that presence about him or within him, felt in his moments of aspiration, prayer or endeavor; or he may call it by a name drawn from his religion — not wholly wrongly nor yet wholly rightly. After the death of his body, he becomes one with it. But unless he has achieved that unity while yet in the flesh, at his next birth the two are again separate. Only now his impulses to good are overwhelming and continuous.

Leaving this picture for further development later, let us consider the opposite. Here the whole tendency of consciousness is away from others, inwards toward self. Others are only considered in so far as they may serve.

A simple classification presents itself at once: on one side of the line are those who may be called their own victims; on the other, those who make victims of as wide a circle of their fellows as they can reach.

Yet to say of the first class that its members are their own victims, is but a superficial way of speaking. They are victims of entities that they have created as habits. Each such entity, whether of drunkenness, drug-taking, or any other form of sensualism, is at first a specialization of the man's psycho-physical consciousness in that direction. This portion grows, finally becoming a center of consciousness on its own account. It finds its life in the satisfaction of its single instinct; it has indeed no other life. Its demands tend to increase in frequency and imperiousness, and if unresisted they will finally entail the sacrifice of the whole remaining energies of the body and lead it to its death.

Such an entity can be called neither moral nor immoral; it simply keeps on doing with increasing intensity the one thing it was created to do. Its victim's body and vitality are its means and instruments. He himself may continue to side with it, or he may struggle with or without success to throw off the yoke about his own neck. If he struggles, he will not only find the strength of his adversary, but its intelligence. He will find a thousand reasons and excuses coming into his mind apparently of themselves, as: It is now necessary for his health; it would be safer to relinquish it gradually; he will relinquish it on New Year's Day; some other man has it whom it does not harm; and so on forever. It will out-reason him as long as he lets it talk. His difficulty is that he regards these pleadings as from himself and treats them with corresponding respect.

But if he makes no struggle, siding with his enemy, it will absorb his personal consciousness more and more completely; the soul will withdraw

at last from a personality which will no longer render any response to its strongest efforts; and what was a man is now merely an embodied vice, an appetite. When death frees it, it remains in the Earth's aura. Unable now to gratify its one passion directly, it becomes a source of constant danger to sensitives and mediumistic natures. These, in some of the states of utter negativity which they permit or deliberately induce, often place themselves beyond the protecting power of their own souls, throw their bodies open to the entry of one of these creatures, and suddenly find themselves the victims of cravings they can neither account for nor resist. Orthodox science may for the next few years scout such an explanation of phenomena for which it has no explanation but a name; in the end it will be found valid. Thus teaches Theosophy.

A further view opens from this point. The whole group of habits and tendencies created by the impulse to seek self-gratification of any kind, whether sensual or higher, are themselves children of a profounder though impersonal habit rooted in material nature herself. By it, as we have pointed out, the units of life established their nature and perfected their powers to the limit which that impulse makes possible. This impulse may be called selfish only at the human level — where a higher comes into view.

When one particular form of sensuality, of self-seeking, is found by the individual to be oppressive, for example drunkenness, and he attempts to conquer it in the interests of his own personality (that is, from a motive that is still selfish), he has, it is true, that particular force against him. But he has not yet deliberately chosen to ally himself with the higher side of nature. He remains morally about where he was. If he wins his fight, his will is stronger, but he is still in unbroken alliance with the force of self-seeking. He has merely *selfishly* cleared an obstacle out of his way.

Two things may now happen. The force of the conquered gratification may diffuse itself out into other kinds of sensuality: he may become lazier, addicted to gluttony, excessive use of tobacco, coffee, sugars, etc.; or more sensual in the limited meaning of that word.

In the other case, with his newly cleared consciousness and strengthened will, he may deliberately set out upon a larger career of selfishness which many others enter from the first. Under the influence of ambition he, like some of them, may use his will to conquer all lower failings, and to develop every power, sacrificing and uprooting every impulse whose gratification is in the way of power.

There are more profound depths of selfishness that simple sensualism does not ordinarily reach. Sensualism, save in extreme degrees and forms, is compatible with the continuance in the nature of much that is yet good. It rather tends to crowd the better impulses to the wall, to dull them, than to exchange itself for them. But the selfishness which seeks power looks directly to, not ignores, other men. The sense of power over others,

gratified ambition, is the enhanced sense of self-being; it is established by personality; it is the very vitality of the self-centered person, a plane of vitality quite distinct from the physical or physiological. It is the material-nature impulse at last in flower, reaching the consummation which human life alone renders possible. When the end is reached, the man has become a fiend.

Most men are too weak to pursue this path very far. They will keep their failings, unable to uproot sensuality, trying to get the respect of men (which gives the sense of power) either by *seeming* what they are not, or by ostentation of wealth. Various kinds of culture and skill, and sometimes oratory, can be acquired without more sacrifice of sensuality than they have strength for; and these they may accordingly acquire. Religious charlatans especially find the path to power over certain minds very easy; and they are correspondingly numerous. But their reign is short; their own failings, weaknesses and ignorance of human nature sooner or later prick the balloon from within. Each moreover is but a unit, the only fighter for his own hand, backed by nothing and no one. Nevertheless, while his power lasts, and over those whom it affects at all, it is very great. The ambition of the great military adventurer is but to control the bodies of men; political ambition and the ambition of the orator aim no farther than men's minds. But this man gets farther in: people offer him their consciences; his dominion may be nearly absolute over their whole natures.

The full possibilities of ambition are little realized in our day because the cumulative effect of successive incarnations, pointing more and more directly in one direction, is left out of account. As soon as ambition for selfish power leads to, is the motive of, the surmounting of a sensual weakness — or still more, a course of self-discipline,— the human nature hardens quickly. He lives by the light of an evil ideal; it becomes infused with the life-force which he withdraws from his conquered tendencies; finally it becomes a conscious presence in his life. It survives the interval between death and the rebirth following; and then, as in the case of lesser leftover habits, there will be a struggle. With most men this struggle is not decided for ages. With each birth, according to its heritage, there is more or less sensual tendency to be again surmounted or yielded to. There are a thousand appeals to affection and compassion, hard to deny, and if not denied generating an opposing force as readily cumulative as the other — and like the other tending to concrete into a center of consciousness, henceforth the Angel in that man's life. There are the ways of life itself, always tending to bring ambition to its end with a crash of disgrace, or by final disappointment.

But in a few cases in every century the created Demon of utter selfishness is strong enough to prevail, little by little, over all. Gradually the appeal of humanity loses all its power; life after life the will strengthens

and the lower weaknesses are more and more easily surmounted. The man and the Frankenstein-monster he has created enter at last into complete union, and the soul — no gleam of whose light is allowed to enter consciousness — departs. The man is an initiate in evil, and, with an intelligence far beyond that of common humanity, remains in its midst. *As such*, such a man is unrecognized by society; for society as yet knows nothing of the possibilities of human development towards good or evil.

Theosophy is the only force that can unify all nations, that can illuminate and purify all creeds, that can show each nation its path to its own noblest development. Individual ambition has to disappear; another and opposite working-force, that of unity and altruism, must replace it as the purer and higher stimulus to effort. To demonstrate that it can do so, is the work of Theosophy.

Therefore, the middle and later years of this century will not be the continuation of the Nineteenth. The light of Theosophy will become generally recognized. Its message concerning life will be accepted. Men will more and more seek its Teacher — whether, as now, Katherine Tingley, or her successor — and that Teacher's accredited pupils for the solution of problems now beginning to be thought insoluble. There *is* a solution to them all; life *may* easily be transformed into its highest terms; there is no inherent need for any of its pains; there is no need for humanity to be in darkness or ignorance. Theosophy can show it to be possible and easy to make Earth a heaven, to strip death of its terror. As soon as the appeal is made the answer will be given. Then will begin the New Order of Ages.

THE ANGEL IN HUMAN LIFE

IN VINO VERITAS — wine unveils the true man — is a bit of cynicism which used to be more often heard than now. It implies that the creature set free by wine is the 'real man' (!), egotistic, talkative, sensual, quarrelsome. Suppose there were another kind of wine which silenced the animal man and freed the spiritual, as the wine we know silences the spiritual and frees the animal. Wine makes some men nearly fiends; the other wine would make some nearly gods. That faint glow of divinity which we see here and there in all men — the suggestion of thinker, poet, artist, saint, hero — would shine out perfect and undimmed.

Wine would make all men fiends, if, while absolutely shutting off the spiritual, it not merely left the intellect untouched, but cleared and sharpened it. The other wine would make all men gods, if, while absolutely shutting off the sensual and selfish, it raised the mind to the power of full expression of the spiritual.

Man's consciousness has its poles in the worlds of matter and of spirit. In lending his mind, from moment to moment, to impulses from one

or the other, he is creating the Angel and the Demon. They bear his superscription, but the matrix and essence of one of them is divine light. He has given of his 'I' to the impulse, given selfhood; and that second self lives on and grows in power.

So if a man finds himself, as we have seen, the constant recipient of suggestions of evil, it is also true that in the diviner part of his nature he has individualized — or can at any moment begin to individualize — the amply countervailing force of good. Between the opposing suggestions he has always the power of choice. He can gradually learn, by opening his mind in one direction, to close it in the other. Mind cannot harbor the two forces at one and the same time. If it admits one, the other, for that time, must go.

But the man who would redeem himself from some besetting failing must not wait for the hour of urgent temptation to invoke the Angel in his being. Strength gathers by constant invocation of its light throughout the intervals. If he does that, victory, however deferred, is ultimately certain. He is invoking the whole force of evolution. For though the Angel is in a sense the creation of the man, he has created it in and of this divine force. In itself it is unconquerable, nor can it ever cease to be. It is an individualized portion of the Divine Intelligence. To invoke it, to feel after it in daily life, is therefore the path not only to purity, but to wisdom and to power. To be saturated with its light is to have become more than man. From the first it is his highest self, *his* God, and his path to *the* God.

If we accurately translate Jesus' "first and great commandment," we shall find him referring to this Presence and describing in pregnant terms the right attitude towards it. The ordinary version runs: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." (And we can note in passing that this "first and great commandment" was not a *Do Not*, but a *Do*. Its keynote was not that of the Ten Commandments.)

Our retranslation runs: Thou shalt love the Master (*Kurios*), the God (*Theos*) of thee (*sou*) with all thy heart (*kardia*, regarded as the seat of imagination and feeling), and with all thy soul (*psuche*, the animal soul), and with all thy mind (full human intellect, *dianoia*).

Every part of consciousness was thus to be engaged, to be tuned to recognition of, and love of, "thy divine Master."

The other command, "like unto it," was, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

On another occasion, speaking still more specifically, Jesus Christ said of little children that "their Angels" behold always the face of the Father in Heaven. Of this saying, the Christian Church, which has lost the ancient teaching of the Angel and the Demon in human nature, a teaching which was everywhere part of the Mysteries, has no real explanation to offer.

Katherine Tingley, speaking in one of her instructions to her pupils, says of these two forces:

Invisible companions formed of man's own essence, one evil, one divine, the secretion or objectivation of the opposite poles of his own self-consciousness, they represent his good and evil angels, the Augoeides and its counterpart, each seeking to absorb his being. One of them in the end must prevail over the other, and one or the other is strengthened by every act and thought of his life. They are his higher and lower potentialities passing slowly into potency as the energies (both good and evil, note) of the soul are awakened.... And if effort be continual, if no failures or falls discourage the aspirant and are always followed "by as many undaunted struggles upward," he has always the help and counsel of the divine 'Daimon,' the 'Warrior'; and victory, however far away, is certain. For this is an unconquerable power, "eternal and sure," an actual presence and inspiration if you will but recognize it.

She is of course addressing those who have fully entered upon the path of self-conquest; but in degree her words apply to all who have begun to face the problems of life.

The existence of the two depends, as we have said, on man's duality of Nature. At one pole he is animal, with all the self-seeking animal tendencies; at the other divine, with potentially godlike power, understanding and compassion. Christ's "great commandment," with its *psyche* and *dianoia*, the animal and spiritual souls, contains a reference to this duality.

In his animal nature man is complete; either temporarily latent and folded away during evolution in other directions, or in full activity, he has every animal power. Whatever can be acquired by struggle either has already been acquired, or can now be acquired by a nobler method. The force of matter has done its best; it is now time for another evolution. The flowers of mind and heart and soul will not bloom in an atmosphere tense with conflict actual or threatened, with jealousy, hate, envy and greed. It is the turn of the divine force, of the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, the direct radiation of the Supreme. This is man's highest consciousness; when, by beginning to follow its behests, he individualizes it from the sea of light, it is his Angel. When he is fully at one with it he becomes a god. Its pressure is towards unity, harmony, compassion. It is the atmosphere in which alone men can move on to ideal life. The closer man stands to it, the profounder is his feeling for beauty, the more is his intellect illumined with comprehension of the meaning of life. He knows of immortality with a certainty beyond argument, for he is beginning to assimilate that which is life itself. The veiled poet, artist, thinker, hero, is beginning to stand forth. He feels at every hour the joy of a spiritual growth that can have no limit.

The path to this growth opens immediately ahead of every man at every moment. The very desire for it is a mark of the presence of the Angel, whose inspiration can be constantly felt coming into the mind as a waft of higher impulse in the pauses of common thought. Seized and held to, it stills perplexities, cools the brain, and shows the path to peace. In the end, if it is permitted, it will clear the human tabernacle of all but itself, and the man is redeemed. Death can no more break the thread of his consciousness.

Skepticism as to the possibility of this is the chief reason why it happens with such excessive rarity. Men will not understand that the Presence which comes upon them at their best moments, which *is* their best moments, waits constantly at their elbow, and that those moments will become continuous if they but seek them with fixity of purpose; that the divine Player is always ready when the instrument is; that his harmonies are limited only by the instrument; that the instrument is the man himself as he knows himself in daily life; and that this Presence habitually makes itself felt in him as the pressure of conscience, as the call to duty, as the perception of grandeur, real beauty of every kind, and of nobility, and as compassion.

The body is the sounding-board of all the phases of consciousness of the man who dwells in it; every mental change, every change of feeling, modifies some part of the body, some organ or nerve-center. And once this change has occurred, it tends after a longer or shorter time to reproduce itself automatically, and to re-excite in the consciousness that attitude, thought, or feeling which first caused the bodily change. Thus are habits generated. The man, by his thoughts, leads the body into temptation a long time before the body picks up the habit and *leads the man* where first he led it. It is the man that is weak and the flesh willing. The body follows and registers the man who lives in it; if he grant a desire from it today, it will demand the same tomorrow, perhaps when he is wanting to think about something important; if he grant *all* its desires, the divine Player will be permanently excluded from the instrument, since they will grow so fast that there is no room for anything else; but if he watches for this Player, and welcomes its advent, its promptings will become plainer and plainer, pass from vague waves of feeling, half-blind impulse to duty, into more and more definite guidance of every step in life, filling it with peace and beauty.

Real Christians are well aware of this *Presence* within the field of their consciousness, but they have seriously limited the truth in their interpretation; calling it "Christ," and confusing it with the Great Teacher who lived 2000 years ago, they have taken no note of the fact that it is the "Light which lighteth *every* man that cometh into the world," and that it is potentially or actually present with the same fullness in those who have and have not heard of Jesus Christ. The Teachers have taught *of* it, being

Teachers just because they had fully assimilated it, and even the name Christ was in use among the Greeks, in this connection, long before our era.

We are dealing with the process of unveiling something present in all men, and the veil that separates them from it is woven of their desires. If a man is thinking high thoughts, and one of the common desires suddenly obtrudes itself, those thoughts must stop until he has either quelled or satisfied that desire, and he must resume them nearer the beginning than when he left off. That which inspired them remains as a power, but it has received a check in its operations. If he is thinking of doing a noble and unselfish thing, that which prompts him remains there even though, because of some selfish or personal consideration, he delays or abstains from the action. What then would happen in the case of a man who had removed all selfishness from his mind, and all other desires from his body than those which conserve health? The Angel would be constantly in action, and would inspire him to heights of thought and feeling and a grandeur of character that would make him a great world-helper.

The task of removing these hindrances of desire seems hard, but a very little effort produces great results. The attempt to find or feel that Presence in consciousness is the withdrawal from desires, and the moment that is done they begin to wither swiftly. The key to success is never to give up the effort, never to let an hour pass without an attempt. Unobserved, softly, surely, the divine plant grows, absorbing and transmuting into its own being the life of the weeds. Then, one day, the man suddenly finds himself free from some fault or vice or failing he had thought was unconquerable. It was conquered by *that Other*, in the darkness, *that Other* which is also himself and who is the real victor in all worthy victories. The sword in its hands is welded by the slowly hoarded strength of our aspirations and our faith. In this fight against the lower in ourselves there is *no chance of final defeat* for the man who tries; the only defeat is to give up trying. The trying, the fighting, *consists* in turning toward the divine in ourselves, trying to feel the companionship of the Angel, the Warrior, its constant presence.

That attempt *is* the fighting. Every critical act and thought in every day (and what acts and thoughts are *not* critical? is the outcome of a conflict, often unnoticed by us, between the good and evil. How easy to see that if on rising and retiring we seek the good in thought and meditation for five minutes, every conflict throughout every day will go better than if we had not done so. Some of the evil in our nature is so deeply rooted that it may take years for this Divine Man to seize and destroy it, but if we look to that place of help daily, not so much holding the evil remorsefully in mind and thus multiplying the difficulty in imagination, as holding *in faith* to the divine and letting that do the work, then we have an assured victory not only over the chief evil but also over what we think the lesser ones.

And that victory is won, not by some extraneous power, but truly by the very self of the man, that part of himself which his accumulated moments of thought, will, and aspiration have made invincible.

There is a slowly growing body of men on Earth who have pledged themselves to the light to work without pause for human welfare. To the world at large they are not so known, though some of them, of various grades of progress, live and work in the common life. Their progress lies in the evolution of faculties and powers, which, though latent in all men, are as yet not generally even believed in, and of whose application in human service it would therefore be useless to speak. Their body has been in existence for many ages, and those who have fully entered its membership return to it with each rebirth. Its ranks are open to all men, and no one taking in his heart the pledge to put aside self and work for human welfare, work that all men might find the light, would remain long in ignorance of this body. Everyone of humanity's Great Teachers was and is among its workers, as well as many of whom the world knows nothing, or knows only as obscure or prominent figures on the general stage.

H. P. Blavatsky and her successors, William Q. Judge and Katherine Tingley, are of this body, and in pursuance of its work founded and sustained the UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD AND THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY. Theosophy is the totality of the wisdom, the highest knowledge of life, which comes of unity with the light, of complete unity of man with the Angel. And oneness of thought and act is the first essential step of the path to that unity. The body in question is but an anticipation of the future for all humanity. And as the individual by aspiration and right action calls his Angel to birth in the sea of light, so such a body, by its unity of purpose, calls into objective being a vaster Power, which it henceforth serves. And this is the real guide of humanity to its ever lightening future, the Christos of the new Earth.

VOLUME II

THE DEMON IN CRIME

Upon the subject of ordinary crime there is little more to be said. There remains only to make a classification of crimes, to note at what point the impulse to them runs over into what is ordinarily counted as insanity, and to study the part played by the Demon in their commission. Especially is such an examination desirable in view of the increasing prevalence of infantile or child crime, crime often of an astonishingly extreme, heartless and purposeless character.

What might be called ordinary crime is an act done in pursuit of some comprehensible aim. Whether it be theft, rape, murder, or what not, the object is clear, and the means employed to gain it have a fairly intelligent

and balanced relation to the end. And, so far, though the criminal is mistaking the path of his own welfare and permanent happiness, he is acting in harmony of aim with his evil instigator; he is not being swept off his feet by an impulse of whose source he is ignorant.

But what are we to say of those impulses to crime whose energy outruns that which is necessary to gain the intelligible and manifest end, or those which seem quite blind and to have no intelligible aim?

And what of those cases in which every vestige of normal humanity seems to have departed and where there remains only an utterly conscienceless creature devoid of any impulses save for self-gratification, possibly without the power to postpone even a small gratification that is immediate in order to retain the capacity for enjoyment of a greater, a little in the future? In passing, it may be noted that there is a whole abyss between such creatures, utter slaves of impulse, of the Demon — and the full initiates of selfishness who are not the slaves of, but utterly and consciously at one with, the Demon. The former, like the habitual drunkards, are slaves; the latter freed in evil, of iron will, the dominators of such parts of their nature as would if gratified stand in the way of their attainment of their conscienceless power. They have subdued the animal, the beast, that it may not stand in the way of the fiend. The acts of such creatures are outside ordinary classification. And of some of the others we can make no real explanation (to call them “insane” is not an explanation) unless we assume that the human adversary, long permitted to guide and reign unchecked, at last acquires an absolute and, so to speak, contemptuous domination over the man, his original creator; who no longer needs to urge or reason with his tool, but treats absolutely as his own the organs of action of the man in whose body he dwells.

It is from a study of the utterly abnormal that we can get more light upon the nature and mode of life of the human vampire. As we have seen, its impulses are gratified at the expense of the life of the man, and by their gratification its gain runs *pari passu* with his loss. He may, and usually does, take his pleasure in acts which nourish his demon, for men are more or less sensual and selfish. If his nature is very bad he may maintain the alliance, and if the pair let the lower sensual rule, the man is on a swift descent in the scale of life; if, still maintaining the alliance, he use his will and intelligence to restrain the lower and purely sensual evil in order that it may not obstruct his pursuit of power over his fellows, then he is still on the path of descent; but a path which, though longer than the other, is more dangerous, more irretraceable, because the compass of will is firmly, consciously and intelligently set thither.

But in other cases the Demon may impel a man to acts which, even in the moment of their doing, may horrify him; acts which because of their not rare anti- (rather than in-) humanity we call insane. As a (now) separate center of life, its acts may be marked by utter want of relationship with the

ordinary or original tastes and habits of its creator; and its performances, attempts and impulses bear not only no such relation, but also none to his strength, reason or judgment. From that point of view we are justified in calling such acts insane, though they may be sane and well-based enough from the Demon's standpoint, since for a time they increase its strength and now independent viability. It may therefore urge the man to crimes of the most purposeless or ill-judged character, often of the most extreme ferocity and causelessness, and to attempt which, by reason of his inadequate strength or the vigilance of society or of his victim's friends are foredoomed to failure. Much light will come upon the study of crime as soon as crime is thus considered and its real author's often quite separate individuality taken into account.

Let us make a rough classification of crimes and the impulses to them.

(1) There is that simple and comprehensible form of crime which consists in taking what is desired from the property of another. The thing desired may be anything from a necessity to a luxury, and of course its degree of criminality lies in the nearness to one or the other extreme. In the insane variety of it, known as kleptomania, that which is taken is useless to the thief, and the act is an irrational gratification of the desire to possess, apart from any contemplated employment of the stolen article. The Demon, unable to make his creator a conscious and rational thief, adopts the simple method of compelling him (usually her) to act as such for a reason that is below his rational consciousness. Kleptomania is an instructive example of the working of the Demon independently of the man, though the man in his extreme weakness of will has to be a conscious spectator. Insanity, that is, irrational action, with respect to the man, the act is with respect to the Demon, sane; for it is (from its standpoint) a perfectly rational and natural and uncomplicated gratification of the desire to possess, to take.

But when a man is hindered in the carrying out of his desires, whether by a person or by blind circumstance, irritation arises. Irritation may also arise from the thwarted desire for comfort, apart from any concrete desired object. Hence the irritability of the gouty man. Irritation may break forth presently as increased effort, since it is a banking up of the force of desire, and may then act rationally in the attainment of an object; or, if the object be unattainable by actions (as comfort in the case of gout) may break out irrationally — as where the unoffending cat is kicked, or the wife and children snubbed and snarled at. In an extremest form, irritability may become rage, and here the banked-up force always breaks forth irrationally — that is, with more or less unrelationship to the attainment of an object. For this reason it has to be classed as an (at any rate temporary) insanity. It is, however, ordinarily called insane only when wholly causeless, and if extreme may amount to mania. In any case, rage is of course a dis-integrative process, and is an affair of the Demon. For though Nature is

always slowly disintegrating our bodies, it is only done in this violent and conscious way when the disintegrative force has been initiated or synthesized under human influence. Rage receives the name of mania when it is a long continuing condition, very violent and wholly out of control. As a rule the ordinary personality of the man disappears, and his functional place is absolutely taken by the Demon *in propria persona*, liberated from all control and no longer needing or condescending to avail itself of the cloak of rationality or imitated virtue. With respect to *it*, mania is not insanity. There is a pleasure in the expenditure of force; (that is why sneezing is pleasant); rage, in its course, has for the same reason a pleasure of its own. In mania the Demon must experience this pleasure in the expenditure of its victim's physical and psycho-physical force.

It is a physical case of the same process which, on another plane, in time brings about even its own destruction and disseverance into the bundle of elementary forces of which it was never more than a temporarily focalized synthesis. If the man was in total alliance with it, he is then of necessity shorn of all the now dissevered elements that made up his personal consciousness and is again at the foot of the ladder of human evolution. Probably this may take place alike before or after death; if before, there remains nothing but a jabbering lunatic.

It belongs to this view of the case that all forms of criminally insane action are only insane and purposeless with respect to the man.

Examined with respect to the Demon they become perfectly comprehensible. But until the Demon is scientifically recognized, the word "insane" must cover a hiatus of knowledge.

In still other cases, the expelled force may cause irrational movements of the body, beyond, but strictly in line with, those of rage; and a convulsion will result. This is called epilepsy, and is really a sort of rage of motion so extreme as to drown consciousness.

(2) Our second class is therefore made up of crimes committed in rage or mania, and either having no human object or a relation of great excess to their object.

(3) Lastly, we come to crimes of cruelty *per se*; that is, where the cruelty is not for the gaining of any observable or easily comprehensible end, but apparently motiveless. They are cases where the pleasure of the cruelty is not even comprehensible to the man who commits it, however real it be.

In the simpler varieties of such cases, crimes of cruelty of this nature serve to gratify the sense of power-holding, power-wielding. The desire to gratify this sense, in cases where selfishness is quite complete, where the Demon rules in unobstructed alliance with the man, and where facile opportunity presents, will certainly lead to crime of this kind. The alliance, that is to say, the presence of the normal consciousness of the man,

differentiates such crimes from those due to mania, though that word is often here also applied.

They are also done to rectify the sense of powerlessness, as where a child who has been worsted by a bigger child tortures a smaller.

In still another class of cases this does not appear to be the whole of the motive. May it not be that there is a direct transference of life-energy from the victim to the operator, that the latter gains strength and life as the victim yields them in his pain, that we are in fact dealing with true vampirization? The gained life, though at first passing to the physical man who is working, is afterwards of working; course appropriated by his Demon, the *real* operator, and sooner or later intense reaction follows; since the subsequent acts of the man proceed on the supposition that the new strength is permanently his, whereas it is already passing in, to the Demon.

Now, taking all of these forms of crime into consideration, do they not of themselves suggest the existence of an evil consciousness separate from that of the man, his instigator to their performance? And does not such a hypothesis make clear much that would be otherwise inexplicable?

The simpler and more venial acts of selfishness are performed by the man from the standing-ground of his elemental nature, in that department of his being where resides the impulse to selfishness and to seeking of sensation that is pleasant. While standing therein he gradually lights up a center of consciousness about which such impulses group themselves, and this center remains alive, active, fermenting, when the man has temporarily gone up higher in his nature. Products of this invisible fermentation, in the shape of sudden impulses, occasionally inject themselves into his consciousness when it is otherwise occupied, and to these he is apt to yield, thinking the resulting acts to be of his own volition. By this the center continues to grow, preserving a line of impulses that are continually stronger, and may ultimately sweep him into crime. And in the commission of each such act the Demon (which is this center) gains power. It may grow constantly, absorbing more and more of the life of the man, until at last he is well-nigh powerless. Then, if he knows nothing of the philosophy of life, is ignorant that he is a soul capable of triumphing over anything in his own being, he must perforce continue to identify himself with the Demon he has created and which is his all-absorbing vampire.

In the ordinary case, death will separate the two, since they are of diverse nature. The Demon must remain where it was created, where its impulses hold it — in the Earth's atmosphere, reinforcing, by community of feeling, the like elements in living men. The man, the all-potential soul, goes to its own place ("heaven") for a while, heaven because existing now in its own unclouded spiritual nature, released from the body whose forces and sensations instigated it in its ignorance to sensuality and selfishness in its search for pleasure. Freed, it may take another and more glorious part

in the work of the Universe. But when its hour comes, it must by the law of its own being reincarnate on Earth — by that Law which presses it through endless experiences in countless successive births until it learns the real way to live and the real purpose of life.

So it must come in contact with the evil impulses which at death it left behind in the Earth's atmosphere — perhaps even with the Demon, if in the last life it had created one with so strong a central impulse of life that it could remain that much time as a conscious unit, not splitting up into the separate evil elemental impulses of which it is a fusion and focus. So the whole is drawn gradually into the infant body and brain little by little as fast as their growing structure permits. And from this time the Angel too, the man's better self, his guide, ultimately to be his redeemer, begins anew his part of that battle whose field is the man's embodied life. So the fight of the former life is resumed, though the man, in the throng of events and sensations that is anew upon him, loses the memory of it, albeit he is the same combatant, with the same ally, the same enemy; albeit he takes up the combat where and as he left it before.

In the end, virtues and unselfishness yield joy, inner peace and the love of men; vices and selfishness their exactly proportioned pain and loneliness. By this joy and pain is humanity slowly and with many and many a lapse led along the path of life through the jungles of experience until it awakes into the vast light, feels about it the protecting and guiding presence of the Angel of light, outgrows need for the punishing and rewarding hand of Nature, becomes its own teacher and law-administrator, and redeems not only itself but all the lesser things which until then travail and wait.

This is the doctrine which the Church has partly preserved whilst mutilating.

Of the individual Demon it has made the grotesque and hideous figure of the cosmic Devil, and thus placing him beyond reach of the power of man, has used him as a *fear*-inspiring weapon; for on the *fears* of its adherents have the Churches in past times largely lived.

The doctrine of Reincarnation it has voted a heresy [Council of Constantinople, in the year 551.] — for the public, though some of the Fathers have taught it.

The doctrine of the Angel it has glossed, though to this day it is a part of its written teaching.

The terrene atmosphere in which man leaves, after death, his baser impulses and his Demon, the sum of them, while he sojourns a while in oneness with his Angel — one portion of this it has called Purgatory and claims to possess over it a sacerdotal reigning.

Hell, which is the *state* of that man whose life is evil and who lives in fear, it has made a *place* of eternal pain and relegated sojourn therein entirely to after death.

Heaven, which, as Jesus Christ said, "is within you," it has treated similarly, though it is really — whether enjoyed before or after death — the *state* of illumination, of oneness with the Angel — the Divine *Self*.

The idea that thought and meditation and Nature and life and joy and pain, and above all the spiritual *aspiration* towards the Inner God, are the real spiritual educators, it has shadowed, because it does not desire that men should come to believe that there is no need (or at best a wholly secondary need) for an orthodox ritualistic teaching Church and priesthood, and that the proffered intermediaries are futile.

But in viewing these facts let us not lose sight of the many noble souls in the Church, searching for truth; men whose purity of motive and loftiness and aspiration do, and did, in spite of all limitations of creed, enable them to reach towards the light. But the laity, who have so long had to live on half-truths and distorted truths, are entitled to the original and unadulterated teaching: Theosophy, the Wisdom-Religion.

PSYCHIC AND COGNATE STATES AND PRACTICES

We can now, in taking another step forward, sum up what we have said of the two powers concerned in human life.

The man who has to any real degree awakened to sense of responsibility and begun to make conscious choice between good and evil, is focusing his higher and lower nature, is creating himself or mirroring himself in the universal spiritual and the universal material. The two nascent centers of consciousness forthwith enter upon their own cycle of growth. Each widens out; from the first they are in touch respectively with all that is best and worst in the mental atmosphere, an atmosphere made up of the contributions of all past and present civilization.

It has been necessary to speak hitherto as if the energy of matter and that of spirit were diverse in essence and absolutely at war. They are however in truth but one, the force of one divine plan working itself out in two stages. The form only of its work changes with the advent of human life.

Assuredly the cosmic purpose cannot be *defeated*; but it can be and has been *delayed*; and it may be long yet ere the Demon, the lower aspect of human life, man-created, is crushed under the wheels of progress. Until then it is like an intelligent power in human life, the universal opponent of good. From it come all the subtlest inspirations to evil in human life, the germs of ideas, systems, philosophies, which some other ages than our own would recognize as insane or base, but which now command ready adherents and defenders; and suggestions to practices which can only wreck mind and body. Tendencies to ambition, crime and cruelty are fanned; antagonisms between men and classes and nations accentuated.

Though some few men are its conscious servants, most of its instruments know not what they do.

Of late years we are hearing more and more of what is called psychism. An actual change in human consciousness, a sensitivity to a new order of impressions, is going on. Specially marked in America, there are many indications of it all over the Western world. It is in the normal course of evolution, and therefore inevitable; but the transition period is full of danger. It is (abstractly speaking) a step towards the integration of humanity into an organism. Mind is becoming more sensitive to mind, more receptive of thoughts and feelings and impulses from without. Mental poise is more easily disturbed, insanity more frequent than ever before. Semi-degraded minds, with a bent to evil which in other times might never have shown itself, become the sudden victims of those “suggestions from the air” of which we have spoken. The temptations of drugs — eminently stimulators of the psychic nature, though subsequently they *infallibly* involve it in the general ruin — were never so marked.

Along with this drug-habit, the special evils or confusions produced or favored by the period of transition, a transition that will end in an understanding and wise use of new powers just beginning to germinate, are hypnotism, psychism, as the word is popularly used, “faith-” and “mind-healing” and mediumism. We will consider them *seriatim*.

As a horse that has once been down is never again exactly as before, so a once hypnotized human being is never again exactly as responsible for his actions. Whether the hypnotic state was induced by the direct gaze of the operator, or by some mechanical method, the subject’s will has been to a greater or less degree loosened from its hold in conduct. Conduct is forever after more liable to slip beyond volition. Moreover, the mind, once thoroughly opened to suggestion, remains open, remains more negative than it was before, more sensitive to suggestion spoken and unspoken, to the silent influence of others and to the currents of thought and impulse with which the atmosphere is full. It is a little nearer insanity, a little more liable to the reception of wild and fanatical ideas and more ready to carry them into action. The volume of evil trying to get into human life finds in such a mind a readier and sometimes a completely ready channel, and the outcome has often been the assassin’s bomb or bullet. Hypnotism is, in fine, an ally and instrument of the forces seeking the confusion and destruction of society.

And instead of recognizing its danger we permit its exhibition on public platforms to hundreds every evening of the year. How many of these immediately begin to practice on their own account?

What is ordinarily called psychism stands somewhere between hypnotism and mediumism, related to both and readily passing entirely into one or the other. At present, in the immense majority of the persons in whom one or more of the psychic faculties are opening, we are dealing

with what is practically a disease, one of arrested development or of degeneration. The mind is not in sound and normal relationship with the body, with the apparatus of sensation. It is loose and incoherent in its operations, suggestible, and profoundly affected by subtle surroundings to which normal persons are almost insensitive. Nor can it close itself at will to external influence. Judgment is very often feeble; and vanity, of which such persons are peculiarly the prey, leads to the further cultivation by exercise of a faculty that had better have been disregarded. Epilepsy and hallucinations are common; and the very fact that some of the “powers” upon which the psychic prides himself are often exhibited by patients in the later stages of exhausting fevers, by victims of alcohol or drugs, by those near death or in the hypnotic state, might teach him something of their real nature and cause. He is however extremely likely to take the title of Professor, to write books upon a subject of which he has not the slightest comprehension, and to take money for talking verbose and mischievous nonsense to people who are envious of his malady. When he actually teaches anything it is usually some trick in self-hypnotism, methods of disturbing and permanently impairing the breathing mechanism, or some futile and half understood gleanings from books of Indian magic. Those who follow his instructions naturally fail to achieve the promised “development,” since the teacher does not know how he came by his own. What they do achieve is loss of health, of mental balance, of self-control, and of will-power — even though great increase in the last is one of the prominently advertised rewards! The lunatic asylum sees the last of no few of them.

Mediumship is an extreme degree of a morbid dis-relationship of mind and body. At its culminating moments in the séance room the union is almost suspended. The body becomes semi-conscious or unconscious, the will altogether ceases to act; and the mind passes into a state which in most cases can only be described as a mixture of dream and delirium. At best it becomes the recipient of a set of impressions which it wholly misunderstands and misinterprets. Some degree of this condition remains permanent, and the extreme degree may at any time supervene. Mediums who for money or other similar reason cultivate their malady nearly always end in some form of obvious mental disease or in epilepsy. The circles which may depend on them for “spiritual instruction” get at best platitudes; at worst, because of their intensely expectant receptivity, seeds of suggestion which may later ripen into overt act.

Of drug-addiction and of the similar use of cocaine and hashish we need not say very much, for they have practically no defenders. But these forms of psychic debauchery are greatly extending their sway. They ultimately induce the pathological psychic and mediumistic conditions of consciousness. But from the first they are of course really wrecking mind and body.

Comparatively lately it has been noticed that by the continual repetition of and dwelling upon certain quasi-philosophical or religious formulae the mind can be made to act upon the subconscious bodily processes. Whatever the variations in these formulae, their common element, expressed or implied, is concerned with physical health. The mind is held upon the idea, feeling, and picture of that, and in some cases the desired result follows. But some other results, neither desired nor suspected, also usually follow — namely a diffuse hypnotic state and a gradual loss of the power of generous mental ratiocination. The mind has set in a mold and too often intellectual progress ceases. The formulae furnished by the founders of the various sects are repeated, varied, diluted, in the mind. And these occupations more or less effectively hide the fact that no real thought is going on, no fresh ground being opened, no seeds being received from the higher nature.

In such cases inquiring and perhaps initially spiritual minds that might have found and disseminated real light, have been closed and stultified.

Such are some of the special confusions of our time, flourishing because of the special conditions now obtaining in men's minds. The remedy lies in the popularization of that deeper knowledge of psychology, of human nature, that Theosophy alone can offer.

DEATH, IT'S LIGHTS AND ITS SHADOWS

In the lower kingdoms of Nature, death comes easily; the instrument of sensation is relinquished without pain. And in the normal course of evolution the sense of individuality is, so far as necessary, readily merged into the common, larger, higher consciousness that belongs to a community — whether the community consist of separate units like a hive of bees, or of only partially separate units like the cells of an organ in the body or the several organs themselves. Mergence is a natural process, as natural as death; but mergence does *not* mean obliteration of the Self.

But man has demonized both by his fierce mental establishment of himself in sensation. In sensation and in egotism lies the only life he can conceive. Back of all the casual thoughts and doings of the hour, sound continuously two deep notes — fear of death, and self-centered egotism. He does not recognize that there is no need to hold to this false self, no need to make “self-realization” a very cult of the day. Self is an eternal unit, and it can only realize itself by going with the current of evolution. Its essential consciousness can be no more *submerged* by mergence than is that of a member of an orchestra who, that a symphony may result, sinks his individuality in the body of which he is a necessary part. Man will not leave himself in the hands of Nature and follow her path so clearly indicated.

So, tied as he is to sensation and self by nearly every mental thread, death appears to him — even when there is some dim light of faith or hope — as a purely horrible amputation. If he would but find his own proper central consciousness, he would find it to be divine, with knowledge of its eternity and without fear of anything. But he has created abnormal and persistently conscious entities in the various centers of sensation, ever seeking to absorb his whole vitality; and, behind them, a still more efficient focus of artificial selfhood, *the Demon*, at once himself because made of his own essence of consciousness, and yet not himself. It is not the eternal inner Self and must some time fade out.

The pain of death is rarely at the moment of death. By then, often long before then, the pain is over. The real pains of death are the pains of all the smaller and greater maladies of later life, the aches, the sense of disability. *These* are the snapping and wearing through of the threads by which man has so strongly tied himself to his body. Death need not be feared for its pain. In the ordinary case, passion for selfhood in sensation and power also lapses into abeyance, and nothing hinders perfect and blissful spiritual rest. If the man has died the victim of the alcohol or drug habits, he will still — unless that habit has altogether absorbed his humanity, a *very* rare case — have his rest in freedom, meeting his old habit again only after rebirth and being then, probably, the better able to deal with it. No slightest struggle is ever lost, however apparently futile.

But there can be no such rest for those who have entirely silenced their higher consciousness, who have wholly merged it in the lust for power. Such either remain as evil entities in the world's atmosphere, co-workers of evil, and inspirers of evil everywhere; or they reincarnate at once. The connection in such cases between the eternal man and the created Demon is so close that it only dissolves — once dissolution begins — after ages of mental agony, *pari passu* with the dissolution of the Demon. And then the spiritual monad must begin again the slow long task of weaving the fabric of mind.

Short of this unusual case, the center of this passion awaits the conclusion of the time of rest, and then on rebirth invades the soul that created it. If it be very strong, its attempts at domination, alternating with the man's better nature, give rise to those startling transitions of conduct of which Stevenson has depicted a variety in his story of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.

Man's fear of death has been used, and also accentuated for still more effective use. Time was when there was no such fear. But that was a time when Reincarnation was as naturally and frankly credited as we now credit tonight's sleep with being the precursor of tomorrow's awakening, a time when the life of sensation did not seem the only possible kind of life. But as sensation gradually overlapped and came nigh to extinguishing spirituality, the clear intuition of Reincarnation dimmed down to a mere

belief or faith in it. The spirit of the age at last seized an opportunity, declaring Reincarnation a baseless heresy and at the same time developing and enforcing the conception of a hell from which only confession and final absolution could save. All the circumstances worked together, and since then the fear of death has darkened all the years of life. It is pictured in men's imaginations and on the canvases of artists as a black specter mowing down human beings with a scythe; as a gulf, gloomy and yawning, into whose sullen and sunless waters fall the shivering souls just divorced from the sunlight of life; as the portal to the pit and to the furnaces in which an angry God wreaks his wrath on his own creatures. It is silence, *finis*, chill and putrescence, a conception which we enforce on the very children and on the mothers of the unborn by the black and barbaric symbolism of our funerals and by the broken columns of our graveyards. Such are our pictures of Nature's merciful rest-fields, of the opportunity she gives us for a blissful sleep filled with dreams more realistic than reality the while she renews in us the strength our own passions have wasted! Naturally, such evil pictures of death, of which the very air is full, with which we are hypnotized ere we are born, have driven some to the mad philosophy *Let us eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die*. And others into despairing faith in dogmas that proclaimed themselves as necessary intermediaries at the hour of death between souls and their Source. That many churchmen have been men of noble hearts does not alter the fact that the demon of lust for power, with an intelligence of which men are mostly unaware, gradually saw its chance to inspire the dogmas to be used in its service.

Long since there were men who sought selfish power with a concentration and intensity we can now hardly conceive of, sought it life after life with absolute devotion until every spark of human feeling was dead, until they became bitter and uncompromising opponents of every breath of influence that might awaken man to his power and dignity. Transcendentalized in evil, they live yet, intensely intelligent forces of opposition to enlightenment. Working on receptive human minds, they instill ideas whose source is profoundly veiled save for the very few. And from this source come the last touches of man's horror of death.

Strictly speaking, death as it exists is abnormal for humanity. Man should not die like the animals. He is a soul, and if he held himself accordingly, his mind would so animate his body that for long years repair would equal waste. But by tying it down in sensualism, he has limited its power. The body must suffer in its death the result of that disharmony which one or another overgrown appetite and passion induces. It is only when held in control by a mind and will that stand consciously superior to it, that it ceases to be but one of the animals, subject to the laws of the merely animal life, and acquires a new power of reparation. It must be long before humanity reaches that point; but a transitional degree in which

death makes no break in consciousness is possible for the near future, possible for many now living. Let those who have not reached that point remember that death is but sleep. The break in consciousness that occurs when life closes, and again when a new life opens at birth, is like that on both sides of deep sleep. In deep sleep, between the dreams of early night and morning, the man comes to his own real nature *as a soul*. It is the soul's breathing time and opportunity — and hence the importance of the last thoughts ere rest. Death too is followed by dreams and then by the soul's full awakening to itself. Immediately after memory has brought up all its stores and the lessons of the just closed life have been learned in that clear retrospect, the light of consciousness is turned down for a moment while the scenery is idealized, spiritualized, for that new act which is a gracious dream. As that comes to its close, the soul awakes to its full consciousness. At birth the light again goes down, and when again it burns up fully, a new life in flesh has begun. New and vivid sensations blot away the memory of the spiritual rest and dream, and slowly the old powers of thought return with developing brain. What is there to *fear* in all this? Death is release, and infancy and youth the opportunity for wiser beginnings that may end in the great victory, that *will* so end when parents and teachers know the secrets and possibilities of their high duty.

THEOSOPHY: THE MOST SERIOUS MOVEMENT OF THE AGE

Time was when a few thought Theosophy to mean antiquarian research only, merely an elegant scholastic weighing and tasting of the religions and philosophies of antiquity. It was proposed to make an intellectual toy of it by that few, an item at the drawing room tea-table talk. The Movement was smoothly commended and patted on the back.

By others again Theosophy was believed to be the door to the mysterious, the uncanny, the supernatural; and often the meetings of the Society's branches were crowded with the devotees of strange cults. Even yet there are groups of people who have appropriated its name and that of H. P. Blavatsky, the great Foundress of the Society, to aid the promulgation of teachings and practices with which it has not only nothing to do, but which it utterly condemns.

After a while it was found to be not so comfortable a topic; it was found to be making an inconvenient demand on its hearers that they should not only talk but *do* something, in themselves and for others. So it gradually became *tabu* with the mental featherweights; and not only that, but in many quarters bitterly hated and fervently denounced, awaking a hostility which has no counterpart in our time. The utmost skill, inspired by the most intense venom, was exerted in the preparation of attacks on the teaching and life of the Foundress of the Society, attacks continued

later from the same sources against her successors W. Q. Judge and Katherine Tingley.

Why was and is this? Indifference we can understand; intellectual opposition we can understand; but why an intensity of rancor directed against no other Movement of the day? There are other philosophical and ethical Movements; there are Movements for the promotion of every possible kind of belief and unbelief. But against none of them has the storm of hostility raged so fiercely or under so many forms as against the Theosophical Society. Where is the difference? Can it be that Theosophy throws light where light is least desired?

Putting aside for the moment that which Theosophy does for the individual as such, we must note that it has as yet barely begun its wider work, which is that of unveiling to men as a race their possibilities and their destiny, the way to unfold the one and reach the other, the way to make Earth the heaven it might so quickly and so easily become.

Theosophy teaches, and will more and more fully teach, men how to separate the true from the counterfeit coin in all the things and pretensions and persons that claim attention. It will show the existence of spiritual factors concerned in human life to which the general humanity has hitherto been blind. It has only begun to do that, but it will go on until the uttermost secrets and essences of the forces that war for and against human welfare are known, and are seen as the threads upon which all past history has been threaded, are seen in their continuing action today. Men are well-nigh totally ignorant of the nature of these two forces by which, because of their ignorance, their national and international life is guided.

At least it must be granted that the darkness is dense enough to need some light. The momentary mood of a senate or of a ruler, precipitating a war, or, by tactful word and act, allaying a coming storm — do we know anything of the inner springs, the hidden psychology, of one or another phase of mood and temper at that critical moment? Upon that hour, that vote, that word, hung, it may be, the fate of countless lives; there was the possibility of the shedding of unmeasured blood, of the making of a wound that decades could not heal, or a friendship of nations that might constitute a bulwark of general peace for centuries.

What may be the force *behind* the crazy idea in the brain of an assassin when he aims his weapon at a man through whom shines a ray of the higher life of a whole nation? Or what, at the very instant of his deed, swerves his hand a hair's breadth? Must we say *Chance*? We use the word far too freely, even from the standpoint of our present ignorance. Must we think that great issues in which all civilization may be concerned, really turn on accidents and trifles, or even did ever once turn on them? Can anything be chance which is of important bearing on human welfare? If so, then all may be, and we may as well give up the search, give up the

attempt to understand history as anything more than a string of recorded facts.

The very continuance of human evolution may be at stake; often, whether it shall be delayed or quickened. At those points where two roads are always parting, a nation may take the path to enlightenment, to spiritual freedom, to international oneness, to the moral growth of every one of its individuals; the atmosphere may be cleared all over the civilized world; or it may take the path to where the darkness grows denser, bigotry and dogma gain a new lease, the bonds of spiritual slavery are tightened; the civilization of a whole people may be well-nigh blotted out. Can we believe that accident and trifles guide the choice at the point where these paths diverge? Surely it must be exactly here that the great intelligent Forces making for light and darkness are in tensest conflict.

May it not be that if we habitually tested all that happens in the light of that idea, tried to unveil in that way the hidden side of events, we should at last become so clear-eyed in our observation, so penetrating in our deduction, we should narrow down to *nothing* the area of chance? Suppose we see what history looks like when examined with the hypothesis that there is everywhere at work a divinely intelligent force making for human progress, peace and civilization; that the great Leaders of Humanity have always felt its pressure in their hearts and have consciously tried to *serve*, not trying to get power or reputation for themselves; and that it is everywhere opposed — though it cannot be wholly stayed — by a power of exactly opposite tendency, inspiring men to ambition and love of gain, and gradually obliterating in them all love for their fellows and humanity as a whole; that some few may even serve it knowingly as the other is served knowingly by many: is it not then likely that those who for their own ends knowingly use and serve it, would rather that at any cost men should ascribe events to chance, to the will of God, to Kismet, and remain ignorant, than that their own ways should be revealed and opened up and that poor hypothesis of chance forever discarded? And that they should resort to any methods to defame the names and honor, and obscure the work, of Teachers who will lay bare these deeper and hidden springs of life and conduct?

It of course true that by *apparent* chance much is wrought. "For want of a nail the shoe was lost," and for want of a shoe the horse was lame, and the general was late and the battle lost and the empire destroyed. Yes, true enough; but why was the nail lost? If we would intelligently study great events, we must always look back to the missing nail; and it is there, where the smallest effort will effect the greatest result, that the real work is done. It is there that the influences contend to pull the vital nail out or to keep it in.

Man lives under two strains of feeling or impulse. Take away one; let the lower be no longer opposed by the higher, and he springs backward to

the human animal, selfish, cruel, sensual — the natural animal accentuated by human intelligence. Take away the other; let the higher be no longer fettered by the lower, and all his deeds and thoughts become those of a god; his humanity is lighted up by his divinity.

These are the two forces whose varying resultant makes the character of each individual. They are the representatives of the vaster world-forces making for evolution and retrogression or decay. One of them is the force always working to spiritualize matter, to raise it and make it conscious on ever higher levels; the other is the force in matter aiming at the intensification of itself. One is the evolutionary force or current, a divine force making for progress in every kingdom; in the human kingdom for universal oneness, for mental and spiritual health, making in fact not for a *new* heaven and a *new* earth, but for a new heaven *on* earth; the other an opposing force or current working downward, backward, evil as the other is divine, making for the extinction of human life as the other makes for its growth and splendor. Both belong to life; but that fierce tendency to sensation whereby matter progresses, should, by the time human life is reached, have ceased. In human consciousness, it is, in its lower forms, lust and sensuality; in its higher, but not less evil form, selfish, cold ambition and love of power over others. Men can consciously serve whichever they will; that one towards which is their natural bent, will, in any case, use their acts to further its intelligently designed effects. The blacksmith unconsciously drove his nail loosely, and the empire fell. One of the two forces was concerned in the fall, and it used the man who drove the nail. Both forces are ever present, one as an inspiration to good; the other psychologizes and inspires to evil. One tends to awake the soul to its work; the other plays progressively downwards to the lowest elements in human consciousness, elements which, in aiming at the intensification of their own consciousness, must finally wreck the man's. Those who serve it consciously and with their full intelligence have said, "Evil be thou my good."

The key that in man releases one or the other, gives it another point of advantage over its opponent, is *thought*, an idea.

A belief may not seem to weigh much in determining men's actions; their conduct is not as their creed. But the belief, the creed, does slowly work; does bite into, does mold, character; does release, little by little, one or the other stress.

Take a single example. If a man believe that his will can, with time, dominate his failings, he will begin to use it, will gain dignity of character from his successful attempt, will be ashamed of his yieldings. His will will grow with use; he will feel his manhood; new ideas of his possibilities will come to him, new ideas of the possibilities even of all humanity. As fast as his failings and sensualities are swept out of the way, his mind will clear, his intelligence grow.

But if he is taught that his single will cannot avail, that he must look outside himself for aid, he will be full of self-excuses for his slips. Why should he respect himself? His will will not grow; instead of willing, he may be beseeching *aid*. His mind will dwell on the idea of his weakness until it is psychologized and the weakness becomes real. The habit of looking for divine aid instead of divine companionship, of looking that the path shall be trodden *for* him instead of *by* him, will become ingrained. He will entirely miss the development of character that the other man achieved.

Further; his thought of human incapacity and feebleness will infect others, even when they do not know it. The infection of the thought and example of the one man is to inspire others to make some struggle for themselves, to make them ashamed of their failings. The other man gives them no such stimulus. From him they will be infected to consider their failings as natural and inevitable in human nature; they will live contentedly with them and enjoy life as they find it.

Paint the picture on a large scale. Conceive a whole nation taught the one or the other idea; all the most spiritual men, the spiritual and intellectual leaders, taught and teaching that the human will is inadequate to secure human ennoblement and the dignity of self-conquest, and that intermediaries and external auxiliaries have to be sought; or taught and teaching the opposite — that it is man's duty and power and dignity to conquer all the lower elements of his nature that are in the way of his growth. What will be the difference in the two nations in a thousand years?

One of the most interesting of national records is easily studied in the case of India.

We have enough of the records of the ancient Âryan civilization of India to know that it was happy, and sufficiently prosperous to permit of the happiness. We have enough too, to know that it was a spiritual civilization rather than a material. The people habitually lived in their religious consciousness, habitually felt themselves in presence of the Divine. That was the secret of their happiness. They tried to do the simplest daily actions so as to give them a spiritual significance. The hymns that have survived abundantly show this. Holding all Nature to be divinely ensouled, they tried to symbolize this and keep it present to their minds by religious ceremonies strictly designed for this purpose, in which the elements of Nature — “earth,” “air,” “fire,” and “ether,” and “water” — were thus symbolically employed; and certain of their number were especially concerned with the conduct of the ceremonies. These men, in the purer days, explained the symbolism to the people, and, from the elevation of their character, were teachers by right.

The light of the earlier days gradually passed away. If we compare the picture of today, and in the time of Gautama Śākya Muni, the Buddha, with that which we get from the hymns, we can easily trace the transitional

steps. The earlier teachers were dispossessed by men, who, ambitious of the power which the former had by right of simplicity and elevation of character, *gradually induced the people to believe that the Divine could not be approached except by way of the ceremonies*, and who made the ceremonies more elaborate and finally incomprehensible in order that they might stand as the people's only saviors. They arrogated to themselves a special and inimitable access to the divine Presence, The resulting abasement of the spiritual dignity of the far earlier time can easily be traced.

But what was the half-truth that completed what the lowering of former spiritual ideals had begun? This: that the spiritual life was the real, because permanent; the material the illusory, because transient; and that the material passions were the enemies of the spiritual life.

It was and is the half of a truth, or better perhaps, a full truth misunderstood and mis-applied. The *true* deduction is that the physical life should therefore be lived in the constant joy of its spiritual possibilities, developed joyfully *into* the spiritual; that since the divine will was manifesting in physical life, obedience to that will lay in living the physical life with all its noble possibilities, fully; *and that the passions were not only no part of full physical life, but in the way of it, its enemies*. The *false* deduction, inevitably drawn consciously or unconsciously by the people, was that the physical life was a useless and painful encumbrance, to be shuffled through as best they could and in reliance on the priests to keep them connected with the spiritual.

And a further result was the development of self-torturing fakir-*ism* and sadhu-*ism*. From the idea that the *passions* of the flesh must be suppressed, which was right, to the idea that the *health* and *welfare* and almost *life* of the flesh must be suppressed, which was wrong; from the idea that as the former was pleasing to the Divine, to the idea that the latter was also, and that it was the condition for cognition of the Divine: these were easy steps.

Easy, that is, to naturally spiritual people. A little of this history has been repeated in our Western civilization. But we are not a naturally spiritual people; and consequently we have partially revolted. If we had had the true teaching — that *physical life should be developed at the expense of the sensual passions* — all might have gone well. But we have been taught that not only sensual passion but physical life in its perfect and legitimate fulness, are incompatible with spiritual consciousness. Half believing it, we have made our choice, and, thinking to select full physical life, have really selected the passionate life.

Such is the power of ideas in molding individual and national character, in releasing one or other of the springs of action, in elevating or debasing men and nations.

So in studying the two forces at work to raise or lower human life, we can begin by tracing to their sources the ideas current among men which mold their actions consciously or unconsciously to themselves. We can note whether the teaching which they are offered from many quarters is such as to raise or lower their sense of human dignity; to call out to its fulness, or to paralyze, their will. And so we can judge of the source whence it comes.

Upon all this, Theosophy is beginning to throw its light. For that reason the Theosophical Movement is the most serious Movement of the day. It is so because it deals with matters not dealt with from any other quarter. Its work is an unveiling; evil unveiled is condensed, stirred to intense activity; and if the man allies himself therewith, he thereby becomes the enemy of that teaching and that person by which or by whom the evil was unveiled. But if he ally himself with the good, he will take up the conflict and be the friend of that through which his eyes were opened.

Theosophy calls upon us to watch, to think, to open our dull eyes. And to the Theosophist the task is not so hard; for he knows that the actuating power playing through and used by the enemies of Theosophy and of its Teachers, is precisely that which Theosophy will unveil as the foe of human progress, the dark thread running back through all history.

CONCLUSION

We have now finished our survey and can look back at the general result and draw some practical lessons in life.

Urgently does the world need the help of those who have found a ray of light in the dark perplexities of being. And that ray comes from within, perceived by self-study.

Once, it may be amongst all peoples, there existed a belief in rebirth, and they lived their life as an arc of a larger circle than we among whom that belief no longer exists.

But may it not be true? Here and there through these pages we have spoken of heredity; may we not be inheritors of our own minds and characters?

Whence our characters? From our parents? But how if we differ from them? Whence that spiritual something which is "I": is that made up of two pieces from two people? I can rule my mind, hold it on to or turn it off from anything; I can rule and ennoble my character; I can control my feelings and my acts; who and whence am "I"? That "I" is free in all thoughts, feelings, and acts. There is the soul, the dominator of its own destiny. Even as infants differ in form from one another so do they show from very birth some domination of the indwelling soul over their acts; each one thinks after its kind, is selfish or unselfish, loving and love-seeking, or indifferent, after its kind. Does it not seem, does not every

man's knowledge of himself tell him, that each is overshadowed from the first by a *soul*, an "I," that uses that body, and brain, and correspondent mind, as fast as their growth permits, and from the first molds them to suit itself?

And whence that pre-existing tendency to have such or another bent of mind and feeling? May it not have been acquired through the slow molding of life after life on Earth? Let every man search himself and see if he do not find himself as soul saying "I have never not been; I can never not be, for I am conscious life itself; never strange to me was this life of earth, nor any of my fellows. I have known it and them always."

Then there may come to him a picture of some distant time when he and they shall have brought back the Golden Age of love and wisdom, and the Universe shall have grown vast to their gaze; when life shall be like a spring morning in its divine promise, and new things be born in beauty every hour.

The writer is a believer in Theosophy, through which this new light shall come to men. The revival of Theosophy in the modern world will bring to all hearts a great hope. Theosophy is nothing new, need be nothing strange, tells of nothing which all may not find in themselves. It is the teaching of and concerning the soul of man and those lower souls in the other kingdoms that are always reaching up to become man. He who fully knows himself as a soul knows Theosophy. It brings hope because the path it shows is for all. No one following it fails to find opening in himself more and more of the truths of life, a fuller consciousness of his own divinity, a richer happiness — fails to attain an even nobler stature of manhood. His nature will outgrow the littlenesses, spites, whims, prejudices, dislikes, belittling proclivities, and empty and fruitless wishes that before obscured it. He will become the dominator of his body and it will reveal itself to him as the divine Temple of his soul, the reservoir of unsuspected powers. He will become constantly aware of his divine Companion, constantly the recipient of that divine flood of light and strength.

Theosophy does therefore bring a message of hope, joy, and peace to discouraged humanity, showing the way, through understanding and action, to liberation from all the sources of its pain. For the power that a man has, through his past, it may be through many lives, conferred upon that which we have called "the Adversary," he may, since it is his own, recall and devote to noble service. All the processes of Nature move to a divine end, save where, being placed under man's direction, they have been misused and desecrated.

The paths are one not many; the goal is one. To practice Oneness is to find joy; to seek the "Companion" is to find joy and to get inspiration to brotherly action; to seek and find in the heart the life that is joy, is to come, unawares it may be, on the Companion; and the joy radiates and precipitates into acts of altruism; all these are the path to wisdom whereon

the helper, the mystic, and the sage, blend, and there arises a Teacher of humanity.

The *immediate* future of humanity lies with the children we are now bringing up. Their minds are plastic, their habits unformed, their thought uncrystallized. From the very first it is possible to teach them easily what to us is so difficult to realize. The Companion of Light with his shining sword, the subtle imp of evil, the divine Law forever operating in the reward of good and the punishment of evil, the Golden Age to come, the conscious throbbing productive mother-life of Nature, the universal Oneness of being; these things can be taught them from the very first and they will learn with joy. Thus learning their path will be easy and pleasant; nothing need be unlearned; they will grow up in physical and mental and psychic health, feeling at home in the Universe, the comrades of all therein, prepared when their times come to launch out into the deepest mysteries of being, returning with the Golden Fleece and spreading among all creatures the light they have gained. Blessed are the workers among children, for they may create the living Temples of the new humanity.

13

The Flame and the Clay

A Student

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O my Divinity! Thou dost blend with the earth and fashion for
Thyself Temples of mighty power.

O my Divinity! Thou livest in the heart-life of all things and dost
radiate a Golden Light that shineth forever and doth illumine even the
darkest corners of the earth.

O my Divinity! Blend Thou with me, that from the corruptible I may
become Incorruptible; that from imperfection I may become Perfection;
that from darkness I may go forth in Light.

INTRODUCTORY

From time immemorial Man has been aware that his nature is dual. On the one hand he perceives his likeness to the animal kingdom; on the other he is conscious of his reflective self-consciousness and power to progress indefinitely. Man is a two-fold being, the product of two lines of descent. His physical organism and the animal instincts and desires can be traced back to their analogs in the animal kingdom; but his essential consciousness comes from a higher source and links him with the divine.

From all antiquity Man has been aware that there are no limits to the expansion of his consciousness; that he has a power of elevating his thoughts far beyond the bounds of personality and of identifying himself in contemplation with the mighty Consciousness that prevails throughout all creation.

At the present day we have two schools of thought which concern themselves with these two aspects of the human question. One is religion which concerns itself with the spiritual nature of Man; the other is science, which deals with the animal nature. Besides these, we have a perfect bedlam of theories, conjectures and fads, proving how inchoate is our knowledge of human nature. We keep our religion and our science in separate boxes. But in antiquity there was no such distinction. One grand *Gnosis*, the Wisdom-Religion, included the whole question and dealt with human life in all its aspects. All science was sacred and all religion scientific.

Since those days the direct knowledge of Man's Divinity has ceased to be a practical force in human life; and in forgetting his own Divinity, Man has neglected his most precious possession. This Divinity renders Man unique and all-powerful among the kingdoms of the Universe; and it is because he has this power that enmity has ever existed among the powers whose aim is the destruction of Man. When we find that both Theology and Science have preached the unworthiness of human nature, we can see behind them influences of which they may or may not be aware, but which are mortally pernicious to human interests. Theosophy calls upon Man once again to avow his Divinity and stand forth in his rightful place as a commander in the Universe, yielding to naught save the eternal law of Right, which is his own inner Selfhood. Theosophy proclaims once more the unity of SCIENCE and the sacred character of all knowledge.

TEACHINGS OF THEOLOGY

Theology has left us but a sorry travesty of the Ancient Teachings about the origin of Man. This idea, so far as there is any definite idea at all, may be said to be that God — the personal ecclesiastical God, whom Theosophy calls a fetish made in Man's own image — creates a fresh soul

for each human being born upon Earth; that his soul, once created, is immortal; that it plays no part whatever in Man's life so long as he is on Earth, but has its own life afterwards in heaven or hell. We are expected to regard ourselves as helpless, sinful beings, passing through a hall of probation in expectation of eternal reward in a mysterious heaven, if we are fortunate enough to escape eternal punishment.

Now compare the hypothesis of a craven sinner supplicating for mercy a personal God and his Son, with the ancient ideal. According to the ancient ideal, Man was himself a God. This is not irreverent, for it does not mean that the *personal* Man is a God. We know that the personal man is full of passion and ignorance. But this is not the real Man, it is only a shadow. For Man has three souls — the animal soul which he has in common with animals, the Divine Soul (his true *Self*) with which he is linked to the inner Truth, and the human soul which stands between the other two. Thus the human mind is a battleground of opposed tendencies, and the good and evil alternately prevail as he proceeds along the path which will ultimately lead to his final choice of the good as being the only enduring reality. Instead of believing that we are born in sin and can never attain anything on this Earth, the ancients believed that we can evoke the divine power within us so as to overcome passion and illusion, and attain to higher powers while on this Earth — for of course they believed in Reincarnation. This is in fact the teaching of Jesus, and many passages might be quoted to show how he teaches us to invoke our “Father in Heaven” and to make ourselves perfect, and how he promises wisdom and powers to those who lead the pure life.

The truth as to the supremacy of the Divine Self in Man is the basis of the Râja Yoga teaching. Children are taught to invoke and rely on their own Spiritual Will for overcoming their faults, and in this way they soon acquire mastery over their weaknesses. They do not, like ordinary children, regard their passions as part of themselves, but as extraneous forces that try to invade the mind, and so they can easily bid them go. No longer fearing the inscrutable decisions of a personal Deity, but taught to rely on the justice of Universal Law, they regard their Spiritual nature as a reality, ever-present, and as being the real “I.” They look upon selfishness and passion as being states of illusion or obsession, and strive to return to their normal condition of happy peaceful brotherliness.

Think what it would mean if all people believed so faithfully in their own essential worthiness, were conscious of such a source of power, and were endued with such a dignity and true self-respect! Clearly the world can only be saved by bringing back to humanity the forgotten knowledge of their divinity; but the Churches do not seem likely to do this; they are as much in doubt as the layman, and are no longer looked to as teachers by those who desire the truth.

Think of the Churches as the professed exponents and conservers of religion! A Church is properly a brotherhood of people bound together in a common recognition of the truths of Religion, the greatest of which truths is the inner Divinity, and the perfectibility on Earth of Man; and the ministers of the Church are those whose lives have acquired true holiness and wisdom by their living up to these truths. The Church is collectively the Temple of Deity, the outward manifestation of divine power. But it has become — as all know — a means of preserving certain ecclesiastical teachings the exact opposite in character and tendency, since they represent Man as almost a helpless sinner, with few or no prospects on Earth, and heir to a doubtful glory in heaven through the power of intercession. Moreover the ministers have seldom excelled the people in either holiness or wisdom. The churches have too often upheld old-standing failings and opposed the progress of enlightenment. They follow in the wake of progress when finally compelled to do so, taking to themselves as much credit as they can for initiating the very reforms they had failed to prevent. Thus, the churches at first resisted the ennobling and emancipating influence of the Chivalric spirit; and finding themselves unable to put it down, deflected it into a theological channel and wasted its ardor on useless fights with the Turks at Jerusalem. They have persecuted men for preaching the truths of science, and afterwards changed around and claimed these teachings as orthodox.

TEACHINGS OF SCIENCE

As another possible means of enlightenment about our human nature let us next consider our modern science. One can scarcely think of modern science in such a connection at all; it is associated exclusively with what is called “profane” knowledge — for in these days we have divided our life into two sections, sacred and secular. Science proposes to obtain exact knowledge of Nature by the process of investigation, but the greater part of human nature does not come under its province. It has made a close study of the physical body, so far as is possible from its single point of view; but this scarcely enlightens us as to the mysteries of the Ego and the relation between the various factors of our consciousness. We can hardly build a complete philosophy of conduct or a lofty idealism upon physiological data. So far as science may be said to have concerned itself with the question of the soul at all, it has perhaps demonstrated that the body is actuated by something else which is immaterial — a fact which we knew before; but even so, it does not follow that this something else is the soul. We cannot regard modern science as an authority on such a large question as the present one; its domain is confessedly restricted to bodily and physical concerns, and it willingly abandons other fields of inquiry to religion or metaphysical philosophy. When it attempts to fabricate a

philosophy of life, it exceeds its own properly defined limits and makes itself ridiculous by trying to find in the physical world the source and energizing power of things physical, and representing mind and soul as functions of matter.

Thus, not only does our science confine its studies to a small section of Nature, but even its *conclusions* about that small section must be largely erroneous because they are based on only a part of the facts. Its premises are its observations; and, as these observations are very limited in scope, the premises are incomplete and the conclusions therefore essentially fallible.

If modern science is to be considered in its best light — as a branch of research with a confessedly restricted domain, but conducted with perfect sincerity and freedom from prejudice — then it ought to confirm the truth; and so it does when thus conducted. It reveals to our eyes the structure of material bodies, but proves that the agencies at work in those structures are immaterial and that the energies revealed in matter have their source outside of matter. Here it reaches the legitimate confines of its own appointed domain, and should leave further questions to other branches of inquiry. But scientific men are often as dogmatic as religious teachers; and they have sought, by extraordinary perversions of logic, to deny the existence of superphysical causes and to explain the *material* world as a self-contained universe. Not stopping here they have created an ideal of Man conformable to their strange ideas of the Universe; and, with an arrogance curiously inconsistent with their theories, have arrogated to themselves the proud position of mere helpless victims of blind cosmic forces. Thus matter makes man and man makes God, so that matter is supreme; and yet it is man that makes these theories about matter.

The most we can look for from science, as at present constituted, is confirmation after the event — tardy admissions of the truth. Over and over again has the attempt been made to constitute a church of science, having dogmas and a special knowledge vested in its professors. The aim has too often been to bolster up certain views previously decided upon, rather than to ascertain the actual facts regardless of prejudice. But the body of scientific people is too large to be thus bound into a sect. Inconvenient discoveries are continually being made by free-lance investigators; and these discoveries always confirm the teachings of Theosophy. Thus attempts have been made to show that Man is a member of the animal kingdom, *and nothing else*; but discoveries in biology and evolution disprove this, and show that there is in Man a factor which differentiates him entirely from even the highest members of that kingdom.

Between man and the animal — whose Monads (or Jīvas) are fundamentally identical — there is the impassable abyss of Mentality and

Self-consciousness. What is human mind in its higher aspect, whence comes it, if it is not a portion of the essence — and, in some rare cases of incarnation, the *very essence* — of a higher Being: one from a higher and divine plane? Can man — a god in the animal form — be the product of Material Nature by evolution alone, even as is the animal, which differs from man in external shape, but by no means in the materials of its physical fabric, and is informed by the same, though undeveloped, Monad — seeing that the intellectual potentialities of the two differ as the Sun does from the Glow-worm? And what is it that creates such difference, unless man is an animal *plus a living god* within his physical shell? — *The Secret Doctrine*, H. P. Blavatsky.

WISDOM-RELIGION OF ANTIQUITY

Since, then, we can look neither to religion nor to science, as at present constituted, for instruction as to the mysteries of our own nature, we must look elsewhere. And giving up the absurd idea, worthy only of a race of savages on an oceanic island, that we are the last possibility in the way of human enlightenment, we can turn to the garnered experience of past ages of untold duration, [There are people who try to cut themselves off from the past history of the race; who throw aside the old legends and traditions, and documents and experiences, and say they will construct a scheme for themselves, well, it will be a very poverty-stricken scheme, for we are all dependent upon one another; we must all learn from one another and from the experience which has been handed down to us. — *Professor Oliver Lodge*.] during which humanity has existed on this Earth throughout the myriads of years of geological time. With archaeology daily yielding up such treasures of information from the bowels of the Earth, we must now enlarge our ideas of antiquity to keep pace with discovery, and admit that mighty civilizations, hoary with wisdom, have preceded us. And an earnest study of the Wisdom-Religion of antiquity, as preserved in its symbols, will reward us by revealing the lineaments of this Ancient Science which included all possible departments of knowledge.

The last 5000 years of the world's history have belonged to the *Kali Yuga*, or Black Age, the lowest stage in the cycle of human evolution, when Man is farthest from the Light and most deeply sunk in materialism and selfishness. During this period the ancient *knowledge* gradually sinks into oblivion and is replaced by religious dogmas and materialistic sciences. Man makes considerable progress in the arts that conduce to selfish ease, but deteriorates in spiritual knowledge. It is during this period that the direct knowing of Man's divine nature has faded away; and it is in consequence of this wave of spiritual darkness that we now find ourselves with religions that are helpless, discredited, and at variance with each other, and with sciences that ignore or deny the spiritual nature.

It is difficult for us, born as we are to a long heritage of the ignorance and heedlessness of *Kali Yuga*, to form any conception of the status of humanity in ages when he was conscious of his divine nature, and when,

instead of our flickering rush-lights of theology and science, there was the Wisdom-Religion, that sacred knowledge which taught of all the mysteries of life, including not only those we now class under the heads of science and religion, but many more which we do not study at all. Yet of late years our ideas have been broadening. In particular we have learned a greater respect for foreign races and for antiquity. Archaeological discoveries have shown us that humanity has not evolved upwards from a state of primitive barbarism, but that mighty civilizations stretch far back into the remotest past, and that our race has had an antiquity commensurate with the myriad centuries of geologic time. We have seen the East begin to awake to a new career of activity which has revealed the immensity of its latent power derived from the heritage of its past. The bonds of invention and commerce have linked together the nations of the world in a closeness that has compelled us to recognize the necessity for a larger oneness; and among nations is awaking an international spirit that can be based on nothing shallower than that humanity which is the common factor of all men independently of distinctions. In this vision of the future we see the reflection of the past; and both prospect and retrospect help us to realize that the period we have called "history" is after all but a brief episode in the vast drama of human life.

If, in the light of this expansion of ideas, we could shake off the fetters of conventional thought and regard the past, not through the jaundiced eyes of a priggish ignorance, but with vision irradiated by generous sympathetic appreciativeness, we might learn that the ancient mythologies were not the imaginative dreams of untutored humanity, but pages from a book we have failed to understand and in our prideful ignorance have therefore scoffed at. We might learn that the ancient "Mysteries" were genuine schools of sacred Wisdom, world-renowned, whose teachings have been the source of all our boasted culture, whether religious or scientific. Years ago H. P. Blavatsky called the attention of the world to the fact of this Wisdom-Religion or Secret Doctrine of antiquity; and since then discovery and thought have made rapid strides towards vindicating her words. But prejudice and fixed ideas die hard, and powerful are the interests leagued together against the inconvenience of admitting that current established authorities must bow before a greater authority accessible to the humble.

Ancient civilizations that flourished before the dark wave of religious persecution swept over the world, had a Science of which ours is but a few recovered fragments. This science — taught about the invisible realms of Nature and the inner powers and faculties of Man. The fact of Man's spiritual nature was known and recognized. It was this fact and the sacred *Gnosis* pertaining to it, that in later ages of persecution had to be kept secret in the Schools of the Mysteries, the profanation of which was visited by death.

The language used by the ancients in teaching the mystic doctrines was allegorical or symbolical; and the reason for this was partly because of the aforesaid necessity for guarding it from those who might abuse it, and partly because such deep truths can be better conveyed in symbolical language than by ordinary words to those initiated into the meaning of the symbols. A comparison of *all* the Ancient Teachings will leave no room for doubt that they form parts of one great original system; and it is the existence of this system that H. P. Blavatsky undertakes to prove in her writings by collating numerous sources of information about the Ancient Teachings. The Wisdom-Religion was at one time generally known, but during the Dark Age it has been, as said, withdrawn from public knowledge, taught esoterically to the proven candidate, and to the multitude in symbols or parables.

REAL MEANING OF CHRISTIAN TEACHINGS

Remembering that our Christianity is the faint echo of the Ancient Wisdom-Religion, from which the early Church borrowed most of its teachings, we may seek the true meaning of some of the Christian terms. For instance, there are the Son of God (or *Christos*) and the Holy Ghost. In these expressions we have a glimpse of the teaching as to the Divine Nature of Man. The Son is the Divine Soul in Man, so-called because he proceeds from the Father who is the Universal Spirit, the great Unknowable source of all life. "No man can know the Father but through the Son." The Son is our mediator and intercessor; a teaching which has been turned into a superstition, for we have been taught to regard Christ as a person, and more over have had other mediators put in in the shape of ecclesiastical authorities. But this Son of God is our own true Divine Self, the source in every man of all goodness, power, and wisdom.

In ordinary Christian doctrine, too, Jesus is made to be God, and therefore entirely superior to ordinary men; wherefore the example of his life is of little use to people who do not possess the advantage of being present Gods, and is indeed little short of a mockery. "He came to show us how good a God can be," as an Eastern critic has put it. But if Jesus was both God and Man, in exactly the same sense as other people are, then indeed, his example is one that we may reasonably hope to follow. In the teaching of the influx of the Holy Ghost or Spirit, we have the same idea. This doctrine declares that man can actually be informed by the influx of a power from above, and it is admitted that the apostles and some of the saints were so informed; but the belief can hardly be said to be real and practical in present-day life.

The fact is that the life has dropped out of Jesus' original teachings in the course of the centuries since they were given. It is doubtful whether his esoteric teachings ever were recorded. He taught his disciples

privately, we are told, but the multitude in parable. If these esoteric teachings were recorded, they have been lost or destroyed. The gospels consist of certain sayings and reminiscences of his life, which have been preserved; and even these have been overlaid by dogmatic teaching to such an extent that their real meaning is perverted. During the dark ages that succeeded Jesus' mission, the last remaining traces of the Wisdom-Religion were diligently hunted down and removed by the emissaries of bigotry and persecution. The proof of this can be gleaned from history. There were originally schools which studied esoteric Christianity, such as the Gnostics and the Essenes; and many of the Church Fathers refer to and quote from their teachings, which are identical in salient points with the teachings of the (so-called) "Pagan Mysteries." But all this was destroyed and replaced by dogmatic theology and ecclesiasticism. The sublime and universal teaching of the Christos or Divine Self in Man was turned into a dogma of an intercessory Savior who shed his blood for the human race; the mystery of the Crucifixion — a symbol which refers to the binding of the Divine Self upon the Cross of material life, and which is found among the ancient Egyptians — became converted into an account of an actual execution. The belief in Reincarnation was expunged (directly or collaterally with other teachings) from the canon at one of the early Church Councils. Nevertheless there is abundant evidence even in the preserved sayings of Jesus, to show what his real teaching was.

The following are some quotations from the New Testament, showing the existence of the Theosophical teachings as to the *Christos* in Man and the illumination to be attained by relying upon It and uniting ourselves in thought and purpose therewith.

Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. — Matt. v. 48.

Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. — Matt. vi. 33.

Behold, the kingdom of God is within you. — Luke xvii. 21.

Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.
— John viii. 32.

Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever; but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.
— John viii. 34, 35, 36.

A clear reference to the Higher Self and the lower self, to the perpetuity of the Ego throughout incarnations, and to the true salvation or liberation by the power of the *Christos*.

Verily, verily I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do.... I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of Truth; whom the world cannot receive because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.... The comforter which is the Holy Ghost,

(to eliminate the hypnotic effect of the altogether special meanings which the words have acquired during several centuries of preaching, let us give them their true sense by using synonyms and translate them the “Sacred Breath” and the “Helper,” which are exact translations of *αγιον Πνευμα* and *Παρακλητος*).

whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.... Abide in me, and I in you.... I am the vine, ye are the branches.

— John xiv, xv.

Jesus speaks frequently, in these reported teachings, not in the name of his own personality, as Jesus, but in the name of the *Christos*. So also does Krishna in the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*, and so also do other Saviors whose teachings might be quoted. As *Christos*, or illuminated, he would have the consciousness of his oneness with all his disciples, though he would of course address their *minds*. Thus, as *Christos*, he declares that he is the vine, and the human minds the branches.

Paul speaks as one of the initiates into the esoteric teachings of Christianity, but his words have been badly obscured by the special theological significances they have acquired in the course of centuries. The word “redemption” calls up a host of dogmatic conceptions, but the Greek word *απολυτρωσις* means “a loosing away,” and might therefore just as well be rendered “liberation.” He speaks of the Son as the “firstborn of every creature,” thus clearly indicating his belief that the Christ was in every man.

Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light [“saints” has an acquired theological sense; the words are *τῶν ὁγίων*, meaning “those consecrated” to the light]; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins [“forgiveness” is *ἀφεσις*, meaning

“deliverance “[: who is the image of the invisible God, *the firstborn of every creature...*

The gospel [good tidings]... whereof I Paul am made a minister... the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints [devotees]: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles [nations]; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory [illumination]. — Colossians i.

As this is not an essay on Christianity, we cannot stop to give many quotations in support of the fact that Christianity was an offshoot of the “pagan” Mysteries, particularly as this has been more fully done elsewhere; but the following passages will bear quoting again:

The profound respect that was paid to the Greek and Roman mysteries, and the extraordinary sanctity that was attributed to them, induced the Christians to give their religion a mystic air, in order to put it upon an equal footing, in point of dignity, with that of the Pagans. For this purpose they gave the name of *mysteries* to the institutions of the gospel, and decorated particularly the holy sacrament with that solemn title. They used in that sacred institution several of the terms employed in the heathen mysteries, and proceeded so far at length as even to adopt some of the rites and ceremonies of which those renowned mysteries consisted.

— *Ecclesiastical History*, Mosheim.

The very thing which is now called the “Christian” religion was really known to the ancients, nor was it wanting at any time from the beginnings of the human race up to the time Christ came in the flesh; from which time the true religion, which had previously existed, began to be called Christian, and in this our day is the Christian religion, not as having been wanting in former times, but as having in later times received that name.

— *St. Augustine*.

The “Christ” is a term taken from the Mysteries. It means “the anointed,” and was the name given to a candidate for initiation after having passed a certain stage — after having so effected the union between the mind and the immortal Self that the latter had become the conscious center of his being and the ruler in all his doings. All men are potentially Christs and can become Christos. The Crucifixion is an emblem of the sacrifice made by the Christ when it assumes the duty and burden of attaching itself to the cycles of Reincarnation and undertakes the salvation of the lower principles of Man. It suffers imprisonment in the flesh, and the Cross is a well-known ancient symbol of matter, found among all nations. The Death, burial, and Resurrection of the Christ are also symbolical of the same story of sacrifice and salvation. If we inquire whether or not there was ever an actual execution of Jesus, the question becomes one of history; but, whenever he existed and whether he was strangled or crucified, the

symbolical meaning remains the same as it always was, ages before the time assigned to the historical Christ.

THE CREATION IN THE BIBLE

The Soul of Man was not given him by a personal God, but comes from the Universal Soul. In the Bible we read that the Lord God breathed into Man's nostrils the breath of life, and Man became a living soul (Genesis ii. 7). But the Lord God here mentioned, is in the original *Yehovah*, a word understood by the Hebrew Kabbalists as meaning a *group* of creative agencies, but afterwards made by the Christians into a personal God; and the word for "a living soul" is *nephesh*, which means "animal soul" (See Young's *Biblical Concordance*). The word *nephesh* is used in Hebrew teachings to denote the animal life which Man possesses in common with all other creatures, and is distinguished from *ruach*, the Spiritual Soul, and *neshamah*, the Spirit. *Nephesh* is the "breath of life" in man, as in beast or insect; of physical, material life, which has no spirituality in it. Hence this passage refers to the creation of the animal nature of Man, and should have preceded in the Bible — from one point of view — the other account of creation, in Genesis i. 26, 27, which says:

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.... So God created man in his own image.

Here the word translated God is *elohim*, a plural word meaning the creative powers. Yet our translators have confused the whole subject by translating it God. This passage refers to the endowment of the animal man with the *Manas* or Higher Mind, by which he was given a link with the Spiritual world and became immortal and potentially omniscient. St. Paul refers to this double creation in I Corinthians xv, where he says:

There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul [*psuche*, "animal soul" — see Young's *Concordance*]; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

This endowment of Man with the Higher Mind, by which he became a Spiritual being, is what is known in Theosophy as the coming of the *Mânasaputras*. The organism of man was perfected by long ages of evolution until it became a highly evolved animal; but it had no spirituality and was not immortal. To complete the work, it was endowed with the *Manas*, or Higher Mind, by other Beings called the *Mânasaputras*, or "Sons of Mind," who had evolved it during past cycles in other spheres. This *Manas* forms the connecting link between the lower and higher nature of Man, and by it he becomes a self-conscious responsible Being.

It is very important to notice that this implies a radical difference between Man and even the highest animal. In a sense all organized beings, even those of the mineral kingdom, are endowed with a spark of the Universal Spirit; otherwise they could not continue to exist, much less grow and evolve. For evolution and growth, and even existence, imply that there is within the evolving form an indwelling spirit of life, which is unfolding itself and seeking outward expression in the material world. Some modern evolutionists have tried to account for growth and evolution without postulating this indwelling spirit; but, to satisfy the demands of logic, they have been obliged to endow the “atom” or the “cell” with all those effectual spontaneous potencies which in reality belong to the indwelling spirit. So that in any case, the existence of this indwelling life-spirit is admitted. But we must not go too far in looking at *material* evolution as the only factor in progressive development, for it is not. Each kingdom has a special “soul,” (*Monad*) peculiar to itself, which is the urging power to what is below it. And so with Man; he is the product of several distinct lines of evolution. The natural evolution could never have produced more than a highly evolved animal; it was supplemented by the endowment with Mind, and this Mind was the product of evolution carried on on other planes.

This subject is more fully treated of elsewhere, but it was necessary to epitomize it briefly here. It shows that Man’s clay is endowed with a Spark in more senses than one. For, besides the Spark of Universal Life that he shares with the inferior creation, he is specially endowed with the Mind which links him with the Eternal and makes him a potential God.

OTHER ANCIENT TEACHINGS

Plato showed that Man had mainly three principles: the spiritual Soul, *nous*; the animal soul, *psuche*; and a mortal body. Another Greek philosopher, Plutarch, says:

Man is compound; and they are mistaken who think him to be compounded of two parts only. For they imagine that the understanding is a part of the soul, but they err in this no less than those who make the soul to be a part of the body. For the understanding as far exceeds the soul, as the soul is better and diviner than the body. Now this composition of the soul with the understanding makes reason; and with the body passion.

What the ancient Egyptians taught about the Soul is not understood by those who have not studied their philosophy; but those who have studied it admit that the Egyptians spoke of “seven souls” (the Theosophical *Seven Principles*). For instance, Gerald Massey, a learned Egyptologist, tabulates them as follows:

Kha, body.
Ba, the soul of breath.
Khaba, the shade.
Akhu, intelligence or perception.
Seb, ancestral soul.
Putah, the first intellectual father.
Atmu, a divine or eternal soul.

Without endorsing the accuracy of his descriptions, we are content to show that this knowledge on the part of the Egyptians is admitted by modern scholars. That ancient Ritual which has come down to us called “The Book of the Dead,” or “The Book of the Master,” is full of teachings about the various principles of Man; as, for instance, where the defunct addressing the “ancestral heart,” says:

O, my heart, my ancestral heart necessary for my transformations,... do not separate thyself from me before the guardian of the Scales. Thou art my Self within my breast, divine companion watching over my fleshs (incarnations).

Here is an appeal to the Higher Self, recognized as being the eternal Self throughout incarnations.

The following are quotations from the *Memorable Sayings* and the *Avesta* of Persian Zoroastrianism:

The Soul being a radiant fire by the power of the Father, not only remains immortal and is absolute ruler of the life, but also holds in possession the many perfections of the bosoms of the world; for it becomes a copy of the mind, but that which is born is somewhat corporeal.

The mortal approaching the fire will be illuminated from God.

He gives us by his most holy spirit the good mind from which spring good thoughts, words, and deeds — also fulness, long life, prosperity and understanding.

The Zoroastrians believed that Ahura Mazda, the Supreme, had endowed Man with a *Favarshi*, or *Ferouer*, the spiritual counterpart; and the *Zend Avesta* enjoins men to invoke this spiritual counterpart and not to pray to *Ahura Mazda* himself. The whole Zoroastrian religion turns on the distinction between the Divine and grosser natures of Man; men are everywhere urged to strive towards their Divine counterpart which inspires good thoughts and noble actions, and to subdue the promptings of the animal nature.

It would be easy to multiply, almost endlessly, references to the fact that the ancients in all lands recognized the seven human principles; distinguished between the three souls, animal, human and divine; knew of

the mysteries of the animal and divine natures of Man; attached supreme importance to the recognition and reverence of Man's Divine Counterpart, his Higher Self; and taught secretly in their Schools of the Mysteries, those methods of self-purification and attainment of Wisdom which, in the Dark Age it was no longer possible to teach publicly. But there is not space for such a lengthy digression. Referring the student then, to other writings for fuller information, we must summarize the teachings.

ONENESS A FACT IN NATURE

It must not be thought that Theosophy merely restates the ethical teachings of the Churches regarding altruism. It does far more than this. It is a Science as well as a Religion. It renders the teachings of religion practicable; connects them with the known facts of daily life. In the Ancient Mysteries were taught — and in the future Mysteries will be taught again — the real secrets of Life and Nature, those that tell of the causes and reasons of things and which elude scientific scrutiny. There is a wide world of knowledge awaiting him whose eyes are opened and ears unstopped. But *oneness* is the first condition. Knowledge cannot be given to a world that would abuse it, nor to individuals unfit to receive it. The prime condition of moral worthiness and temperamental fitness must be observed; these conditions are imposed partly by the nature of things and partly by the protection given by Those pledged to stand guard over the sacred Knowledge. But no Law or power withholds the Truth from Man except the barriers he himself raises, and revelation ever awaits the ready. The published teachings of Theosophy represent the outer Mysteries and the teachings which Jesus gave to the multitude in parables.

It is clear that there are enormous gaps in our knowledge of things. Our science can study the various properties of chemical elements and compounds, or the forces that play in matter, such as electricity and heat; but it can find out practically nothing about what these properties and forces are in themselves or the reasons for their existence. Thus the whole world, except its final physical manifestation, is a sealed book. But we are dealing here particularly with the case of Man. To the eye of science the body of Man is a most wonderful and complicated machine, whose workings can be seen, but nothing is known of the invisible workers. It is a mighty organ, and some scientists say that it plays itself, the music which it produces being the force that plays it. This is nonsense. The atoms and cells and fluids cannot move and grow and change of themselves. Theosophy introduces us to the study of these invisible parts of Human nature.

Modern ignorance will hastily assume that everything beyond the body must be the Soul, and one has heard of scientists trying to weigh the Soul, and of spiritualists imagining that an astral appearance was the immortal spirit. But it is most unscientific thus to limit the possibilities of

Nature and jump at one bound from the bottom to the top. We cannot limit the whole creation to just these two things — the material world and the spiritual world, the former belonging to science and the latter to religion. There are worlds within worlds without number, stretching away from the boundaries of our physical sense-world, getting more refined as we proceed. In these worlds lie the causes and agencies whose effects we witness but whose essential nature eludes observation.

Keeping to the main subject, the Flame and the Clay, we must recall the fact that there are the Seven human principles; so that, to divide Man into only a body and a Soul is very inadequate. Such a doctrine as the latter leads to great error; for people mistake for their Soul parts of their nature which are very earthly. The Astral Double or *linga śarîra* is merely a duplicate of the body and does not of itself possess any intelligence, far less conscience; yet spiritualists play with these doubles and allow themselves to be played with by them. Even the Lower Manas is not the real Soul, though it may be very highly endowed with brain-mind power. Yet this is what many people invoke when they pray; for their prayers are selfish.

The word “subconscious mind” is being used a good deal by dabblers in this kind of speculation. It covers a great deal of ignorance and stands for all sorts of latent powers in our nature, many of them potent for evil. To rely upon whatever influence may chance to act through us when we are off our guard, is, to say the least, rash; we may simply become the victims of the hypnotic influence of other minds, or a prey to obsession; we may merely be making appeals to that part of our lower self which is not yet fully manifested. This is what the “New Thought” unwisely does; it invokes unseen powers without discrimination and so calls into play latent forces that are more likely to be selfish and destructive than spiritual and beneficent.

Hence the importance of a knowledge of Theosophy and of an observance of the duties of altruism. These protect us from the mistakes and passions to which unguided speculation and unpurified living render us liable. They show us that the true Soul can be in no way connected with selfishness, and that anything in which there is ambition or pride, no matter how apparently exalted and intelligent, is not the Soul.

In days of yore men knew how to meet together for the purpose of invoking the Soul — that mysterious Presence which is One and yet many, which knows no separateness, yet has a home in every faithful heart. Not in the heat of their passions and the turmoil of their unpurified bodies did they meet, as when a crowd of fanatics assemble to arouse the *Kâma* principle and lash themselves into unholy frenzy and lust. The rite was guarded by initiatory tests and preparations directed by the Teachers and sanctioned by the common knowledge of the Mysteries. We find traces of such rites and of their subsequent degraded forms, which historians

interpret in the light of their own prejudice and ignorance. In the statues of Egypt are preserved the pose and mien of those who commune with the Soul, and the faces are full of inspiration to the reverent and understanding; but profane scholars call them stiff attempts of primitive art. Even today the descendant of mighty civilizations, dubbed by modernity “primitive man,” withdraws to the mountain-top or forest to commune with the Great Spirit that he may learn what is wise to do.

This Holy Communion we have lost; we pray for selfish advantage; when we meet for communion, it is not for communion with each other, but that each one may separately appeal to a God of desires. The Soul cannot manifest itself through hearts that are not united, any more than music can flow from an orchestra where each player plays his own tune. Only to united hearts can the Soul reveal itself and its Light shine upon the mind of Man, illuminating him as it did in days of yore.

And this revelation is a very real FACT, and something more than a pious resignation or other equally vague affair, such as religions have made it. And it is this fact that Theosophy aims to bring back to Man’s knowledge — to make unity a *fact* in Nature. Ordinarily it is the false teachings of science and religion that keep us from learning these truths, for often people find out things by their intuition, which they are prevented from accepting on account of their fixed beliefs; but once let the lucid teachings of Theosophy about Human nature be known, and many facts of life which were formerly mysteries will be explained. People will not then reject their flashes of intuition under the impression that they are sinful or delusions. Once let us understand that there is Divinity within us, and we shall daily find indications of its presence. The songs of the poets will no longer be regarded as magnificent flights of the imagination, but recognized as glimpses of truth. There will be no *ex cathedra* utterances from pulpit or chair to frown down our efforts to understand ourselves.

RESURRECTING THE BURIED CHRIST

The Higher Self;— this may be said to be one of the keywords of Theosophy. It sums up the sacredness of the Wisdom of Antiquity; it gives the key to the grandeur of ancient civilization. In place of this Higher Self we have now only the (hypothetical) personal God and his son Jesus Christ, dim figures that are little more than theories to most people and, unhappily, mere fetishes to others. We find the truth of Man’s higher nature coming forward, but it is not always by any means in connection with religion, but by some other influence, such as Chivalry. What were the ideals of honor, fealty and self-sacrifice, inculcated by Chivalry, but the recognition of Man’s essential goodness and dignity? For this ideal the Churches have substituted the “miserable sinner” theory and thereby degraded Man and taken away his true ambition and spur to progress.

Progress has been achieved in spite of ecclesiasticism, by the irrepressible urge of Man's Higher nature, and ecclesiasticism has afterwards laid claim to the credit for this progress.

It is still incumbent upon us to endeavor to make the Christ manifest in us. And now, as before, the prime condition is fraternity. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." The great cause of illusion and enthrallment is our false self, or rather our false selves, for each one of us has many false selves. Like a dreamer or an actor engrossed in his part, we live in a constant state of illusion, believing ourselves to be other than we are, falsely attributing *self* or *I-ness* to parts of our mind that are merely incidental. Under this illusion we imagine ourselves to be separate from other people. But there is really no such thing as separateness, the Universal Spirit being one. We are invited to wake up from our dream and attain full consciousness, and then the illusion of separateness will pass away and we shall become aware of our oneness with all that lives. Therefore the way to approach this revelation consists in striving against selfishness. What holds us back is our personal desires. These have to be mastered; and not the lesser ones only; for, though a man should be the greatest saint and ascetic on Earth and yet retain pride or love of eminence, he would be in as great a state of illusion as ever, and might be much further back than some poor drunk with a bodily complaint but a pure heart.

Thus we see that the universal exhortation to charity and unselfishness is not an onerous condition exacted from us as a means to our personal reward in a future state, but it is simply a statement of the fundamental law of life. Unless this law is observed, conflict must result; the lower orders of Nature cannot resist it; but Man with his freewill, must consciously choose. Aside from the teachings of the Teachers, many men have tested and probed life in all directions and have at last found that there is no lasting peace in anything personal, but that the eternal life and the enduring peace rest in the depths of the Soul in an ocean of Love without bonds or thought of self-interest.

What a pity that this glorious Truth of the Christ should have had to struggle so hard against the assaults of dogmatism on the one hand and animalism on the other; and that the so-called guardians of Truth should have so travestied it that many have plunged into materialism as the lesser of two evils! Oh, let us resurrect the Christ to a new life among men!

THE TEMPLE

The word temple has a double significance. It means not only the building erected as a place in which to invoke the Supreme; but it means also the human heart, which is a shrine sacred to the Divine Presence. In fact the outer temple, made with hands, is but a pattern of the Temple

within. It is impossible to read the references made in ancient scriptures to temples without realizing this fact.

Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise It up.... But he spake of the temple of his body.
— John ii. 19, 21.

Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God.
— Rev. iii. 12.

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. — I Cor. iii. 16, 17.

What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost [sacred Breath] which is in you? — I Cor. vi. 19.

Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them. — II Cor. vi. 16.

And an infinity of instances might be quoted from other scriptures, all showing recognition of the great truth that the human body is (or rather, as we must now say, should be) the dwelling place or temple of the Divine Spirit. But we have defiled that temple, filling it with money-changers, making it a stall for cattle, and perverting its uses, until now it needs much purification ere it can be fitted again for the manifestation of the Sacred Light. Yet the Light is ever present, though veiled, and its undying rays continually warm and illumine us, filling us with an insatiable longing for a changeless peace and knowledge and love, such as the world cannot bestow. Aspiring to make our love impersonal, our ideals high and pure, and our interests those of humanity, we may call back more of that Light into the temple. If the reality could be revealed, all doubts would vanish; we should know what we are and what is the meaning of life. But the Light shining through many a clouded and tintured screen of the mind raises illusions, and these have first to be overcome.

It is positively dangerous to speak of revelations and illuminations, so many are the chances of error. The materialistic unenlightened man mistakes any state of exaltation for a “beatific vision,” when it may be only an excited condition of the nerves produced by physiological causes. Circles of enthusiasts, whether psychic cranks or religious cranks, can produce collective hallucinations and imagine that they get inspirations. Materialism may have gone too far in denying the possibility of any revelation; but it was a reaction against superstition. Now, however, that very materialistic ignorance has made us an easy prey to the slightest spiritistic phenomenon or psychic experience or revivalist frenzy; and we

have no wisdom to discriminate between states that may be low and states that may be high. But let us remember what Paul says about the divine Love (αγαπη) translated “charity,” that though a man should have all gifts and yet not have this, he would be but as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal; and that it vaunteth not itself, envieth not, seeketh not its own, doth not behave itself unseemly, etc. The true illumination is soulful; it is not phrenetic, like those that lead to the founding of wonderful sects with new Bibles or new cults of mental culture with weird practices; it renders the man reasonable, useful, and at peace with himself and with others.

THE PERFECTED HUMAN

Jesus the Christ affords us one example of a perfected man, but Western theology has made him the only one; moreover, it has made him a god — nay, *God* — in a special sense, thus giving him an insuperable advantage over ordinary men and rendering his example of little use. And this in spite of his own teachings on the point. But there have been many Christs, some known to history as Great Teachers, others unknown. Only on special occasions and for special purposes do perfected characters appear publicly in this Dark Age. Ordinarily their work for humanity can be better performed in private. History furnishes us with examples of the occasional intervention of such characters, and the reason for their ordinary seclusion is apparent from the misunderstanding and persecution to which they have always been subjected. The public presence of such beings seems to act disastrously upon human society as at present constituted, by stirring up fanatical personal devotion on the one hand and bitter animosity on the other. Men are not yet sufficiently well balanced to stand the presence of such helpers *visibly* and *publicly*. *Nevertheless they exist and continue to work for the welfare of humanity in other ways*, influencing the tides of thought and inspiring great movements.

This perfected state is an attainable ideal for humanity in general, and we are all on the road towards it. Sooner or later, in the cycle of rebirth, we shall have sounded the depths of experience and learned to distinguish between the permanent and the fleeting in our nature. We shall make a conscious choice of the Path that leads to perfection and to emancipation from the thralldom of desire. Those who have overcome the great delusion of self and made Divine Love the law of their life, step out into a wider life that is free from the trammels which impede alike knowledge and action. They are Magicians, in the true sense, commanders of Nature, servants of humanity. Recognizing the Flame, they have made that the center of their being, in place of the fires of desire and selfishness. The Path that leads to perfection is open to all who are ready to recognize their divinity and accept it as their guide. It cannot be followed by the ambitious for personal advancement or by the curious. Service and self-sacrifice are

the conditions required of the pilgrim. Knowledge follows in proportion to his devotion.

The mind is the critical center of our nature, hovering between the divine aspirations from above and the selfish impulses from below. Divine Magic or the attainment of the eternal Life means that we must succeed in blending our mind with the Soul, so that the two may form a self-conscious entity for Good. For the Soul needs the mind for consummation of its perfection, and the mind can never be satisfied but by the Soul. And truly we all know by experience that there is that in our mind which craves a perfection and finality not to be found in any worldly possession or any object of pride and vanity; it tests them all and exhausts them. For the mind is from the infinite, and longs to return to its native element. It calls upon its Divine Prototype; but ere the call can be answered, the house must first be swept and garnished.

Naught but the truth can satisfy the eternal Pilgrim; and many are the delusions which he has to encounter and surmount ere he can attain thereto. He mistakes one passion after another for the true source of permanent satisfaction; but finds out the vanity of all, until at last he realizes that the only fixed dwelling-place of the heart is in the perfect purity and selflessness of truth, when the mind has ceased to ally itself with the changing desires and has united itself to the Soul.

THE KINGDOM

Man who man would be
Must keep the empire of himself, in it
Ruling the changes.

The proper study of mankind is man.

The King, an uncrowned king, is he
Who from desire and fear is free.
He who rules himself, rules others.

Γνωθι σεαυτον.

Discipline is surely a thing greatly needed. There can be no liberty without governance; otherwise it becomes license. The true governing power is in the heart of the individual. The reason why we have such disorder in our social systems is because the individuals composing them are undisciplined in their natures. Individual desires and passions, unbridled, make up collectively a vast force that works for confusion. With this force civilization is struggling. But how can there be discipline and self-governance when we have no central rock of faith or knowledge to which to anchor? We are simply drifting, trusting to inertia and gravity to

keep us from foundering. The average man allows himself to be swept easily along the currents of conventional motive, and is content to be part of a huge machine, working blindly so far as his knowledge is concerned; thus he becomes the tool of other people's desires. But a man who has a definite purpose in life and is so far emancipated from the thrall of his own imagination that he has a sense of being an immortal Soul, can sit still and let the currents of thought and desire pass by. Thus he becomes free and is a power in the world.

Most children are brought up without any knowledge of the Soul. Their desires are never mastered; they never learn that it is possible to master them. As they grow up they may learn to cover up these passions in a mask of policy, but they are there all the same, and they spoil the man's life, leading him along a path he would rather not have trodden. In the Râja Yoga system of education, children learn to take their stand on the basis of their Soul and to dissociate themselves from the personal desires. Thus they acquire a self-command which shows itself in everything they undertake, rendering them masters of every situation. They are kings in their own domain.

It is surely a proud ambition to be masters of the mental and emotional world around us and to control all the strong unruly forces of our nature. But this we cannot do unless we have a vantage ground outside of the complicated machinery we wish to control. *Λος που στῶ, και την γην κινῶ* "Give me somewhere to stand and I will move the earth," said Archimedes. The reason why we fail to control the Protean changes of our nature is that we do not take our stand on a neutral center. We cannot cast out Satan by the power of Satan. The self must be raised by the Self, as the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ* says.

The recognition of the Flame means self-control, mastery, freedom; deliverance from the only real form of servitude — servitude to one's self. This is the riddle of the Sphinx — how to grasp life. We have to answer the question, "Who am I?" At present, our selfhood being wrongly located, the real Controller of our life seems like an outside Power — a God or Destiny — but we can recognize it as ourself, and thus learn to "will our destiny." All that we now imagine to be ourself will then be external to the real Self thus found; and, standing at the center of our being, we can dispose of the peripheral forces.

14

On God and Prayer

A Student

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INTRODUCTORY

The purpose of this Manual must be to separate the wheat from the chaff, and to help people, while rejecting that which is false in their old ideas, to keep that which is true. It will be shown how the dogmas that have grown up around religion in the course of centuries have obscured the truth and kept men back from progressing in spiritual knowledge to the extent they should have done, by causing them to cling fast to errors sanctioned by authority only, and to expend their devotion on objects unworthy of it. It will be the endeavor to clear religious truth of these errors, thus rescuing that which is holy from that which has debased it. And this will not be done in the old tearing-down iconoclastic way of a certain class of atheists and “freethinkers” — a method that has often caused people to cling the more tightly to their cherished errors. People may be pardoned for clinging to theology as *the lesser of two evils*, when the greater evil is a superstitious materialism, or rather animalism, that denies and scoffs at all faith and at everything held as sacred. If Theosophy unqualifiedly rejects the theological God, it is only because its own idea of Deity is so much higher that the theological idea seems like a profanation. If Theo-sophy repudiates the ordinary conception of prayer, it is only because it has a far higher conception of prayer to offer. Theosophy does not pull down and take away without having something better to give instead. It does not pull religion down at all, but merely asks believers to step behind the outer forms of their creeds and examine the inner spirit — that which is common ground for all religions and the source whence all religions are sprung. It asks them to lay aside the mental forms under which ignorant generations have sought to gain an idea of the Eternal, and to try to discover the source of everlasting life and power and wisdom through its manifestations in the world without and in the heart within. It asks them to give up petitioning a hypothetical personal creator for the fulfilment of questionable desires, and to endeavor to ascertain the spirit of the Eternal Law and harmonize their lives therewith. It teaches that right action is the truest prayer.

In the great extension of knowledge that has taken place in all directions, we can no longer regard the Christian religion as anything unique and specially favored. We realize that it is but one out of many religions that have existed from all time, and that religions are but the temporary and local forms which the one great eternal RELIGION takes during ages of spiritual obscurity when humanity as a whole is not able to grasp that one RELIGION. We can trace the symbology back to earlier sources among the Babylonians etc., and this is upsetting many people, although there is no need to be upset. It merely shows that our religion is, in its essential parts, much older than we had thought; and this surely does not detract from its merits. Our age is just learning to apply the scientific

method of generalization to religion, and to realize that all religions are derived from a parent religion, as languages have descended from a parent language. Just as scholars show that the various tongues spoken in Europe and Asia are derived from someone parent tongue spoken ages ago by the Race from which the diverse nations are descended; so it might be shown that the various religions are offshoots of a Root-Religion understood in antiquity. And if philologists extended the limits of their inquiry so as to include other languages than the ones about which they treat, they might trace the present human races still further back to a still more inclusive and parent Race. And so with religions; if we trace far enough back, we shall draw continually nearer to the original unity from which has sprung all the diversity, and find that all religious symbology and doctrine comes from one and the same ancient source.

The world is very ancient; and the great civilizations of the remote past, whose remains we are discovering here and there, endured for thousands of years. In comparison with our own brief history, their history was very old and mature; they had advanced farther in knowledge than we have as yet advanced; for our race is yet (comparatively) in its childhood. Hence in remote antiquity there was a general knowledge of the secrets of Life and Nature — a knowledge which was neither religion nor science, for it was both — and men were wiser and had greater powers than we. It is the scattered and misunderstood fragments of this Ancient Knowledge that form the basis of our religious symbology and doctrine.

As this Ancient Knowledge was founded on eternal Truth, which is always accessible to the illuminated understanding, it is eternally true and verifiable. It can be gained again. It is ours now to rediscover the essential truths of life and to reconstitute the WISDOM-RELIGION of antiquity.

THE THEOLOGICAL GOD

The theological God is rather an elusive conception. The conception varies from that of the man whose ideas have been described as implying a “coarse familiarity with the Almighty,” and who dares to pray to God to help him to choose new clothing, to the noblest and most intuitive conceptions of our great divines. Therefore it is difficult, in discussing this question, to know what one is discussing. If one points out the absurdity of the baldly stated orthodox dogmas of the creation and redemption, some Christians will deny that that is what they believe. There are many Christians who do not believe in the literal interpretation of the dogma that God created all men with a character that dooms them to eternal torment unless they are fortunate enough to hear of and to accept the teaching of the Atonement. These crude beliefs do not represent the advanced thought of Christendom. Still it may be taken as a representative view that God favors the Christian religion as being the only true one, and that he sent his son,

Jesus, to the world to preach a gospel of salvation which is essential to the future wellbeing of all men. And when the points of difference are sifted out, there remains a definite idea of "God" which is recognizable and definable as the theological God of ordinary Christian belief. This, then, is the conception with which we have to deal.

THE PERSONAL GOD AND PANTHEISM

But the principal trait of the Christian God which Theosophy calls in question is that which makes him a *personal* God. Theosophy holds that personality is an attribute which cannot be attributed to the Deity without limiting the conception to a degree that renders it entirely inadequate. Personality is an attribute of man, and of man in his state of illusion. It is a defect in human nature, an obstacle which he is destined one day to transcend. To attribute this limitation to the Godhead is to create God in our own image. It is true that there are some, who, when speaking of God as a person, claim that they are using the word "person" in a larger sense than ordinary, and try to give the idea of a very large personality, including, as it were, all other personalities. But when the meaning of a word is so modified as to make it entirely different, it would be better to drop it altogether, as misleading, and use another; but this our unitarian friends cannot do so long as they have to maintain the Christian idea of God against what they call "pantheism." Hence it is clear that the Christian God is a personal God, and that it is essential to make him so in order to avoid losing him altogether and becoming a pantheist. On the question of Pantheism, H. P. Blavatsky says:

The [true] Pantheists... do not deny a Creator, or rather a *collective aggregate* of creators, but only refuse, very logically, to attribute "creation" and especially formation, something finite, to an Infinite Principle. With them Parabrahman is a passive because an Absolute Cause, the unconditioned *Mukta*. It is only limited Omniscience and Omnipotence that are refused to the latter, because these are still attributes (as reflected in man's perceptions); and because Parabrahman, being the "Supreme ALL," the ever invisible spirit and Soul of Nature, changeless and eternal, can have no attributes; absoluteness very naturally precluding any idea of the finite or conditioned from being connected with it. And if the Vedântin postulates attributes as belonging to its emanation, calling it "Îśvara *plus* mâyâ," and Avidyâ,... it is difficult to find any Atheism in this conception.... In this ALL lies concealed its coeternal and coeval emanation or inherent radiation, which, upon becoming periodically Brahmâ (the male-female Potency) becomes or expands itself into the manifested Universe.

— *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, Proem.

And again:

Christian theologians... will allow of no other God than the personified secondary powers which have worked out the visible universe, and which became with them the anthropomorphic God of the Christians.

Many say that if the idea of a personal God is rejected, either atheism or (what is commonly known as) pantheism is the only alternative. But this is not the case. As H. P. Blavatsky has explained the matter well in *The Key to Theosophy*, it will be advisable here to quote therefrom:

INQUIRER. Do you believe in God?

THEOSOPHIST. That depends upon what you mean by the term.

INQUIRER. I mean the God of the Christians, the Father of Jesus, and the Creator: the Biblical God of Moses, in short.

THEOSOPHIST. In such a God we do not believe. We reject the idea of a personal or an extra-cosmic and anthropomorphic God, who is but the gigantic shadow of *man*, and not even of man at his best. The God of theology, we say — and prove it — is a bundle of contradictions and a logical impossibility. Therefore we will have nothing to do with him.

INQUIRER. State your reasons, if you please.

THEOSOPHIST. They are many, and cannot all receive attention. But here are a few. This God is called by his devotees infinite and absolute, is he not?

INQUIRER. I believe he is.

THEOSOPHIST. Then if infinite — *i.e.*, limitless — and especially if absolute, how can he have a form and be a creator of anything? Form implies limitation, and a beginning as well as an end; and in order to create, a Being must think and plan. How can the ABSOLUTE be supposed to think — *i.e.*, have any relation whatever to that which is limited, finite, and conditioned? This is a philosophical and a logical absurdity. Even the Hebrew Kabbalah rejects such an idea, and therefore makes of the one and the Absolute Deific Principle an infinite Unity called Ain Suph. In order to create, the Creator has to become active; and as this is impossible for ABSOLUTENESS, the infinite principle had to be shown becoming the cause of evolution (not creation) in an indirect way — *i.e.*, through the emanation from itself (another absurdity, due this time to the translators of the Kabbalah) of the Sephiroth.

INQUIRER. Then you are atheists?

THEOSOPHIST. Not that we know of, and not unless the epithet of “Atheist” is to be applied to all those who disbelieve in an anthropomorphic God. We believe in a Universal Divine Principle, the root of ALL, from which all proceeds, and within which all shall be absorbed at the end of the great cycle of Being.

INQUIRER. This is the old old claim of Pantheism. If you are Pantheists, you cannot be Deists; and if you are not Deists, then you have to answer to the name of Atheists.

THEOSOPHIST. Not necessarily so. The term “Pantheism” is, again, one of the many abused terms whose real and primitive meaning has been distorted by blind prejudice and a one-sidedness of view. If you accept the Christian etymology of this compound word, and form it of *pan* (παν), “all,” and *theos* (θεος), “god,” and then imagine and teach that this means that every stone and every tree in Nature is a God or the ONE God, then, of course, you will be right, and make of Pantheists fetish-worshippers, in addition to their legitimate name. But you will hardly be as successful if you etymologize the word “Pantheism” esoterically, and as we do.

INQUIRER. What is, then, your definition of it?

THEOSOPHIST. Let me ask you a question in my turn. What do you understand by Pan, or Nature?

INQUIRER. Nature is, I suppose, the sum total of things existing around us; the aggregate of causes and effects in the world of matter, the creation or universe.

THEOSOPHIST. Hence the personified sum and order of known causes and effects; the total of all finite agencies and forces, as utterly disconnected from an intelligent Creator or Creators, and perhaps “conceived of as a single and separate force” — as in your cyclopaedias?

INQUIRER. Yes, I believe so.

THEOSOPHIST. Well,... When we speak of the Deity and make it identical — hence coeval — with Nature, the eternal and uncreate Nature is meant, and not your aggregate of flitting shadows and finite unrealities.... Our DEITY is neither in a paradise nor in a particular tree, building, or mountain; it is everywhere, in every atom of the visible as of the invisible Cosmos, in, over, and around every invisible atom and divisible molecule; for IT is the mysterious power of evolution and involution, the omnipresent, omnipotent, and even omniscient creative potentiality.... — In short, our Deity is the eternal, incessantly *evolving*, not *creating*, builder of the universe; that *universe itself unfolding* out of its own essence, not being *made*.

We make the mistake of attributing to God thought and feeling as we know them; forgetting that these states or processes of our mind are finite, transitory, conditioned. All thinkers who have tried to analyze the mind have been forced to admit that it proceeds from something higher than itself, and that thoughts are but the conditioned manifestations of this inscrutable something behind. All that we can know about ourself, are the manifestations — the mental phenomena, the emotional phenomena, and the physical phenomena; the real Self, the real I, lies beyond them all. Shall we then make the Deity less than our own Self?

We speak of the Deity as thinking and having emotions; but thought and emotion imply the externality of the exciting stimuli. Thus, to imagine the Deity as thinking, it would be necessary to imagine him as being external to the Universe and as being conditioned by it. Deep reflection

will show that even in order to form an idea of the nature of our own inner Self, it is necessary to go deeper than thought and feeling — to postulate, in short, something higher than the ordinary conception of God; yet such a God is made out to be the Absolute.

The Christian idea of God is limited by being thought of as separate from the Universe, which he is supposed to have created as a man would make something out of the materials at hand; or “He” made the materials too. And he is supposed to rule in this Universe. Furthermore, he is conditioned by the power of evil, personified as Satan, and by the perverse will of Man. This theological conception of God is extremely crude, and such as, while pardonable in a savage, is not worthy of a reflecting age.

Evidently this God is only a partial power, a minor deity, since so many things are not included in him. He is a personification of certain forces within Man and without. The ancients used many such personifications, such as Jupiter, Mars, Saturn, etc.; yet they did not any the less believe in a Supreme Power above and including all. We boast of having replaced polytheism by monotheism, but really we have the old polytheism over again in a less complete form; for the One God which we have substituted for the ancient Gods is in no way their superior.

Let one meditate on the nature of his own being, and then reflect that there are countless other human beings like himself; and let him try to conceive what must be the nature of the common Soul or Life that links all these human beings together. He will then see that personality must be a limitation — something of the nature of a delusion. The effect of this delusion is to make each man think that he is the center of the Universe and that other people are merely external circumstances. He cannot enter into their self-hood, yet each one of them has the same feelings about himself. The only way to overcome this perplexity is to imagine that there is a Super-Spiritual, or Divine, common Consciousness manifesting in Individual Monads, and that the appearance of separateness is a limitation caused by our brains or some other part of our personal apparatus. In this way we can at least eliminate the idea of personality from our conceptions; and, thinking of the Deity in this way, we may reach a broader and worthier conception than that of theology. Yet to reach this conception, it is necessary to eliminate all familiar mental modes, everything that goes to make up the notion of personal consciousness; even thought, as we know it. And even so, we have but foreshadowed the conception of one of the higher principles of man, and must yet be immeasurably far from a conception of the One God, the Ultimate Universal Spirit.

To the unreflecting person it seems as though if we take away thought and feeling there will be nothing left; hence he may protest that the Theosophical teachings as to the Universal Spirit make it an empty abstraction or nothingness. But Spirit is that from which all thought and feeling proceed, and it is superior to them. Our ordinary consciousness is

but a feeble light in comparison with the fuller consciousness beyond. Beyond intellect there is Intuition, as much superior to thinking as sight is superior to feeling. Even thus, the elimination of all limitations from the conception of the Spirit does not make it less, but makes it more.

It is absurd to jump at one bound from the material world to the Universal Spirit, without stopping to reflect that there must be grades and degrees beyond counting. The physical Universe is complex beyond conception, as we know from science; why then expect the more spiritual worlds of Nature to be so simple? Is it not clear that what is called "God" stands for the whole of Nature lying beyond the reach of our limited senses, being in fact like the x representing unknown quantities in algebra? Even in human nature there are principles higher than the mind, and in the natural world around us there are worlds within worlds. Our conceptions of Spirit have been altogether too limited.

A study of the philosophies of antiquity shows that the world has reflected more deeply than we on these questions. For the days have gone by when it was possible to allege with any show of plausibility that the pantheons and cosmogonies of the ancient Egyptians, Hindûs, Greeks, etc., are merely systems of imaginary gods such as are — or are said to be — believed in by savages. We know now that these ancient races were highly civilized, that some of them had elaborate and accurate mathematical and astronomical sciences, and that they had advanced further in meta-physics than we have. The main difference between their science and ours is that where we place abstractions they placed Beings, where we speak of force they spoke of life, where we postulate attractions and affinities they saw conscious Mind. For they recognized a fact that is at last beginning to dawn upon us — that the forces and qualities of Nature are not blind and unintelligent; they may appear so when viewed solely from the standpoint of their manifestation to our physical senses, but in their real essence and to deep thought they are alive and conscious. In fact, all force and motion are the manifestation of conscious mind, and conscious mind appertains to some Being or Beings. Hence in the ancient philosophies we find these Beings represented as what we have called "gods," "daemons," etc. These gods and daemons are in fact the names by which were denoted the innumerable hierarchies of creative Beings that go to make up the boundless universe of life. In place of this we have on the one hand our One God, and on the other hand our scientific forces — both of them extremely hazy conceptions and mutually contradictory. Now it is surely no act of irreverence to admit that the Supreme acts through a host of conscious and intelligent Beings of various orders, any more than it is irreverent to say that he acts through heat and electricity! At one time the Churches persecuted people for making scientific discoveries, and the very same outcries were raised against science as are

now being raised against Theosophy — that it was irreverent towards the ideal of Godhead.

H. P. Blavatsky points out that the word “pantheism” has been degraded by modern ignorance and flippancy of thought, until now it means, for the general mind, something that is disparaging. It has come to mean that the Deity is nothing but a kind of summing up of the forces of *physical* nature, and thus pantheists are said to have no God and to be atheists. But the word pantheism has a higher and truer sense. No true pantheist ever claimed that the sum-total of the forces that play in the manifested Universe was God. But if the words Nature and Universe are used in a wider sense, so as to include *all* — not merely the outer manifestation, but the sum-total of the spiritual creative powers — then pantheism becomes the doctrine that Deity is the ultimate Life and Will and Mind underlying and directing all — a conception which so far from degrading the idea of Deity, elevates the idea of the Universe to spiritual nobility.

In contrast to the lofty (true) pantheistic conception of Deity, consider that idea which limits Deity to the status of a personality — purely hypothetical — who established a certain religion in comparatively modern times and made truth and salvation conditional on the acceptance of a special scheme of salvation through Jesus. Add to this the fact that when we visit foreign lands we find swarms of people just as fixed and fanatical in their ideas about Islam and Muhammed, or whatever the names of their religion and its prophet may be, as some of us are about our current religion and savior. Is it not evident that these popular forms of religion are purely local, temporary and racial? But in all lands there will be found people above the common level, who recognize that true religion is one and universal, and that the less intelligent people are not able to grasp this truth and so have been obliged to reduce their religion to the form of a set of dogmas. Religion thus becomes dogmatic and exclusive and is thought to be the only true religion. And the conceptions of Deity are equally multifarious and local, in contrast to the universal conception of Deity as the ultimate source of all Intelligence and Power, standing in an equal relation to all religions. As the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ* says:

In whatever way men approach me, in that way do I assist them; but whatever the path taken by mankind, that path is mine.

Those who through diversity of desires are deprived of spiritual wisdom adopt particular rites subordinated to their own natures, and worship other Gods. In whatever form a devotee desires with faith to worship, it is I alone who inspire him with constancy therein, and depending on that faith he seeks the propitiation of that God, obtaining the object of his wishes as ordained by me alone.

There are many people whose lives are cast in a limited mold and whose duties and interests do not lead them out of a comparatively narrow sphere, who worship in their hearts an ideal of Deity that does not lead them into any conflict of thought and suffices for the simple needs of their nature, acting as an inspiration to worthiness of life. These people, as the above quoted passage says, worship the true Spirit through a mental form, and will eventually attain broader conceptions. But Theosophy is a universal religion and its appeal is to all men. It must appeal to the remotest peoples of other continents, equally with civilized western nations. Hence its teaching as to the Deity must go beyond the limited racial conceptions. Such a conception is peculiarly necessary for missionaries who undertake to help alien races along the path of spiritual perfection. It is of little use to preach to them the particular God of western civilization.

We are too hasty and impatient in our speculations about the Universe and THAT which is supreme in it and over it. We need to study our own inner nature more. All light is from within; what reaches us from outside is the opinions of other people. Everyone who has meditated deeply is conscious of the presence within him, beyond the reach of thought, of a Power that makes for good, speaks with the voice of conscience, inspires to better things. This Power proceeds from our Divine prototype, the Higher Self, our *real* Self. The Higher Self is far higher than any ordinary conception of God, for the latter is but the highest ideal the mere mind can imagine, and is limited by the imperfections of the mind that imagines it. If it is possible for a human nature to become so sublimated that he can rise beyond thought to a higher and fuller state of consciousness, this would be a revelation, and its character might be such as altogether to stultify one's speculations as to the nature of Deity.

REAL MEANING OF PANTHEISM

As stated above, to call Theosophy pantheistic is a serious error, unless the word "pantheism" be understood in its original sense. If pantheism be taken to mean that the Supreme Spirit is nothing but the totality of manifested Nature, then this kind of pantheism is certainly not the belief of Theosophy but is the belief of certain modern schools of monists. Theosophy does recognize that the sum-total of manifested Nature can be conceived of as a Unit, but this Unit is not the Supreme Spirit; it is what is called in Vedāntic philosophy *Prakriti*, the basis of Nature. But besides *Prakriti* there is another conception called *Purusha*, the Spirit of the Universe. This duality of Spirit and Matter, or *Purusha* and *Prakriti*, is a necessary conception in every great philosophy of the Universe. It is the Supreme considered in its dual or creative aspect. The Supreme is One; but, as Creator, It becomes Two; the One and the Two are the Trinity (or rather one of the trinities) found in every religion.

H. P. Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine* gives the following summary:

- (1) The ABSOLUTE; the *Parabrahman* of the Vedântins or the one Reality, SAT, which is, as Hegel says, both Absolute Being and Non-Being.
- (2) The first manifestation, the impersonal, and, in philosophy, *unmanifested* Logos, the precursor of the “manifested.” This is the “First Cause,” the “Unconscious” of European Pantheists.
- (3) Spirit-Matter, LIFE; the “Spirit of the Universe,” the Purusha and Prakriti, or the *second* Logos.
- (4) Cosmic Ideation, MAHAT or Intelligence, the Universal World-Soul; the Cosmic Noumenon of Matter, the basis of the intelligent operations in and of Nature, also called MAHÂ-BUDDHI.

The ONE REALITY; its *dual* aspects in the conditioned Universe.

From this it will be seen that the conception of these later pantheists is a long way from the Supreme. It is only one half of number three in the list. Even the “First Cause” and the “Unconscious” of the more philosophical European pantheists is but the first manifestation of the Supreme; beyond that is still a profounder conception — the *Parabrahman* of the Vedântic philosophy.

From all eternity two states are recognized which appear alternately and periodically — a passive latent unmanifested state, and an active manifested state. To quote from *The Secret Doctrine*:

The esoteric doctrine teaches... that the one infinite and unknown Essence exists from all eternity, and in regular and harmonious successions is either passive or active.... The philosophers of the oldest school of Buddhism (which still exists in Nepal), speculate only upon the active condition of this “Essence,”... and deem it foolish to theorize upon the abstract and “unknowable” power in its passive condition. Hence they are called atheists by both Christian theologians and modern scientists, for neither of the two are able to understand the profound logic of their philosophy. The former will allow of no other God than the personified secondary powers which have worked out the visible universe, and which became with them the anthropomorphic God of the Christians.

This is represented symbolically in Ancient Teachings by geometrical figures. Speaking of such an ancient book, H. P. Blavatsky says:

On the first page is an immaculate white disk within a dull black ground. On the following page, the same disk, but with a central point. The first, the student knows to represent Kosmos in Eternity, before the awakening of still slumbering Energy, the emanation of the Word in later systems. The point in the hitherto immaculate Disk, Space and Eternity in *Pralaya*, denotes the dawn of differentiation.... The one circle is divine Unity, from which all proceeds, whither all returns. Its circumference — a

forcibly limited symbol, in view of the limitation of the human mind — indicates the abstract ever incognizable PRESENCE, and its plane, the Universal Soul, although the two are one.... It is the ONE LIFE, eternal, invisible, yet Omnipresent, without beginning or end, yet periodical in its regular manifestations, between which periods reigns the dark mystery of non-Being; unconscious, yet absolute Consciousness; unrealizable, yet the one self-existing reality; truly “a chaos to the sense, a Kosmos to the reason.” Its one absolute attribute, which is ITSELF, eternal ceaseless Motion, is called in esoteric parlance the “Great Breath,” which is the perpetual motion of the universe, in the sense of limitless ever-present SPACE.

The second symbol, the circle with a point at the center, shows the first differentiation in the periodical manifestations of the ever-eternal Nature. Even this is impersonal, being the “Unconscious” or Unknowable of European philosophy and the Hidden *Logos* or Word of Greek philosophy.

The third symbol is a circle with a horizontal diameter, and *symbolizes* divine immaculate Mother-Nature.

In the fourth symbol a vertical diameter is drawn, making a cross, and this represents the origin of manifested life. The Cross without its circumscribed Circle represents materialism or materialistic pantheism.

HOW TO APPROACH THE SUPREME

What precedes has dealt with mental conceptions of the Supreme, which at best can only be very imperfect. Yet it is of the utmost importance to have a correct intellectual conception, for illogical and erroneous conceptions are capable of misleading and keeping in the dark people who otherwise, by their intuitions, would be on the right track. The false intellectual conceptions of the Supreme current in Christian theology, are responsible for much ignorance.

Now we come to the question of how to approach the Supreme. An intellectual idea conceived in the mind is imperfect, but a fuller knowledge, above the intellect, is attainable by those who can draw near in heart to the Divine center of their own being and thus know the Supreme, *so far as that may be possible*, by blending themselves therewith.

The esoteric teachings concerning the relation of man to the Universe, on all planes, spiritual, psychic, physical, etc., comprise a subject far too vast to be summarily dealt with. But it may be briefly stated that the Higher Self of man is a radiation from the Universal Spirit. It is through this Higher Self that man comes in contact with the Spirit and attains to knowledge and enlightenment. We cannot do better than quote from an ancient scripture, the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*, which deals with the mode of attaining spiritual enlightenment. The speaker is Krishna, who

allegorically represents the Higher Self; and the pupil, Arjuna, stands for man.

There dwelleth in the heart of every creature, O Arjuna, the Master — *Īśvara* — who by his magic power causeth all things and creatures to revolve mounted upon the universal wheel of time. Take sanctuary with him alone, O son of Bhârata, with all thy soul; by his grace thou shalt obtain supreme happiness, the eternal place.

This perishable body is known as Kshetra; those who are acquainted with the true nature of things call the soul who knows it, the Kshetrajña. Know that I am the Knower in every mortal body.

I am the embodiment of the Supreme Ruler, and of the incorruptible, of the unmodifying, and of the eternal law, and of endless bliss.

Brahman the Supreme is the exhaustless. Adhyâtma is the name of my being, manifested as the Individual Self [not the personality].... Âdibhûta is the Supreme Spirit dwelling in all elemental nature through the mysterious power of nature's illusion.

All this universe is pervaded by me in my invisible form; all things exist in me, but I do not exist in them. Nor are all things in me; behold this my divine mystery: myself causing things to exist and supporting them all but dwelling not in them.

I will now tell thee what is the object of wisdom, from knowing which a man enjoys immortality; it is that which has no beginning, even the supreme Brahma, and of which it cannot be said that it is either Being or Non-Being.... It is immanent in the world, possessing the vast whole. Itself without organs, it is reflected by all the senses and faculties; unattached, yet supporting all; without qualities, yet the witness of them all. It is within and without all creatures animate and inanimate; it is inconceivable because of its subtlety, and although near it is afar off. Although undivided, it appeareth as divided among creatures, and while it sustains existing things, it is also known as their destroyer and creator. It is the light of all lights, and is declared to be beyond all darkness; and it is wisdom itself, the object of wisdom, and that which is to be obtained by wisdom; in the hearts of all it ever presideth.

Know that prakriti or nature, and purusha the spirit, are without beginning. And know that the passions and the three qualities [goodness, passion, and indifference] are sprung from nature. Nature or prakriti is said to be that which operates in producing cause and effect in actions; individual spirit or purusha is said to be the cause of experiencing pain and pleasure.... The spirit in the body is called Mahêśvara, the Great Lord, the spectator, the admonisher, the sustainer, the enjoyer, and also the Paramâtmâ, the highest soul.

He who seeth the Supreme Being existing alike imperishable in all perishable things, sees indeed. Perceiving the same Lord present in everything and everywhere, he does not by the lower self destroy his own soul, but goeth to the supreme end.... This Supreme Spirit, even when it is in the body, neither acteth nor is affected by action, because, being without beginning and devoid of attributes, it is changeless. As the all-moving Âkâsha [world-soul, spiritual ether] by reason of its subtlety passeth everywhere unaffected, so the Spirit, though present in every kind of body, is not attached to action nor affected. As a single sun illuminateth the whole world, even so doth the One Spirit illumine every body.

[Arjuna says:] Thou art the one indivisible Being, and non-being, that which is supreme. Thou art the first of Gods, the most ancient Spirit; thou art the final supreme receptacle of this universe; thou art the knower and that which is to be known, and the supreme mansion; and by thee, O thou of infinite form, is this universe caused to emanate.

Thou art the supreme inexhaustible Being, the end of effort, changeless, the Supreme Spirit of this universe, the never-failing guardian of eternal law.... Space and heaven and earth and every point around the three regions of the universe are filled with thee alone.

In the Bible the Higher Self is spoken of as “the Son” and the Universal Spirit as “the Father.” Jesus, the Galilean Initiate, says, speaking as the Christ, just as does Krishna in the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*: “I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” And in many other passages he expounds the meaning of Christhood, how it is to be attained, and the relation between the Christ in man and the Universal Spirit or “Father.” These records of the Churches are merely echoes of the esoteric doctrine of antiquity.

PRAYER

Theosophists do not practice prayer in any ordinarily accepted sense of the word; nor do they believe in its necessity, its efficacy, or its rightfulness. But they do believe in prayer in another and entirely different sense.

In the first place, to whom are they to pray? As shown above, they do not believe in the supremacy of a personal God, and to pray to the Absolute is an absurdity. In the second place, they believe that most prayers are more or less selfish requests to the Supreme Law that it will make exceptions in favor of the petitioner. A Theosophist believes that he should endeavor to understand Divine Law and bring himself into harmony with it, rather than wish to alter it in his favor. Ordinary prayer is made for some specific object, some advantage or possession, material or spiritual. Thus it implies that the petitioner knows better what is good for him than the Supreme Law, and presumes to make suggestions in the light of his erring

judgment. The truest prayer is: "Not my will but Thine be done!" followed by energetic and dutiful action, as this implies a complete renunciation of the personal will and judgment in favor of the Divine Law.

Ordinarily a person who prays, simply concentrates his desires and his imagination in an attempt to bring about the fulfilment of his wishes. Desire and imagination are forces which tend to produce results. Hence the suppliant sets up a force that tends to bring about the fulfilment of his hopes. But desires are conflicting, and at other times he will send out other desire-forces tending to neutralize the first; and other people will be doing the same thing. Thus this kind of prayer, which is merely desiring, can only set up a multitude of conflicting currents and bring about conflicting results. This is very obvious in the case of two armies praying each for the other's destruction. It is evident that if all these prayers be addressed to one God, he cannot grant them all. In fact any prayer for a specific object must involve an interference with the general dispensations of providence. Logically, then, it is absurd to pray for specific results; we can only aspire to bring our lives, our wishes and our thoughts into harmony with the Divine Law. Beginning with the assumption that the Power we invoke is higher than our finite understanding, how can we oppose our personal judgment and wishes to its superior wisdom? Such an attitude is as irreverent as illogical.

Nevertheless people do pray for specific objects: some for material advantages, some for relief from suffering, some for special spiritual gifts, some for rain or fine weather, some for victory over each other. To whom, then, or to what are these prayers addressed? The answer is that they are addressed to personal gods, "graven images," fetishes created by man in his own imagination. They are in fact invocations of the power of desire, methods of strengthening the selfish will. When two hostile armies pray for mutual victory, it means that each one is combining in an act of will and concentrating its mental forces for the subjugation of the other. The belief which each set of suppliants has in the idea of a personal God enables them to concentrate their efforts more successfully. As said in *The Key to Theosophy*:

Prayer has several other meanings besides that given to it by the Christians. It means not only a pleading or *petition*, but in days of old meant far more, an invocation and incantation. The *mantra*, or the rhythmically chanted prayer of the Hindûs, has precisely such a meaning, for the Brâhmans hold themselves higher than the common *devas* or "Gods." A prayer may be an appeal or an incantation for malediction and a curse — as in the case of two armies praying simultaneously for mutual destruction — as much as for blessing. And as the great majority of people are intensely selfish, and pray only for themselves,... the result is that prayer, as now understood, is doubly pernicious: (a) it kills in man self-reliance; (b) it

develops in him a still more ferocious selfishness and egotism than he is already endowed with by nature.

Prayer kills self-reliance. In *The Key to Theosophy* the question is asked: "Do you believe in prayer, and do you ever pray?" and the answer is: "We do not. We *act* instead of *talking*." Everybody knows the story of the wagoner who prayed to Hercules to lift his wheel out of the rut. The case of the individual who, instead of acting, waits and prays for an opportunity, is equally familiar. Such prayer is a natural accompaniment of the false ecclesiastical teaching that man is hopelessly sinful and needs the intervention of a savior to rescue him. This is the teaching that has tended to take away man's most precious prerogative, his self-reliance, and to convert him into an abject suppliant. With the belief in a personal God comes the belief in prayers; when the faith in our own divinity departs, we begin to supplicate outside powers. The truest kind of prayer is action; for how can the Higher Nature be invoked better than by allowing it to act? But the man who, instead of acting, petitions an external power to act for him, practically disowns his own divinity. Gautama the Buddha says: "Seek naught from the helpless Gods — pray not! but rather act." But there is another kind of prayer. To continue the quotations:

INQUIRER. Is there any other kind of prayer?

THEOSOPHIST. Most decidedly; we call it WILL-PRAYER, and it is rather an internal command than a petition.

INQUIRER. To whom, then, do you *pray* when you do so?

THEOSOPHIST. To "our Father in heaven" — in its esoteric meaning.

INQUIRER. Is that different from the one given to it in theology.

THEOSOPHIST. Entirely so. An Occultist or a Theosophist addresses his prayer to *his Father which is in secret* (read, and try to understand, Matthew vi. 6), not to an extra-cosmic and therefore finite God; and that "Father" is in man himself.

INQUIRER. Then you make of man a God?

THEOSOPHIST. Please say "God" and not "*a* God." In our sense the inner man is the only God of whom we can have any cognizance.... We call our "Father in heaven" that deific essence of which we are cognizant within us, in our heart and spiritual consciousness, and which has nothing to do with the anthropomorphic conception we may form of it in our physical brain or its fancy: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit of (the absolute) God dwelleth in you?" Yet let no man anthropomorphize that essence in us. Let no Theosophist if he would hold to divine, not human truth, say that this "God in secret" listens to, or is distinct from, either finite man or the infinite essence — for all are one. Nor, as just remarked, that a prayer is a petition. It is a mystery, rather; an occult process by which finite and conditioned thoughts and desires, unable to be assimilated by the absolute Spirit which is unconditioned, are transmuted into spiritual wills and the will;

such process being called “spiritual transmutation.” The intensity of our ardent aspirations changes prayer into the “philosopher’s stone,” or that which transmutes lead into pure gold. The only homogeneous essence, our “will-prayer,” becomes the active or creative force, producing effects according to our desire.

There is logic in the practice of invoking some of the minor cosmic forces, either in external or internal nature, to come to our aid, as some tribes do by means of their incantations and ceremonies. But let us be frank about it and admit that such powers are neither high nor specially worthy, but merely inferior powers which we subject to our selfish will in order to bring about desired results; and they are dangerous. Such gods were never regarded by their worshippers as anything else but inferior beings in the scale; sometimes these gods are even punished by their suppliants for not granting their prayers. Multitudes of such gods are recognized, varying in the degree of their importance and power. But all this has nothing to do with the One Spirit — also recognized by the very peoples who worship these minor gods. Yet we, in our confusion of understanding, presume to address the Universal Spirit in the terms which a savage addresses to his tribal god or family fetish.

It is the motive that makes the difference between true and false prayer. Where the motive is selfish, or even tinged with selfishness, the desire-forces of the lower nature are called into play; and to that extent the man strengthens his personality, and, if successful, has merely done a little “black magic.” But where there is nothing but a pure aspiration for Light and a submission of the personal desires to the Law, then spiritual forces are invoked and the nature is elevated and refined. In the Bible, Jesus says: “Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do.” But he is speaking as the *Christos*, the Higher Self (*Âtmâ-Buddhi-Manas*); and surely the phrase “in my name” ought to be a sufficient guard against any tinge of selfishness in the prayer. What does it mean, to “ask in my name”? It does not mean simply to use the words, “in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,” at the end of a prayer. It means that we are to ask in a spirit of unselfishness and purity of heart, desiring nothing, but submitting to the Universal Law. Then, and then only, will the prayer be answered, for selfish desires cannot reach the *Christos*.

Delusion though the idea of a personal God is, some people in giving it up may have to pass through a painful experience; for even delusions may be comfortable, and it is not always easy to break away from an old habit even when we know it was wrong. There may be a sense of desolation and abandonment on losing faith in the old anchor, as if one were left alone and helpless in the Universe. But this is only a temporary stage. The only evidence we ever had of the existence of a Supreme Spirit was from our own intuition, and we still have that intuition. The one great

unanswerable fact remains that we are alive here in the world; so far as we can tell, without our own consent. This means that a power beyond our ordinary intelligence is the cause of our existence and is watching over the life. We are in the hands of a Law, else how did we come to be here? This Law, whatever it may be, is evidently of immeasurable power and intelligence; we have only to study Nature in order to see that. Jesus' words about the "heavenly Father" caring for the lilies and the sparrows come to mind; did he not mean that man, as well as other creatures, and even more than other creatures, must be under the same beneficent intelligence? Clearly it is not our poor erring mind that rules our life; the whole thing, from the working of the smallest bodily cell to the ordering of the greater events, is managed by powers beyond our ken. And we see that the universal life is self-sufficient, reliable and beneficent. In this life we share; on its tides we were born into the world from some mysterious source; may we not trust its wisdom and its purposes?

What we must do is *Strive to KNOW*. If our ordinary intelligence is so finite and helpless, it need not always be so. Man may choose to consider himself as merely a higher animal sprung from some Javan ape or a degraded humanoid; but it is only his own choice that so limits him. Let him turn away his eyes from the biological ladder up which the bodily organs have climbed in development, and think of his spiritual heredity. Where was he before birth? Where is he during sleep? Who is he? Who are these others? The answer to such questions is to be sought within, not without. The portals of the senses, through which ordinary science issues in quest of knowledge, are only the gateway to a small field of knowledge — that of the external world, the outer crust of Nature. Close the outer senses and open the eye of the mind upon the world within, and we shall find the portals to a greater knowledge. Let us study our mind and try to find out whence spring the thoughts and feelings; search after the permanent factor; ask ourselves who we really are and what is our relation with other beings. In that way we can approach the eternal source of life. Science is sacred; however we came into existence, or by whom or what created, there is no ban upon inquiry.

The fact that we do actually possess the power of inquiry is surely sufficient warrant for exercising it. If we do not know who or what we are, let us search.

Self-analysis shows that our ordinary consciousness is made up of a large number of desires, cravings, fears, prejudices, instincts, habits, fixed ideas, and so forth; and if analysis stopped here we might reach the conclusion that we were helpless driftwood. But deeper reflection shows that there must be a central master-life somewhere behind the scenery; the very fact of self-analysis proves it.

This mysterious central power is located by theology outside of us, so that we are made mere creatures of it and cannot know it except possibly

as we know a stranger. But in Theosophy we are taught that this Power can be known by the process of self-identification with it. It is our Self. The Power that rules our life is not another personality, however great; it is ourself. In striving to know it we should strive to be it; *we must seek it within*.

In this way we shall reach a far loftier conception of Deity than that given by theology. We may tend in thought towards the ocean of infinite Being, in which is “peace beyond all understanding,” and perfect wisdom, and boundless beneficence. This shall be our God; the eternal Spiritual Light that shines from our Souls, as the cosmic light shines from the face of the Sun, illuminating the whole world with gracious light and warmth, dispelling all mists and darkness.

So there is no need for despair and doubt, which are but the shadows thrown up by the imagination. They are mostly the product of ill health and morbid conditions. To a healthy animal nature, the abundant life is in itself sufficient; to the *spiritually* healthy there should be such an abundant flow of spiritual life that that would be sufficient. Knowledge and certainty flow from within. Remember it.

Without wishing to rival the Church doctrine of praying to saints — for to pray to anyone is altogether opposed to the teaching of Theosophy and of self-reliance — we may bear in mind that there are and always have been human beings who have progressed beyond the majority of the race to the point of spiritual enlightenment, and who therefore live only as benefactors. The world is very old, and during the countless ages Souls have won their way from darkness to light, and now exist as perfected men, forming a great guardian wall to humanity by their ceaseless beneficence. Whether they are in the body or out of it does not matter, as they have transcended limitations. It is but rarely, and in response to special circumstances, that they reveal or partially disclose their identity to the world. For the most part they remain unknown, as the conditions of their work demand, for they can work far more effectually in the silence. The weakness of man is not able to treat such Teachers properly and their public appearances stir up much superstition and hostility. It is well, however, to know that there are beings who thus fulfil the eternal laws of righteousness and stand as champions of justice, right, and mercy. It helps us to have confidence in those laws, and to feel that in abiding thereby, we do not rely on a phantasy. The enduring laws of life are those that make for purity and mercy. The spiritual life is expansive and generous, giving warmth to all, like the Sun. Selfishness and covetousness contract the nature and stifle life. Let us study Nature and learn what is her eternal law of growth and seek its likeness within ourselves.

Prayer, then, is a constant yearning to know the TRUTH and to be worthy of it; a striving of the mind towards its Divine Parent, the Spiritual Sun. Disgusted with the continual striving of the personality to get

something for itself, to exalt itself to a state of spiritual pride, we should seek the impersonal center where there is rest from the dissatisfaction caused by personal consciousness, and where there is no vanity nor desire. And outwardly, prayer expresses itself in actions, by which we strive to manifest that which is best in us.

TRUE INDEPENDENCE

Theosophy can rightly be called the gospel of freedom, since its aim is to give man more independence. The circumstances of life continually combine to throw man back on his own self-reliance, which proves to be the only unfailing resource. If there were a personal God, one could imagine him as being disgusted at the attitude which people assume towards him, and that he might ignore their supplications in the hope of inducing them to rely on themselves. This is in fact the very way in which the universal Law does treat us; it continually brings us up against the things we seek to avoid, until at last we are obliged to face them. The whole purpose of life is to strengthen character; it is the Soul's school. But the weakness of our lower nature makes us hang back; we continually court the smooth paths and try to pamper ourselves. A wiser power gives us what will serve to bring out our strength.

In the ideals of Chivalry we shall find a more manly ideal of human nature than that usually put forward by religion. We can dissociate the spirit that animated Chivalry from the ideas of warfare and so on with which it was associated in accordance with the times wherein it flourished; and aim at a new manifestation of the same spirit in a form adapted to present needs. This spirit made Man himself the central point and regarded character as the thing to be aimed at. It set up ideals of courage, faith, dauntlessness, and honor, recognizing the essential strength and dignity of Man. In the same way one has heard, in connection with the Red Men, of ideals of courage, endurance, and calmness; of a code of honor in which it was a disgrace to fear or complain. Often have people been driven, after the failure of all other supports, to fall back on their interior strength and to cry, "Be there a God or no God, I will never play the craven before fate; as long as I have breath, I will fight!"

It is this kind of spirit that Theosophy seeks to restore. It is this kind of spirit that false teachings have done so much to undermine. By substituting for it the attitude of abjection and expectation of favors from without, it has weakened the self-reliance of Man. We need a new Declaration of Independence to proclaim the freedom of the will from the slavery of dogmas, religious, scientific, and otherwise.

Speaking of irreverence, there can be nothing more irreverent than to disown our own divinity; this is truly insulting the Divine Spirit breathing in Man. Let us stand up boldly and rely upon the essential worth of our

own inner nature, bidding the doubts and fears and subtle suggestions of incompetency depart from us. There is a little secret that Man has yet to learn, and that is that the hobgoblins of life flee before a dauntless will. Most of these so-called evils are creations of our own imagination, the brood of fear, hate, and doubt; before a right attitude they disappear into nothingness. False teaching has gathered around us a whole army of such fears and doubts that will need some banishing; but the healthy teachings of Theosophy can do it.

Instead of regarding sin as a primordial taint, not to be removed but by special favor, and even then not until after life is over, let us regard it as a weakness which our cowardice has allowed to grow. The passions are on the screen of the mind. These passions are insubordinate elements of our own nature, which have profited by our craven attitude toward them, but must depart at the word of command. To be pulled hither and thither by currents of desire, having their origin one knows not where, and passing to and fro from mind to mind gathering strength as they go — this is not a very noble idea of freedom. Why not stand out and apart from these currents and let them go by? Why not hold still the rambling mind, shut our eyes to the stream of pictures that enchain our attention, and *dwell in the stillness within*? Then the truth would be reflected in the calm waters and we should have an initiation.

The poor conceptions of God and the craven ideas of prayer are inevitable accompaniments of wrong notions about life, especially the *ignorance* of Reincarnation on the one side, and the dogma of vicarious atonement on the other. What rational idea can ever be founded on the belief that we have only a single Earth-life, preceded by nothing and followed by eternity in heaven or hell? It is altogether out of key with science and commonsense, to say nothing of man's intuitions. To fit such a theory, one could only expect equally inadequate theories about Deity and prayer. And how the Christos can ever save Man except by descending upon Earth and living in the hearts of all men, cannot be imagined. If there was only one Christ, and he lived at an arbitrary point of time and space, and was the only perfect and sinless man there ever was or will be, then the human race is reduced to the level of a tribe of savages worshipping a fetish. Oh let us rise up and declare independence from this tyranny in which we have been held, submissive slaves, by those who have perverted eternal truths into means of subjection, withholding the heritage and actually loaning us our own money on conditions of usurious thralldom! To take away from Man the grace, the spiritual dignity, the faith, that is his by Divine birthright, and to dole it out to him again in return for a consideration! There are no words for the crime and no words for the folly that permits it.

Let us take back our religion into our own hearts and manage our heritage ourselves. Let each one seek for God *within*, and decline to accept

introductions to any other deity. Let us sweep away the soul-destroying doctrines of the postmortem heaven and hell, and determine to fulfil Man's mission to make of Earth a heaven. Let us throw off the debasing pursuit of our own salvation — the very acme of selfishness — and leave the Law to deal with those precious possessions we call our "souls," which are really nothing but our personalities. Religion has too long been grounded on the motives of fear and cupidity. The fear which a sinner has about the fate of his "soul" is the same fear as a rich man has about his other soul — his bank book. He insures for it, and how often is prayer merely the daily or weekly premium!

The dogma of the personal God has made for selfishness and personal differences. It introduces into the most sacred relations of life that greatest of all limitations — personalism. And accepted modes of prayer have encouraged the process, concentrating the most intense thoughts of each man upon narrow interests. Theosophy is trying to purge out the noxious selfishness and personalism from religion and to restore the old noble ideals of Deity and Prayer, that Man may be truly free and independent.

15

Theosophy The Mother of Religions

A Student

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THE UNITY OF TRUTH

Theosophy is another name for the Ancient “Wisdom-Religion.” But Theosophy is not a *religion* in the ordinary meaning of that word; it is rather the ancient Wisdom which comprised science, philosophy, and religion. This Wisdom may be considered, as to its source, under two aspects. It is the voice of the Divine in man; or it is the teaching of men who have progressed so far on the path of progress that they have become divine, *i.e.*, the mind has become one with the higher consciousness of the God within. Consequently, all Great Souls, or Great Teachers, are men who have reached that high plane which the Bible calls “the unity of the Spirit”; and their teachings must agree in essence, though the forms they assume may vary from age to age. It also follows that the teachings of such advanced Beings, and the divine voice in each of us, must harmonize, for the Divine is One, is Wisdom itself, and all its teachings must be in harmony. No argument is needed to convince anyone who understands Theo-sophy in this light, that it must be the “mother of religions.” But all do not understand Theosophy in this light. Some look upon it as a mere cult invented by H. P. Blavatsky; though she herself repeatedly asserted, as did Jesus, “my teaching is not mine, but his that sent me.” (John vii. 16). Others have regarded Theosophy as only a recrudescence of old heresies. These objections to Theosophy are mutually destructive; for it is a logical law that contradictories may both be false, but cannot both be true.

For all those who harbor such misconceptions it is necessary to place before them some evidences that will appeal to the reason; though true conviction springs rather from the inner higher nature of man than from the mere mental perception of things. Hence the old saying: He who is convinced against his will is of the same opinion still.

The teaching given out by H. P. Blavatsky did not originate with her. Not only does she assert this very plainly, declaring that she presents “a nosegay of culled flowers, and only the string is hers that ties them” (*The Secret Doctrine*, I, xlvi); but the whole trend of her writings is to remove the veils from the various teachings given in past ages, East and West, and to show the true harmony, the essential unity, both in nature and in purpose, underlying all those teachings, when rightly understood.

It would not, however, be just to H. P. Blavatsky, nor to the message given through her, to suppose it to be merely a repetition of some Ancient Teachings to be found in various philosophies or religions. It should be clearly understood that she has made a great advance upon the past. The world today needed that the Ancient Wisdom-Religion should be given out more fully than on former occasions, and this H. P. Blavatsky has done. Of course she has given out but a small portion of the “*Gupta Vidyâ*,” the “Secret Doctrine,” yet what she has given out is more than the world, at

present, is advanced enough to assimilate in its fulness. The tendency of the modern mind along scientific lines, with a strongly materialistic bent, necessitates that this aspect of the Ancient Wisdom should be brought forth to meet the needs of the age. Consequently many things about the nature and origin of man and of the world, not to be found elsewhere, are given out in *Isis Unveiled*, in *The Secret Doctrine*, and in H. P. Blavatsky's other writings.

In the time of Jesus there was little need for modern scientific teachings, and they were not given *as a system of technical knowledge*. Then moral and spiritual teachings, and a life which was an embodiment of these, was the thing especially needed. This line of teaching is still needed, and will be for a long time to come, but something more is required now. The advances made in geology, astronomy, and other branches of science, called for more light on those lines, and this has been given. The teachings given out by H. P. Blavatsky are really a *revelation*, in the old sense of the word; they are the unfolding of what the ordinary mind could not of itself have discovered. Yet, the truths, the facts, always existed for those whose divine nature was able to see them, and to impress this knowledge on the recipient intellectual nature.

It will thus be seen that the claims of Theosophy are very large; larger indeed than the horizon of our present knowledge; for it distinctly affirms that the revelations which have been given are only a portion of that vast treasury of knowledge which we shall yet explore; and which, even now, is known to our Elder Brothers, who are the real Custodians of the Divine Wisdom-Religion. In other words, all existing religions have presented only a fragment of the TRUTH. Some religions, or systems of philosophy, have emphasized one aspect of truth, others another aspect of it, according to the state of the world at the time. As man is a Soul, the great need of ordinary humanity in every age has been moral and spiritual; therefore all religions have, in varying degrees, ministered to the moral and spiritual progress of humanity. But in addition to this, some have contained a strong philosophical element, others a more practical element. It was not, however, until our own day that what is called the scientific element has been made publicly prominent, as it has been in *The Secret Doctrine* and in other writings by H. P. Blavatsky. While, according to her own statement, she has given out to the world but a small portion of that vast wisdom of which her Teachers are the Custodians, yet she has given enough to stimulate the mind of scientific men all over the world for the remainder of this century, and longer.

It is well known to students of Theosophy that already not a few things which H. P. Blavatsky revealed in her writings have been confirmed by the investigations of the learned. And no doubt many of the things not as yet accepted by scientific men will be corroborated in the not distant future. Already every new find in the domain of archaeology and in

kindred branches of science, is tending to vindicate H. P. Blavatsky's teaching regarding the great antiquity of humanity. The very dwarfed notion of chronology which prevailed in the West, owing to mistaken views of the Bible, is passing away. A saner conception of evolution is gaining ground as the result of the great light which Theosophy throws upon man's past. A sounder knowledge of psychology is possible as a result of what we now know of man's sevenfold nature, and of the various lines of his evolution. In a very true sense we have revealed unto us new heavens and a new earth. Before the close of this century the world will awaken to the wonderful revelation which has been given in the Theosophic unfoldment of the present age. Then there will be no need to prove that Theosophy is the mother of religions, for the fact will be recognized by all who are able to form a just judgment.

The great mission of Theosophy is to *unify*. *Universal Oneness* is the unification of Humanity, and the Elder Brothers have planted its seed in the soil of the last century, and of this century.

Right knowledge, right feeling, right action: by these three chiefly will men be brought to realize that "Unbrotherliness is the insanity of the age," as Katherine Tingley has said. It is always most necessary to *live* Theosophy in order to lift humanity to something higher. And, as part of that right action, right feeling — a really kind and loving disposition to those we would help — must inspire it as its heart and life. But, *in addition to these all-important factors in genuine Theosophy, there is needed that extended knowledge which gives life a basis in sound philosophy.*

The more man advances the more he seeks to solve the riddle of existence. Corresponding to the notions of past, present and future, man yearns to know his own nature, whence he has sprung, and what is his goal. He also seeks some rational explanation of this Universe of which he feels himself a part. To these questions Theosophy has in all ages given an answer, but today that answer is fuller than ever before. The Ancient Wisdom has always existed, and always exerted an influence upon the races of humanity through all the ages. While it is impossible to give in detail the workings of the great Theosophical Movement throughout the centuries, there are some things which are well known, and which cannot fail to bring conviction to the open-minded inquirer.

SOME OF THE TEACHINGS

At the outset it may be well to state briefly some of the Theosophical teachings concerning the origin, nature, and destiny of man, and of the Universe. This will give definiteness to the task of comparing the different religions and philosophies with each other, and will make it easier to connect them with their common source, the Ancient Wisdom-Religion.

One of the first and most important things which Theosophy places before us, is the *Law of Periodicity* which pervades the Universe as a whole, and is seen in all its parts. The second thought is the *Unity of Being*. The going forth or manifesting of the One Life is called the Great Breath; and the outbreathing and inbreathing of man is a *type* of the outflow and return of the Divine Creative Energy. Of course human language and human conceptions must be inadequate to deal with the Eternal, the Absolute; and this truth must always be kept in mind as we use the terms of the finite and concrete to speak of the Infinite. The One Absolute Life, or Being, is conceived as the source of what is called the Unmanifested Logos, or Word; which, in turn, produces the Manifested Logos, and returns unto Itself. From this Manifested Word, existence proceeds by definite stages, or planes, until we have, at last, this Universe of suns and planets. This is the going forth of the Great Breath, or manifestation, or existence, or creation. The return of the Great Breath is the universal rebecoming one with the Absolute. Thus, evolution implies involution. Day and night, activity and rest, birth in the objective, and return to the subjective, these are the ways of Nature.

From this it follows that the Divine is immanent everywhere, and in all things; not as contained in them, but as the One Reality within, or behind, every appearance. With startling force the words of the New Testament come before one's mind — "Because I live, ye shall live also." (John xiv. 19). Or the words of the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ* — "I established this whole universe with a single portion of myself, and remain separate." (ch. x). It also follows that the Infinite Plan, Wisdom, or Purpose, must be manifested on all planes of the Universe. Or, in other words, the great and the small, the macrocosm and the microcosm must be images of each other. "As above, so below," said the old philosophers. "God made man in his own image," says the Old Testament.

Theosophy has given a much fuller teaching than was known to the world before, concerning the septenary nature of the Universe, and of all things therein. This truth was known publicly to some extent in ancient times, as we see from the number seven being so sacred among the Hebrews, and also in India, Egypt, and other countries. This is one of the special ways in which the Divine Plan of the Universe is stamped upon each of its component parts. As the image of the Sun is seen in each of the myriads of bubbles on the surface of the river, so is the Divine reflected in all. The Divine transcendence, and the Divine immanence, these are the two great and complementary conceptions of Life which sages have taught in all ages. In the present day the forward movement of thought seems to emphasize chiefly the fact of the Divine immanence; but in other ages the Divine transcendence was often dwelt upon almost exclusively. It is at this point that Theosophy renders such important service to the various great religions and systems of philosophy, by unfolding the fundamental truths

which all contain in part, but which none manifest very clearly. It also gives us a rational conception of the Universe, which avoids the dualism of some ancient philosophies, and reconciles the Divine transcendence, and the Divine immanence. In the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*, a Theosophical treatise, this immanence of the Divine is stated plainly; and yet there is no confining or limiting of the Infinite by the manifested:

I established this whole universe with a single portion of myself, *and remain separate*.

And again:

But there is another spirit designated as the Supreme Spirit — Paramâtman — which permeates and sustains the three worlds. As I am above the divisible, and also superior to the indivisible, therefore, both in the world and in the *Vedas* am I known as the Supreme Spirit. — (ch. xv).

In the New Testament we have teaching that is very similar, and which has the ring in it of the Ancient Wisdom:

For in him we live and move and have our being; as certain also of your own poets [e.g., Aratus, and Cleanthes] have said, for we are also his offspring. — (Acts xvii. 28)

For of him, and through him, and unto him, are all things.
— (Rom. xi. 36)

The words of Paul in I Cor. xv, remind one strongly of that “Great Day Be With Us,” which the Wisdom-Religion speaks of as the return of all to Absolute Being. Paul says:

Then cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father.... Then shall the Son also himself be subjected to him that did subject all things unto him, that God may be all in all.

This is surely the return of the Great Breath, the end of one period of manifestation.

Theosophy, as revealed to us, deals with only a few points of the great Involution and Evolution. For instance, it deals chiefly with our solar system; and, more particularly with life on this planet during a portion of the Fourth Round; though many other things are touched upon in a general way so as to give humanity a rational conception of the Universe, and especially of human life on this planet. But the portion of the Wisdom-Religion thus revealed to us far transcends in fulness and in scope any and

all existing teachings, and clearly points to the Ancient Wisdom as the great mother of religions.

In the course of ages the various religions wandered far from their source, and forgot, or almost forgot, that source. But we have now begun a movement toward UNITY on all lines. Comparative language, comparative literature, comparative religion; these and other similar studies indicate that the trend of thought is toward a recognition of unity as underlying all superficial differences of individuals, or of nations. Universal Solidarity is thus a movement towards that Great Center from which all have proceeded, and to which all must return.

In this return, or re-becoming, the definitely religious impulse or consciousness manifests itself in various ways. Religion may be likened to the homing instinct in some pigeons, which enables them, though in distant and strange places, to turn their flight homeward. Among men of various lands and ages we find expressions of this homing instinct. "Thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations," says the Psalmist. And in Wordsworth we have a similar idea: "trailing clouds of glory do we come from God, who is our *home*." In the *Gîtâ* it is written, "Thou who art the dwelling-place of the universe"; and, "Thou art the final supreme receptacle."

ASPIRATION ONE WITH RELIGION

All real religion is at bottom this consciousness of the Divine, and the resistless aspiration of the Soul towards the Eternal. It is that celestial attraction by which our souls are moved and, swayed in their courses, as the planets are in their orbits by the Sun. Religion is the great binding force. But we are conscious of another force in us, the impeding force of our lower nature. Therefore the message of all religions must be, how to cultivate or develop the true nature, the homing instinct in us, and how to overcome the hindering influence of the lower self.

The kingdom of heaven is within. Man is a temple of God. The purpose of religion is the unfolding of the heaven within, until it fills the world. Or, it is the manifesting of the Divine in man until the whole man is taken up into, or becomes one with the Divine. A true and clear perception of the purpose of life is most essential towards realizing that purpose. It is also of great importance to *know ourselves*, to *know what we are*, and *how* we have come to be what we are; to know the various principles of our constitution, that we may work intelligently towards the perfecting of our being. This scope is fully covered by the Wisdom-Religion, or Theo-sophy. It explains to us our origin, and the origin of the Universe. It explains, not only our duality, but our sevenfold nature; and shows us how man is a little image of the Universe and embodies in himself all the planes of the Universe, from Âtman, or pure Spirit, to the

visible outer sheath, the material body. We are thus, at one and the same time, made aware of the Divine immanence, and of the Divine transcendence; and we are, therefore, the better able to explain and sympathize with the various aspirations and movements of the human mind as shown in the different forms of religion, from age to age, in different lands.

While we discriminate between those religions which keep closest to the great meaning and purpose of life, we are able to judge charitably even of those lower forms of religion which savor more of man's lower nature than of his higher. We call to mind the words of Krishna in the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*:

In whatever form a devotee desires with faith to worship, it is I alone who inspire him with constancy therein.

A similar expression is found in the book of the Acts:

Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him.

What an amount of misery might have been averted if these words of Peter had always been kept in mind by professed Christians, and especially by that Church which leans so much on Peter!

Theosophy having thus made plain for us the nature and purpose of true religion, helps us the better to understand how it is that religions decline as they cease to minister to the higher nature of man, and become subservient to the lower self, or to selfishness, in some of its manifold aspects. For it is a lamentable fact, and one of the most prominent things in history, that religions in most, if not in all cases, very soon become deflected from the lofty spirit and purpose of their founders. This fact is well illustrated by the parable of the enemy who came and sowed tares among the good seed, while men slept. It is partly on account of this corruption which soon takes place in religions, that the Ancient Wisdom-Religion needs to be again and again declared to the world in forms suited to human needs. The new revelation is new in its form, and in some of its details, but it is the Old Truth which has been from the beginning. H. P. Blavatsky clearly states that her message is not a new thing, but part of the Ancient Wisdom. We find in the New Testament a similar statement. St. John says he does not write a new commandment, but an old commandment which had been from the beginning, *vis.*, brotherly love. And in the East it is an Ancient Teaching:

Hatred does not cease at any time by hatred; hatred ceases by love; this is an *old* rule.

Religion, being in its essence the consciousness of the Divine, and the impulse or attraction towards Divinity, has ever largely consisted, in its manifestation, of some means by which this impulse might be realized. The different “cults” are mostly modes or methods by which men seek to realize the purpose of existence. However dimly recognized in some cases, the object is one and the same, namely, return to the Divine. H. P. Blavatsky says:

There is not a religion, whether Christian or heathen, that is not firmly built upon the rock of ages — God and immortal spirit. (*Isis Unveiled*, I, 467)

Theosophy helps us to understand that all religions have the same great goal in view. This, of itself, should tend to remove the prejudices that spring up in the various religions, and should help to foster a spirit of unity among all who are striving towards the same goal, whether they call it heaven, paradise, or by any other name.

THE ORIGINS OF RELIGIONS

Theosophy also throws much light upon the origin of the various “cults”; for, by unfolding the original teaching, or some of it, we are helped very much in tracing many of the divergencies which have arisen.

It will be readily seen that among all religions the idea of *Sacrifice* has been very prominent. It is well known that the ordinary evolutionist looks to savage life as illustrating the genesis of modern man, and his cults. The savage personifies the forces of Nature, and offers sacrifices to gain their favor. But Theosophy teaches that races, like individuals, have their periods of youth, maturity, and old age. The savage, in some cases at least, is but the decayed remnant of what was once a great race. It is said that the aborigines of Australia are a remnant of the Third Root Race, which, at its zenith, was much more spiritual than the sub-races of the Fourth Root Race. The idea of sacrifice has undergone a long degradation, and it is only within the last few thousand years that we find a gradual movement away from gross notions of sacrifice to more spiritual conceptions. Even during the short space of Hebrew history, outlined for us in the Old Testament, we see what a hard battle the spiritual teachers had to wage against the bulk of the people, and the materialistic tendency of the priesthood. And, in this respect, Semitic history is a close parallel to the history of India, Egypt, and every other country.

In the Greek and Latin classics, from the time of Homer onward, we find various kinds of sacrifices mentioned. From the ancient histories or relics of many countries we find evidence that sacrifice of some kind was almost universal. In some special cases human sacrifices were offered, but generally animals were offered in sacrifice as a substitute. From very early

times the common articles of food were used as offerings. In later times the prophets declared that such offerings were not required; that the real and true sacrifice was the giving up of the lower nature to the higher. This was a return to something like the original meaning of sacrifice. Whatever hinders the return Godward must be given up. The lower must give way to the higher; the animal nature to the god within. This is what is taught in the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*:

Some devotees give sacrifice to the Gods, while others, lighting the subtler fire of the Supreme Spirit, offer up themselves. (ch. iv)

We have a similar teaching in Rom. xii. 1:

Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable (or spiritual) service.

The reasoning in this passage and in I Cor. iii, and elsewhere, is that we are temples of God, and therefore the whole of the tabernacle or temple should be sacred and holy, and devoted to the Divine Light of the Holy of Holies. The whole of life should be held sacred:

Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

So also, in the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*, we are taught:

Whatever thou doest, O son of Kunti, whatever thou eatest, whatever thou sacrificest, whatever thou givest, whatever mortification thou performest, commit each unto me. (ch. ix)

The spiritual meaning of sacrifice was always the inner teaching. The tendency to materialize figurative teaching is seen in regard to nothing more clearly than in this matter of sacrifice. In some of our modern Theosophical writings the language is highly figurative, as it was in the Ancient Teaching, and we can well imagine that a materialistic mind might very soon degrade the spiritual to the carnal. For instance, in *Light on the Path* {p. 84}:

Before the soul can stand in the presence of the Masters its feet must be washed in the blood of the heart.

In the light of this we may read that saying in Heb. ix. 22, "Without shedding of blood there is no remission." And we can see how the religions of the world have perverted the Ancient Teaching, and carnalized the great spiritual truth, that in the return Godward, the lower nature must be given

up or consecrated to the Divine Self within. St. Paul, being acquainted with the Ancient Wisdom-Religion, spoke of “dying daily”; and being “dead unto sin, but alive unto righteousness”; and felt that “though the outer man perish the inward man is renewed day by day.” These and many similar passages must be familiar to all; and yet, lamentable and almost incredible though it may be, it is nevertheless the fact that orthodox *Churchianity*, the world over, Romanist and Protestant, is based on myths misunderstood, and symbolic language materialized. The whole “scheme of salvation,” in a few words, is this: Adam, and all his descendants, through him as their federal head and representative, became subject to death on account of the broken law. Christ, the second Adam, died in the room of humanity, and having paid the legal penalty of physical blood, all who believe in him are saved, and all who do not are lost. Also, theologians have always maintained that the animal sacrifices of the Old Testament prefigured the (literal) perfect sacrifice of Jesus.

Slowly, very slowly, humanity is awakening from the nightmare of ages, the perversion of teachings which were once lofty and spiritual, into dogmas revolting to reason; but which in the name of religion ministered to the lower selfish element of human nature, and were therefore popular or “orthodox” in all ages.

Nothing has been more degraded than the ideas of sacrifice, substitution, atonement, and yet, as is so often the case, great spiritual truths do exist of which the ordinary dogmas are hideous caricatures. Theosophy teaches today, as it did long before the dawn of ordinary history that the very Universe exists through sacrifice, but *not* sacrifice which is a pain, or a penalty, as we commonly conceive it to be. It is taught that the great Helpers of Humanity sacrifice themselves for weaker lives. There is a passage in the first volume of *The Secret Doctrine* which is full of grandeur; it is where the SILENT WATCHER is spoken of as the GREAT SACRIFICE (p. 207).

It is he who holds spiritual sway over the *initiated* Adepts throughout the whole world. He is, as said, the “Nameless One” who has so many names, and yet whose names and whose very nature are unknown. He is *the* “Initiator,” called the “GREAT SACRIFICE.” For, sitting at the threshold of LIGHT, he looks into it from within the circle of Darkness, which he will not cross; nor will he quit his post till the last day of this life-cycle. Why does the solitary Watcher remain at his self-chosen post? Why does he sit by the fountain of primeval Wisdom, of which he drinks no longer, as he has naught to learn which he does not know — aye, neither on this Earth, nor in its heaven? Because the lonely sore-footed pilgrims on their way back to their *home* are never sure to the last moment of not losing their way in this limitless desert of illusion and matter called Earth-life. Because he would fain show the way to that region of freedom and light, from which he is a voluntary exile himself, to every prisoner who has succeeded in liberating

himself from the bonds of flesh and illusion. Because, in short, he has sacrificed himself for the sake of mankind, though but a few Elect may profit by the GREAT SACRIFICE.

It is under the direct, silent guidance of this MAHÂ — (great) — Guru that all the other less divine Teachers and instructors of mankind became, from the first awakening of human consciousness, the guides of early Humanity. It is through these “Sons of God” that infant humanity got its first notions of all the arts and sciences, as well as of spiritual knowledge; and it is they who have laid the first foundation-stone of those ancient civilizations that puzzle so sorely our modern generation of students and scholars.

And what is true on the higher planes is also true regarding the higher nature in each of us. The descent into human forms of the Sons of Light, about 18 million years ago, in the latter half of the Third Root Race, was the manifesting of the Higher Ego, or Christos, in man. For it is truly said: “We are temples of God and the spirit of God dwells in us.” Human nature being sevenfold, his evolution has been on several planes, and not on the physical alone, as the ordinary Darwinian supposes. The Christos in each of us has made the great sacrifice in descending into matter in order to guide, purify, and finally make one with itself the lower nature. This is the real at-one-ment, or atonement, of which the orthodox dogma is truly an awful misconception. The Christ is crucified in each of us, and must continue to be so until the lower nature is raised up, and made fit for union with the God within us. That is the great day of at-one-ment. Then we shall be able to say in our whole nature: “Not my will but thine be done.” Then the sacrifice of the lower self will be complete; it will have ascended in the flame of perfect love. Then the soul can “stand in the presence of the Masters.”

The Universe is a continual “becoming.” The descent of spirit into matter is the “fall of man.” Man is himself the fallen angel. Jesus said, quoting from Psalm lxxxii. 6, “Ye are Gods, and all of you are children of the Most High,” and he added, “the scripture cannot be broken.” (John x. 35)

The Ancient Wisdom-Religion may be found all through the Bible; and in the sacred writings of every great religion. The cross itself is one of the oldest symbols in the world. All history is a symbol. The life of each individual is a type of the whole. It must be so, as man is the little image of the Universe; his sevenfold nature corresponding to the seven planes of the Cosmos. It need not then be wondered at that the story of Jesus the Christ is a picture of what takes place in the Universe, and in each individual, nor need we marvel to find all Great Souls manifesting many points of likeness. St. Paul cried out, “I protest I die daily.” There is a double sacrifice taking place in each of us; that of the Christos, which, like Prometheus, suffers, and is chained to matter as a result of bringing from heaven the celestial fire to hasten the evolution of the lower nature in man;

and there is also the sacrifice of the lower self as it dies to its desires and passions and rises into the higher life of the spirit. The consciousness of the necessity of this sacrifice of the lower nature has led men in many lands to practice great austerities. Men, like Simon Stylites, have perched themselves on lofty pillars, or in some other manner have tried to separate themselves from their lower natures by separating themselves from the world. They have tortured the body thinking to develop the soul. This is a sad misconception of the truth. *The Voice of the Silence* {p. 30} says:

Think not that breaking bone, that rending flesh and muscle, unites thee to thy "silent Self." Think not that when the sins of thy gross form are conquered, O victim of thy Shadows, thy duty is accomplished by nature and by man. The blessed ones have scorned to do so.

Another phase of the same misconception is seen in those philosophical systems which regard matter as something evil in itself. It is "matter out of place," or anything out of place, which is the evil. The evil is when the lower nature seeks to drag down the higher nature, instead of being purified and lifted up by it.

UNITY THE KEYNOTE OF THE NEW ERA

It is often said that Theosophy does not oppose any religion as such, but seeks to enable each person to find in his own religion the primal truths which are one and the same in all religions. This is very true, and the subject of sacrifice illustrates this. Theosophy alone is able to explain the fundamental truths in this idea of sacrifice; and in so doing it helps us to see how misconceptions have arisen. There is the sacrifice of the Universe in which every step downward of the Divine Spirit into manifestation is a sacrifice. Or, to put it in another way, Spirit clothes itself in denser and denser sheaths. This is the going forth of the Great Breath. Redemption is the re-becoming, or the return Home. Each stage of the return is a sacrifice, the transformation of the lower nature into the higher, it is being born again not only by water, but also by fire. The lead is transmuted into gold. Each step upward, though a seeming death, is really not destruction, but transformation of life. Nothing is lost, or "cast as rubbish to the void."

Looking at the matter in this light, how sad the spectacle of men in many lands and ages offering up human sacrifices, or even offering up animals! Well might the prophet exclaim:

To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices?... I delight not in the blood of bullocks or of lambs.... Who hath required this at your hand to trample my courts? Wash you, make you clean.... Cease to do evil, learn to do well. — Isaiah i. 12, 17.

And again:

Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the bands of the yoke and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke. Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, etc.?

— Isaiah lviii. 6, 7.

With a departure from the true original meaning of sacrifice, there arose a false notion of that great law of the Universe by which the higher sacrifices itself for the lower, in order to raise it to a higher plane. The selfishness of the lower mind, working on this for ages, elaborated a scheme of salvation in which, instead of the lower dying for the higher, *something else* should be *substituted* as a sacrifice. Finally, in modern orthodoxy, we have the most sublime facts of the Universe degraded into mere legal transactions, in which the pure is by a fiction regarded sinful, and the sinner esteemed just. And yet Jesus himself taught the law of Karma plainly, and declared that the transgressor would go into a prison from which he could not emerge until he had paid “the very last mite.”

Theosophy, the mother of religions, thus shows us the great fundamental truths, and enables us to see, in some degree, how the various religions have made turbid the waters of the perennial fountain, of truth. Selfishness and misconception lie at the root of the false dogmas. In this day many have come to feel that these dogmas are not true, but it is by the help of the Wisdom-Religion that men are able to see the original fundamental truths and understand how, in so many cases, these truths have been forsaken and perverted.

The New Era in which we are fortunate enough to live, has as its key note or grand design, UNITY. The many tribes, races, families of humanity have gone to different parts of the Earth, and each has developed certain qualities peculiar to itself. The time has now come for them to recognize that all are members of *one family*; and to join together in mutual enrichment, in harmonious unity; each, in this way becoming heir to the thousands of years of racial development achieved by the whole human family. Many things are working together to this end. On material lines the nations are being bound together by electric wires, and lines of communication, and unity of interests. Even so on inner planes, subtle currents are linking men together. The great things we did together in the long forgotten past will be eclipsed by the still more glorious achievements we shall unitedly accomplish in the Golden Age ahead of us. But among the things that tend to harmony and unification, nothing is more potent than *true* religion. And as we see that the ancestral Wisdom which we had about man and the Universe is ours once again, we shall join hands, and the veil of covering shall be removed from all flesh, for we shall see eye

to eye, and new pages of the Wisdom-Religion will unfold as we need them and are able to use them wisely.

To compare the ethics and ideals of the various religions with each other and with the Wisdom-Religion, is difficult, because most people have more or less prejudice in favor of someone religion; or if unprejudiced, each man naturally understands his own religion better than he can understand any other. Yet, notwithstanding these drawbacks, it is surely possible to make a fairly accurate survey of some of the great religions, or religious ideas, or symbols, for purposes of comparison.

On the question of ethics simply, it is not difficult to point out the fundamental agreement existing between several of the great religions. The moral law is much the same in the commandments of Moses, and of Gautama Buddha. truth, honesty, justice, purity, reverence for life, respect for parents, and the like; these are the common principles of morality in Christianity, Judaism, Hindûism, Buddhism, Islamism, and Confucianism. Moreover, all Great Teachers have recognized that love is the foundation of law, and is the fulfilment of the law. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you, is the positive aspect of the great law as taught by Christianity. Do not unto others what you would not have them do unto you, is the negative aspect of the same law of mutual consideration. And the philosophic basis of the commandment is the *unity of life*, the unity of humanity. It is because we are many members in one body, members one of another, and if one member suffer the other members must also suffer; it is because of this great fact that it is wrong to injure anyone. It is because of the unity of life that it is wrong to do anything to injure this unity — wrong to lie, or to steal, or to bear false witness. We call that thing wrong which is against the wellbeing or harmony of the whole, or any part of it.

The Jews recognized all sin as being first of all, against the Supreme Source of truth and right. Even in our law courts we have still some echo of this idea existing. It is the “People,” or the “King,” as the case may be, against the person who is charged with an offense. With some nations the Supreme Source of all receded more and more into the background of human consciousness, and the void was filled in the popular fancy by a host of gods and goddesses which personified some of the powers of Nature, or some of the faculties of the human soul. Idolatry, in its more and more material aspects, marks the *lowest point of the arc, not the primeval point from which we have started; that primeval starting point was the Wisdom-Religion*. This, of course, is entirely opposed to the ordinary views of modern science. But modern science, and modern history, begin where man begins to emerge from the lowest point of the cycle. Even the modern scientist believes that the finer and rarer precedes the denser. Our material Earth is the last step in the process of materialization. The fluid, gaseous and ethereal states mark anterior stages

of manifestation. If the scientists will only study the analogy of Nature faithfully they will be led to the portal of true Wisdom.

In maintaining the position that Theosophy is the mother of religions, it is necessary to distinguish between essentials and those things which are only external. Many things connected with the various cults have nothing Theosophic about them. They are modern; they are mere human accretions, or even perversions of the original teaching. Again, there are certain cults which may be regarded as having naturally sprung from the human mind viewing with awe and reverence the forces of Nature. Yet even these, in their pure and primitive forms, were probably given by Great Teachers, who used symbols to a large extent in their teaching; for, as H. P. Blavatsky explains, [*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 473.] those Great Teachers knew that words would be forgotten in the course of ages, therefore they used the picture teaching of symbols, which would be more easily preserved. Consequently the various cults, such as Sun-worship, star worship, serpent worship, sex worship, tree worship, and Nature worship generally, were at first pure and lofty. The symbolic was regarded as merely symbolic. It was only during the course of long ages that the symbolic teaching became gradually degraded as the human race itself sank deeper and deeper into materialism.

SEPTENARY NATURE AND HUMANS

At all times the essential thing, lying behind all outward signs, has been a love of Perfect Truth, of Absolute Good; and a realization that man is truly the offspring of the Most High. Also, that the Divine Life is a Unity though seen in manifestation under a countless variety of forms. In a word, we should endeavor to realize the Divine as both transcendent, or above all, and immanent, or in all manifestation. This has always been the aim of the Wisdom-Religion, as manifesting through the Divine Principle in man; or through the express teaching of those Great Souls, who call themselves our Brothers, though they have developed far beyond ordinary humanity. It is this which gives the Wisdom-Religion its unique position and its strong claim upon us; it is the teaching of the Great Helpers of Humanity, and it is also capable of verification as the real Self in each of us rises to the high plane of development which our Elder Brothers reached ages ago. But even beyond that, it is in a large degree capable of being demonstrated to the reasoning mind — a principle in us which is lower than the spiritual or divine Ego. For instance, when Theosophy tells us that man is sevenfold, and that nature is sevenfold, we have a teaching which our reason leads us to accept because we meet so many evidences of it. Nor does it require much demonstration to show that this teaching must have been given by ancient Sages, for we find it in the oldest religions. If we

begin with the present and go backward, we shall be astonished at the amount of evidence existing.

We think of the seven days of the week, one of which is the day of rest, and we are at once reminded that in both color and sound the septenary law rules. There are seven notes in the musical scale, and seven prismatic colors. Human life is divided into periods of seven years. It is an old saying that man has seven senses, though only five are in use generally. Some philosophers have spoken of man as having seven obvious parts; and seven internal organs; and seven foci through which the soul acts. The seventh day, or the fourteenth, was regarded as critical for certain diseases. The human offspring is viable in the seventh month, and in the seventh year the child undergoes an important change, which some religions recognize, having borrowed it from the Ancient Wisdom. Life on the Earth is powerfully influenced by the revolution of the Moon in 4 times 7 days. Human life, as we see from Shakespeare, was divided into seven ages. These seven stages were closely associated with the seven planets of astrology. These are but a few of the instances in which we find the number seven very prominent in Nature.

Now, if we glance at some of the ancient religions, or races, we shall see how important a place was held by the number seven. From our Northern forefathers we have the seven days of the week, and their names. Among the ancients a symbol for the Universe was a ship with seven pilots. In India, says Mr. Subba Row, it was taught that there were six primary forces of Nature resumed in a seventh. Among the ancient Greeks, Apollo, the Sun God, was called the sevenfold or *εβδομαγετης*. Among the Persians the number seven was held sacred to Mithras, the Sun God. Plato tells us that from the number seven was generated the soul of the world. Among the ancient Hebrews the sacred ladder had seven steps of ascent, the love of God; and seven steps of descent, the love of one's neighbor. On the ancient Assyrian tablets were represented seven gods of the sky, and seven gods of the Earth. Among the Freemasons seven members make a perfect lodge, though five may hold one. Among the ancient Aryans the number seven was sacred. There were seven sages, seven planes of the Universe, seven holy islands. In the Bible we find seven as the sacred number, from Genesis with its seven days, to the Revelation with its seven churches, seven angels, seven candlesticks, seven trumpets, seven kings, seven vials poured out. The seventh day, the seventh month, the seventh year, and seven times seven, the Jubilee, all show how Jewish national life was permeated with the sacredness of the number seven. The teaching that the *land* should have its sabbaths, or rests, and not only men and animals, indicates a profound knowledge of Nature, obtained either by direct teaching, or as the result of long experience. Modern science recognizes that the life of metals, or machinery is prolonged by periodic rests. And the lack of rest for the land is diminishing

very much the productiveness of not a few parts of America, and of other countries. The Hebrews, with good reason, connected national well-being with keeping the sabbaths. In so doing they were working in harmony with Nature, which, as Theosophy shows, is sevenfold.

Now, if we examine this fact, that nations so far apart should have the sacredness of the number seven as a basic principle in life, and in religion, we have a strong indication that they must, in some distant past, have obtained this knowledge from one and the same primal source — the Ancient Wisdom-Religion. Let us turn to the exposition of the Ancient Wisdom, as given by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine*, a work which she has written as a commentary on the ancient *Book of Dzyan*. If this *Book of Dzyan*, with the other Ancient Records, could be placed before the world, and if the mysterious ideographic characters could be read and could be understood by scholars, then nothing further would be needed to prove that the *Gupta Vidyâ*, the ancient Hidden Wisdom, was indeed the fountain of knowledge, the mother of religions. But this cannot be done. The Ancient Records are preserved with great care, and some of them are “accessible only to the *highest initiates*.” We must be thankful to H. P. Blavatsky for the sample she has given us, and still more so for her explanation of the translation. A few samples will show this.

In regard to the Universe, *before* the Great Breath went forth, we read: “The Eternal Parent, wrapped in her ever invisible robes, had slumbered once again for seven eternities.” “The seven sublime Lords and the Seven Truths had ceased to be.” Then, at the beginning of manifestation we read: “The last vibration of the seventh eternity thrills through infinitude.” “Then the three fall into the four. The radiant essence becomes seven inside, seven outside.” From stage to stage of manifestation we find the sacred number seven. “Listen, ye Sons of the Earth, to your instructors — the Sons of the Fire. Learn, there is neither first nor last, for all is one: number issued from no number.” “Learn what we who descend from the Primordial Seven, we who are born from the Primordial Flame have learned from our fathers.” And again: “Thus were formed the Rûpa and the Arûpa: from the one light seven lights; and from each of the seven, seven times seven lights.” All through the account of the genesis of the Universe, or of this planet, the number seven is found. No wonder then that fragments, dim memories of the Ancient Teaching should be found in the Old Testament, in the sacred writings of India, Persia, Egypt, and of every other nation.

And when we turn to Anthropogenesis, the origin of humanity, we find the number seven very prominent. The Earth is sevenfold, man is sevenfold. The Earth passes through seven stages or Rounds — we are now in the fourth. In each Round there are seven Root Races, and in each Race seven sub-races. No wonder then that H. P. Blavatsky says,

Number Seven, the fundamental figure among all other figures in every national religious system, from Cosmogony down to man, must have its *raison d'être*. It is found among the ancient Americans, as prominently as among the archaic Aryans and Egyptians.

— (*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 34)

The septenary nature of man, as taught by Theosophy, is thus seen to be in harmony with the basic number of the manifested Universe. This was known to the ancient Egyptians, but it disappeared from ordinary teachings, at least in the West, during the time of a descending cycle. Modern languages have no terms for the seven human principles; not until we go back to ancient Egypt and ancient India do we find names for these principles. In the New Testament, only a threefold division of man — body, soul and spirit — is given. And as a result of this we find St. Paul, and other writers, when speaking of the higher Manas and the lower Manas, much hampered to make their meaning clear. In the Old Testament we do not find a full account of all the human principles either; though in the esoteric teachings of the Hebrews, as appears from the Kabbalah, they evidently had obtained, or preserved, part of the Ancient Wisdom-Religion, as did the Egyptians and the Hindûs. This will be seen at a glance by comparing the two plates given in *Isis Unveiled* (Vol. II, p. 264), where the ancient Indian and ancient Hebrew conceptions of the Universe very closely correspond. It may not be amiss to notice that between the obvious teaching of the Old Testament and the Hebrew esoteric lore, a vast difference exists.

ESOTERIC AND ESOTERIC TEACHINGS

It is well known that there is very little, some have thought nothing, about the future life in the early part of the Bible. It is concerned about this life chiefly, and about right living here, not about the state of the soul after death. Keep the Commandments, that thy days may be long in the land, is the burden of the teaching. And if a modern Easterner is correct in supposing that the Hebrews had an exoteric form of religion for the mass of the people, and an esoteric teaching for the “elect,” it is only what we find to be the fact with other old religions also. This inner teaching was handed down orally to those selected to receive it. The “schools of the prophets” probably existed not only in the days of Elisha and of Samuel, but all through the history of the Hebrew people. It must have been always a difficult matter to know when, and how much of this occult teaching to give out to the world, or to the mass of the people generally. While, on the one hand it is wrong to withhold the bread of life, or the light; on the other hand, as we know from experience, it is a mistake to give knowledge, or to try to give it, to men before they are ready for it, before they hunger and

thirst for truth. And in all ages, so far as we know, the Light-bringer was regarded as an angel of darkness rather than an angel of light. The writer of *The Secret Doctrine*, the Harbinger of the Wisdom-Religion in our own day, shared the same fate. "Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute?"

THE MYSTERIES

"The Mysteries" is the term applied to the secret wisdom which was handed down from teacher to pupil under solemn promise not to divulge it except in the manner in which he himself had received it. In addition to this, it is evident that it was a matter of attaining to inward illumination, or spiritual development, rather than the mere imparting and receiving of knowledge. No doubt, according to the great law of Nature, as each higher plane helps that below it, the pupil was helped, and taught, and trained by his elders, but the end of it all was that he might attain to that condition in which he should know for himself. To know the truth really *he himself had to become one with it*. To tread the Path, he had to become that Path himself. To know God he had to become one with the divine within himself. This "Knowledge," from the very nature of the case, must have ever been, and must ever continue to be the "Great Secret." As knowledge is power, and as power may be used selfishly, it is easy to see why many things were kept hidden from the mass of the people. This was not to keep men in darkness, but to keep powerful instruments out of the hands of the selfish. Knowledge is a two-edged sword, and he who uses it or any faculty unwisely, injures himself even more than he injures others. Notwithstanding all the care used, much knowledge was employed selfishly during the evil days of the Fourth Race, the Atlantean, and the world has not yet gotten rid of the bad effects.

These "Mysteries" were the outcome, or the consolidation of the Ancient Wisdom-Religion which had long previously come to man in the Third Race, the Lemurian, when the Sons of Mind, the Mānasaputra, descended upon Earth and took upon them the human form, becoming our spiritual ancestors. For man being sevenfold, has a spiritual heredity as well as a physical and an astral. From many sources we get hints about the "Mysteries." Aristotle considered that the welfare of Greece was secured by the Eleusinian Mysteries. Socrates says, "Those who are acquainted with the mysteries insure to themselves very pleasing hopes against the hour of death, as well as for the whole of their lives." Cicero writes, "When these mysteries are explained we prove not to have learned so much of the nature of the Gods, as of the things themselves, or of the truths we stand in need of." Sallust tells us, "the intention of all mystic ceremonies is to conjoin us with the world of the Gods." Plutarch affirms that in the mysteries, "The First Cause of all things is communicated." One of the

Christian fathers, Clemens Alexandrinus, writes, "The doctrines delivered in the greater mysteries are concerning the Universe. Here all instruction ends. *Things are seen as they are*; and Nature, and the things of Nature, are given to be comprehended." Plato says, "The design of the mysteries is to lead us back to the perfection from which, as a principle, we first made our descent." Again, he declared it was "difficult to find the Father and Molder of the Universe; and when found, impossible to discover him to all the world." We may compare this with what is written in the *Book of Job*, which is said to be a book of *initiation*. Job, when the climax of the whole drama is reached, declares, "I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee." And in the book of *Ecclesiasticus* it is written, "At first, she (Wisdom) will walk with him by crooked ways, and bring fear and dread upon him, and torment him with her discipline until she may trust his soul, and try him by her laws. Then will she return the straight way unto him, and comfort him, and *show him her secrets*."

Philo says of the Jewish teachers, "They changed the words and precepts of wisdom into allegories, *after the custom of their ancestors*." Maimonides writes, "Whoever shall find out the true meaning of the book of Genesis ought to take care not to divulge it." In the ancient Egyptian Ritual we read, "This book is the greatest of all mysteries. Do not let the eye of anyone see it; that is detestable. Learn it. Hide it." In *Isis Unveiled* H. P. Blavatsky records much about the mysteries. We learn that whether in ancient Egypt, Greece, Persia or India, the object of the mysteries was much the same. "The unity of God, the immortality of the Spirit, belief in salvation only through our works, merit and demerit; are the principal articles of faith in the Wisdom-Religion, and the groundwork of Vedaism, Buddhism, Parseeism, and such we find to have. been even that of the ancient Osirism, when we, after abandoning the popular Sun-God of the materialism of the rabble, confine our attention to the *Books of Hermes*, the thrice-great." In the books of Manu we find similar teaching: "The man who recognizes the Supreme Soul, in his own Soul, as well as in all creatures, and who is equally just to all (whether men or animals) obtains the happiest of all fates, that to be finally absorbed in the bosom of Brahmâ." "Of all the duties the principle one is to acquire the knowledge of the Supreme Soul (the spirit); it is the first of all sciences, *for it alone confers on man immortality*." This reminds us of the words of Jesus (John xvii. 3), where he says that "to know the Father as the true God is eternal life." In the Persian *Desatir* it is written, "Whatever is *on earth is the semblance and SHADOW of something that is in the sphere*; while that resplendent thing (the prototype of the Soul-Spirit) remains in *unchangeable* condition it is well also with its shadow. But when the *resplendent one* removeth far from its shadow, life removeth from the latter to a distance. And yet that very light is the shadow of something still more resplendent than itself." (*Isis Unveiled*, Vol. II, p. 113) Proclus said,

“in all the initiations and mysteries the gods exhibit many forms of themselves, and appear in a *variety of shapes*, and sometimes, indeed, a formless light of themselves is held forth to the view; sometimes this light is according to a *human form*, and sometimes it proceeds into a different shape.”

From these “mysteries” the great religions of the world had their origin. As the mysteries were only for the few who had been tried and found worthy, a popular form of teaching, based upon them, was given to the public. This was, of course, symbolic; and the tendency of the lower mind in man is to drag down, and materialize things spiritual; hence the degradation of the mysteries, and the lapse into idolatry. For the essence of idolatry is ever the same, it is the worship of a sign or symbol instead of the thing represented by the symbol. Hence the great need from age to age, for Messengers, Teachers, Reformers to come and lift up the world to that light from which it has fallen. And this is true, though, according to the great law of Progress, the cycles of the world’s life are on the whole onward and upward. We find this thought of restoration, or purification, prominent in several religions. In regard to Judaism, which directly or indirectly, has such a widespread influence on all Western nations, we find a notable hint given by Jesus on one occasion. Speaking of a certain custom, Jesus said that Moses permitted this because of the hardness of their hearts, but “*from the beginning it was not so.*” And as to the true Law, he said he came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it, or to fill it full of a deeper significance than they supposed it to possess. Again he said, they had “made the Law of none effect by their traditions.”

A CYCLICAL REGENERATION

If we look at Brâhmanism and Buddhism, we shall find that Śâkyamuni came to *restore*, not to destroy anything really good and true. The primal teaching had, through long ages, been made of none effect by a declining sacerdotalism; just as the teaching of the Mosaic Law had been through Phariseism. There was need for renewal, rebirth, restoration. Hence, one of the Great Teachers, one who had much to do with giving the Wisdom-Religion to this generation, said that “*pre-Vedic Buddhism*” was the teaching which he and his companions proclaimed. This can only mean the Ancient Wisdom-Religion, the heritage given by the Sons of Light, when the lands and seas of the world were very different from what they now are.

As Brâhmanism declined, Śâkyamuni came to enlighten and restore; and met the natural opposition of a declining priesthood. But in the course of time Buddhism also declined, and a restoration was needed. This was only partially accomplished by various great teachers; so that a real return to the “*pre-Vedic Buddhism*” is needed for modern Buddhism as well as for

Brâhmanism. This fresh reissue of the waters of Truth from the Ancient Source is afforded in Theosophy.

Among the Israelites Moses came to teach and purify, but in the course of ages the Scribes and Pharisees “sat in Moses’ seat”; and made the law of none effect. Jesus came to restore, to lead men back to the light; but before long the various ecclesiastical divisions obscured, and well-nigh buried out of sight the teaching of Jesus. Therefore, according to the Great Law that guides the progress of the world, a new Teacher had to come in the Nineteenth century. She came to a world needing the life-giving light of the Spirit, instead of materialism. She came to give new impulse and right direction to a world that was wandering far from the true Path. She came to give, on a vaster scale than had ever been given before, a new revelation embracing Cosmogogenesis and Anthropogenesis, Religion, Science, Philosophy — the revelation of the Universe to man, and of man to himself; this was the scope of her mission. And her revelation, as she herself says, was not her own, but was simply a portion of the great Wisdom-Religion, while more remains to be given out at the end of the Twentieth century, or at some future time, as man becomes ready for it.

It is according to wisdom that in a declining cycle certain truths are not given out. The septenary nature of man and of the Universe is one of these simple yet basic truths, and it was not given out during the Dark Ages. We have now entered on a new age, an ascending cycle, and that makes possible the increase of light. Yet, even so, knowledge is being used selfishly, and consequently to the hurt of humanity; but working in harmony with the Life and Purpose of the Universe we may with open vision, like the prophet of old, see that “they that are with us are more than they that are with them.” We may realize the truth of the words of the New Testament, “Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world.”

THE VALUE OF EACH RELIGION

The various religions which have sprung from their parent, the Wisdom-Religion, though they have failed in many respects, in every case have accomplished something. Just as races, or nations, or individuals, have separate messages to give, so each religion has its separate note to sound in the complete harmony of the whole.

The well-known author, James Freeman Clarke, in his *Ten Great Religions*, has made an attempt to indicate what the various religions failed in doing, and what they severally accomplished. “The essential value of Brâhmanism,” he says, “is its faith in spirit as distinct from matter, eternity as distinct from time, the infinite as opposed to the finite, substance as opposed to form.” But, he thinks, it does not explain the world, it simply denies it. He thinks it is incapable of morality, of true worship, and also

that it does not really teach immortality because it neglects the absolute distinction between right and wrong, and teaches absorption instead of immortality. The system of Confucius he regards as having done good work in teaching morality; in its reverence for the past; and in its respect for useful institutions. Buddhism, he says, "has done good in teaching the relation of the soul to the laws of Nature; its doctrine of consequences (Karma), and its promise of an ultimate salvation in consequence of good works." But he regards it as having "the defect that belongs to all legalism." The religious teachings of the Eddas, and of Zoroaster he groups together because "they both recognize the evil in the world as real, and teach the duty of fighting against it. They avoid the pantheistic indifference of Brâhmanism, and the absence of enthusiasm in the systems of Confucius and Buddha."

The Semitic religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, proclaimed a pure monotheism, and consequently it was only after contact with Persia that we find in the Jewish scriptures any mention of an *evil principle*, and then it is not the Satan of orthodoxy, but rather the heavenly critic who appears among the sons of God, as stated in the book of *Job*. A *perfect* conception of the Divine transcendence precludes the notion of a Devil. In Egypt, as in northern Europe, the divine was seen chiefly in the various powers of Nature. In Greece the divine was seen in man rather than in Nature.

The form of religion known as "ancestor worship," was, and to some extent still is, very wide-spread. It was also very ancient. Not only China and Japan, but Greece, Rome, and nearly every part of the world has seen this form of religion. It was no doubt one of the early shoots from the Wisdom-Religion. It seems to have sprung from several elements, one of which was the knowledge that in his real nature, man is an immortal spirit. Another element was, that between the Absolute and our present humanity, countless orders of finite beings exist. It was also a perpetuation and an extension beyond death of parental relationship and was, therefore, rooted in natural affection. The wonderful persistence of it is seen in the East; and it is said that the public devotion to the "ancestors" recently shown by the Emperor of Japan has done much to strengthen the Ancient Religion, which neither Buddhism nor any other teaching has been able to stamp out.

TEACHING BY MYTHS AND SYMBOLS

The study of myths and symbols has been very suggestive of an earlier and more universal religion than any now existing. The wide-spread influence of certain myths, and the fact that certain symbols have been found in lands far apart and belonging to times very remote, point to a common origin in a prehistoric past. Of these symbols the cross, in its

various forms, is of great antiquity. In *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 557, we read:

Verily may the Cross be traced back into the very depths of the unfathomable archaic ages. Its Mystery deepens rather than clears, as we find it on the statues of Easter Island — in old Egypt, in Central Asia, engraved on rocks as Tau and Svastika, in pre-Christian Scandinavia, everywhere!

In *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II. p. 99, H. P. Blavatsky says that the Svastika form of cross has many meanings:

In the *Macrocosmic* work, the “HAMMER OF CREATION,” with its four arms bent at right angles, refers to the continual *motion* and revolution of the invisible Kosmos of Forces. In that of the manifested Kosmos and our Earth, it points to the rotation in the cycles of Time of the world’s axes and their equatorial belts; the two lines forming the *Svastika* ✚ meaning Spirit and Matter, the four hooks suggesting the motion in the revolving cycles. Applied to the *Microcosm*, Man, it shows him to be a link between heaven and Earth, the right hand being raised at the end of a horizontal arm, the left pointing to the Earth.... It is not too much to say that the compound symbolism of this universal and most suggestive of signs contains the key to the seven great mysteries of Kosmos.

In ancient Scandinavia it was the hammer of Thor. Dr. Schliemann found it in two forms *under* the ruins of ancient Troy.

The symbol of the *Tree* was also very ancient, and universal. Among the Scandinavians it was *Yggdrasil*, the tree of Existence. Among the ancient Hindûs it was *Aśvattha*, the world-tree. In Egypt the sycamore tree was sacred to Hathor. In the Bible, from the first of Genesis to the last of Revelation, we find the tree frequently used in a symbolical sense. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and the tree of life are in the Garden of Eden. And in the heaven of the Apocalypse, the tree of life bears fruit every month, and its leaves are for the healing of the nations. In the ancient writings of the Wisdom-Religion the Sons of MAHAT are quickeners of the human Plant. (*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 103)

The *Sun*, as we might naturally expect, was in all lands, and from the most ancient times, regarded with great reverence. In a simple untutored race it would be quite natural to expect men to show reverence to the source of light and life. One of the first white men to come into contact with the natives of the distant interior of South Africa tells how they bowed to the Sun as he rose above the horizon, “because he warmed them.” But between this simple and very natural form of gratitude, and the elaborate conceptions of Egypt and of other ancient lands, a vast difference exists.

Mr. Owen Morgan, as quoted in *Egyptian Belief and Modern Thought*, says:

It is a common error to suppose that the ancients worshipped the sun. They did nothing of the kind. They worshipped the Eternal Spirit, which in Egypt went under the name of Osiris, and in Britain under the name of Celi, the *concealed*; and regarded the sun as the first-begotten of the Father, and of the inert confusion of matter.

Mr. Bonwick quotes from the *Vedas*, the *Upanishads*, and the *Yasna Avesta* of the Persians, severally, as follows:

Let us adore the supremacy of the Divine Sun, the Deity who illuminates all, from whom all proceed, are renovated, and to whom all must return; whom we invoke to direct our intellects aright in our progress to his holy seat.

And from the *Upanishad*:

It is I, O Brahmâ, who adore thee under the form of the resplendent sun. O sun, eternal, hearken unto my prayer!

The Avesta calls the Sun “without beginning and without end.” Kennedy, speaking of the Hindû religions, says that the Sun “appears under two perfectly distinct characters; the one as the Supreme Being, the other as the inferior deity, the regent of the “solar orb.” In the course of ages the symbol became in itself an object of worship. Thus idolatry originates, and it assumes various forms. It is the worship of the letter rather than of the spirit. It is the tendency to materialize where we should look to the spiritual, or ideal. It is narrowing and limiting, where we should ever study to reach upward to the limitless and the supreme. Yet, as the human mind is constituted, for the vast majority of humanity at least, forms must be used to give definiteness. To the Magus, whom Sir E. Arnold, in *The Light of the World*, makes say:

Om, Amitâya! oh,
The Immeasurable! What word but doeth wrong
Clothing the Eternal in the forms of Now?
Our great Lord Buddha would not name Him once,

Mary of Magdala replies:

If no name be,
Will not the weak soul say, “naught is to name.”

But the tendency of worship through forms, has in most cases been, not to open up vaster and wider heavens to the adoring vision, but rather to place the worshipper with his back to the light, so to speak, and to make the objects of his worship, images, or shadows, of himself, more and more limited and material. This is as true of so-called Christians today as it was of the Chaldeans thousands of years ago. "God is spirit," said Jesus, "and to worship truly we must worship in spirit and in truth."

The fact that the prophets of Israel were loud in their denunciations of the idolatry into which solar symbolism had degraded, did not prevent their using such expressions as "The Lord God is a sun and shield," (Ps. lxxxiv), "The sun of righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings." (Mal. iv) And in the New Testament we find in Rev. xix, these words, "And I saw an angel standing; these Solar symbology is not only widespread, but exists to our own day in forms little suspected. For writers on symbology tell us that the pointed pyramid, or obelisk, is a solar symbol, and is seen in the spires and pinnacles of old churches; even as it is seen in Lapland, ancient Egypt, ancient America, ancient India, and China. Even the weathercock has the same significance; the cock, according to Pausanias, being sacred to the Sun, as the herald of the day. And in the symbolic writing of the Chinese this symbol is used. Du Halde, Vol. II, says "They, the Chinese, in representing the sun put a cock in a circle."

And as regards myths, if we have the patience to trace them to their source, they will lead us back to the origin of religions and races; back to that ancient time when there was one great religion, the Wisdom-Religion, which was the synthesis of science, religion, and philosophy — Divine Wisdom, truly, for it had its origin in the Divine Teachers, and in the Divine Self within Humanity.

The *mythos* was an ancient form of teaching. Like the story, or parable, or symbol, it expressed much — revealing truth to the wise and hiding it from the foolish — and it was a form of teaching easily remembered. The myths of Prajâpati, of Prometheus, of Osiris, all carry us back to the Wisdom-Religion, which alone can fully explain them. They all have the same message concerning the Divine in man. They all point to human progress and to the return of man and the Universe to the Infinite Source whence all things proceeded.

The creation legends, the legends of fallen angels, and of giants, are all the broken lights that have come from the Wisdom-Religion. The story of Atlas takes us back to Atlantean times, and even to the Lemurian age, when the mountain range was thrice its present height, and when it might be said to support the heavens.

There is, however, one point which it is well to note carefully. H. P. Blavatsky tells us that in the Wisdom-Religion, the *mythos* or symbol had not one key only but seven keys. It is the tendency of some learned writers who are acquainted with but one key, the physiological, or the astro-

nomical, to imagine that their explanation covers the whole ground, and to ride their particular theory to death; whereas a wider knowledge would give a sounder view of Nature as septenary.

Through long ages of separation, each family, race, or religion, has treasured its own form of the primal Wisdom, and has come to regard all other forms as false. This is a great mistake, but like most drawbacks, there has been this compensating influence; it has given intensity and devotion to the adherents of each system. It is a fact well known to the careful student of religions or sects today, that not infrequently, the narrower the creed, the more deeply in earnest are its adherents; and often, too, the more illiberal a sect is intellectually, the readier are its adherents to give and suffer for their narrow faith. While on the other hand, a broad and liberal form of thought is often accompanied with lack of intensity and lack of liberality to give for it, and suffer for it. When the river is narrow it moves along with great force, and cuts a deep channel; but when its waters broaden out over many acres the stream loses in energy and can hardly turn a single mill. But the time has now come for humanity to find unity; to realize that all religions have had the same Mother — the Wisdom-Religion; to realize that all nations and all men are rays of the same Divine Being; and that by seeking this unity we shall progress to a higher plane of life. For Paradise regained is more than Eden restored. When we get to a point in the ascending cycle corresponding to the Third Root Race we shall have attained not only to great heights of spirituality, but also to that Wisdom which comes through many aeons of experience. In other words, the ascending angels on the great ladder reaching from Earth to heaven, will be superior to those descending.

DOGMATIC TANGENTS

In maintaining that Theosophy is the mother of religions, it is not claimed that *all* forms of religion have sprung from the Ancient Wisdom. It is well known that the modern orthodox teaching in the West holds to the doctrine of Creation, that is, making out of *nothing*, in the strict sense of the term. It denies the dictum *ex nihilo nihil fit*. It declares that the *emanation* theory of the East is false. On this point, at least, an irreconcilable difference exists between modern western religions and the Ancient Wisdom-Religion. Yet a proper understanding of the Eastern teaching about *Mâyâ* might serve to show how western orthodoxy arose. In the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ* Krishna declares that:

Though myself unborn, of changeless essence, and the lord of all existence, yet, in presiding over nature — which is mine — I am born but through my own *Mâyâ*, the mystic power of self-ideation, the eternal thought in the eternal mind.

Some of the uses of the word *create* in the Old Testament may refer to this power of *Mâyâ*, or causing to appear; for example in *Is. xlv*: “I form the light, and *create darkness*. I make peace, and *create evil*.” Darkness and evil are not positive entities, but only the shadows cast by Light, and by Good. And it is worthy of note that the text which is specially quoted as proving *creation* to be distinct from making, only proves that the present order of things was not the source of things in the beginning — “By faith we understand that the worlds (aeons) have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which do appear.” (Hebrews xi. 3) This passage, which speaks of aeons being framed by the Divine Word, is only another illustration of how the Wisdom-Religion underlies all religions. And when these religions understand themselves they will realize how much they owe to the Ancient Wisdom.

This is not the place to speak of Karma and Reincarnation, except to point out that these integral parts of the Ancient Teaching can be easily seen to be the workings of Nature. We see the law of seed-time and harvest, and whether we like it or not, “we reap the seed we sow, the hands that smite us are our own.” What we call *Law* is a mode by which the One Life acts. And as to Rebirth, it will be found that those who object to it do so because they do *not view life from the standpoint of the soul, but from that of the body*. As the body has many days and nights, so has the soul in the long journey, and when the goal of all manifestation is reached, and the GREAT BREATH returns to ITSELF, the result of all the billions of years of progress is not annihilation. We do merge, or become one with the Eternal Parent, but we go forth again as the Divine Word of a new period of manifestation, after the “Seven Eternities.”

As men realize the unity of their origin, and the unity of religion underlying all existing differences, it must tend powerfully towards real and lasting harmony and peace. We are many members in one body. We are all rays from the GREAT SUN. In our heart of hearts we can feel that the great primal truths of justice, uprightness, compassion are our common heritage, because they pertain to the ONE SPIRIT which is over all, and through all, and in us all.

From Crypt to Pronaos

The Rise and Fall of Dogma

(Rev.) S. J. Neill

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HUMAN VEILS OF TRUTH

Religion and dogma — are they both necessary to us? Are they in the Grand Design of things, as are spirit and matter, substance and form? And if so, what should be their relation, or proportion to each other? Some philosophers have thought that “good” and “evil,” “light” and “darkness,” are necessary to each other, and these philosophers might equally well maintain that a proper admixture of religion and dogma, with a little ritual added, is as necessary for man’s well-being as are the various elements in the air we breathe. Certainly the admixture extends throughout history, and it is probably prehistoric. It is also common to all lands and peoples, and might claim, with far more justice than a certain church, to be accepted “*quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*” — always, everywhere, and by all. But old age and universality do not make a thing right, else many vices might claim to occupy high positions, higher even than the dogmas.

Some words, and “dogma” is one of them, have a very innocent colorless youth, but in their old age they become sadly degraded. It would have saved the world much sorrow and bloodshed if “dogma,” had retained its original meaning of “opinion.” But it did not do so. It became, says the *New English Dictionary*:

a belief, principle, tenet; especially a tenet or doctrine authoritatively laid down by a particular church, sect, or school of thought; sometimes, depreciatingly, an imperious or arrogant declaration of opinion.

From the same authority we learn that one of the earliest instances of the use of the word in English is in 1638, where we have the expression, “The grosse fanaticke Dogmataes of the *Alcoran*.” {The great fanatic (single-minded zeal) dogmas (inconvertibly true principles) of the *Qur’an*.}

To speak of the “rise and fall of dogma” covers a wide field. And it may seem rather strange to talk of the *fall* of dogma when there are still so many millions in all parts of the world whose religious systems contain so many dogmas; and when a certain church in the enlightened West is trying to “put back the clock” at the present moment by prohibiting the clergy and the laity from reading any books of a progressive character. Nevertheless, the Twentieth century will witness, as the Nineteenth century also in some degree witnessed, the declining power of dogma: for, as true religion becomes stronger the influence of dogmas must decrease and in the end disappear. By this it is not meant that the time is near when opinions or beliefs will cease. Men must always have opinions and see things somewhat differently until the light of *perfect* knowledge is reached. But, dogmatism, or the domination of certain dogmas over the minds and lives of men, will weaken and vanish. The freedom in which

we now rejoice is possible because the dogmatic spirit has lost the power it once had to crush out freedom of thought; though in many quarters the attempt is still made to shackle the minds of men, not only in the domain of religion, but in other fields also.

The history of all religions presents very much the same phenomena in regard to the growth and influence of dogma. Very soon after the good seed is sown the enemy comes by night and scatters tares; and not infrequently the tares outgrow the wheat. But the worst of it all is, that with many foolish people, the tares are mistaken for the wheat — dogma is prized more than, or instead of, true religion. Strange as this may seem, it nevertheless has had a clear illustration in regard to the great Founder of Christianity himself. It is well known that his teaching is not only devoid of dogmatism, but is of such a character that dogma could not easily be built up upon it. For, who could build a dogma on, “Blessed are the peacemakers”; “Blessed are the pure in heart”; “Be ye therefore perfect as your Father who is in heaven is perfect”? Consequently, two sets of men have fallen into a similar error in regard to the Sermon on the Mount, and other teachings of Christ. The unspiritual man says it is morality only, and that is the whole of religion; while certain orthodox teachers declare that the teaching of Christ is morality only, and not the real heart of religion, to get which, they say, we have to go to the epistles, and the full development of dogmas. And in harmony with this is the fact that a much larger number of sermons are based on the epistles than upon the words of Jesus himself. But is it not strange; as a prophet of the Nineteenth century remarked, that he who *himself came to be the gospel*, should have failed, in his longest and fullest discourse, to preach the gospel and should have left this to be done by his disciples! This attitude, which for many centuries was the prevailing spirit of Christianity, shows how prone men are to prefer dogma to the true spirit of religion. Moreover, it helps us to see how dogma has grown up; and the origin of dogma or its relation to true religion, is indicated by the first words of the title to this essay — “From Crypt to Pronaos.” This phrase is used to indicate a literal and historical fact; and it is also used figuratively to represent the process of thought as it proceeds from within outwards, and becomes more and more externalized and materialized.

Man, in his three-fold nature of spirit, soul, and body, is not only a type of the Universe, but is also a symbol in which we see the process of unfoldment from within outwards. If the term *crypt* be regarded as the hidden center, the inmost of things, or the spirit of things, and *pronaos* the last, or outermost court of the temple, we shall have a picture of religious history in most cases. The dogmatic stage will correspond to the last, or outermost sheath of the soul, the outer court of the temple.

The history of these terms, *crypt*, and *pronaos*, is itself full of interest and instruction. In tracing historically the English use of the word *crypt*,

the *Oxford English Dictionary* gives the earliest appearance of the word as being in 1432: "The cripte of Seynte Michael in the mounte Gargan." This use of the word is rare, the Latin form being the one commonly employed. Historically, the word is used (a) "as a grotto or cavern; (b) as an underground cell, chamber, or vault, especially one beneath the floor of a church used as a burial place, and sometimes as a chapel or oratory." In 1563 a writer says: "Christians had caves under the ground called *cryptae*, where they for fear of persecution assembled secretly together." In 1789 Brand writes: "The chancel of the church stood upon a large vault or crypt."

Of course the use of the word in its Latin form is much older. The term *crypta* was applied to a vaulted building partly, or wholly beneath the level of the ground. Juvenal speaks of the *crypta Saburae*. Seneca calls the tunnel north of Naples *crypta Neapolitana*; and Jerome uses the same term in speaking of the Catacombs.

According to the learned Venables in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, the crypt, as part of a church, had its origin in the subterranean chapel erected on the tomb of a martyr. When the tomb was not wholly below the ground the part of the church floor over it would be raised. This fashion of raising the chancel or altar end of a church, to indicate the crypt underneath, was widely imitated even where the reason for it did not exist. In nearly every country in Europe the remains of ancient crypts exist, some of them being of Roman workmanship.

H. P. Blavatsky, in the *Glossary*, tells us that some crypts were for initiation, others for burial purposes:

There were crypts under every temple of antiquity. There was one on the Mount of Olives lined with red stucco and built before the advent of the Jews.

And in *The Secret Doctrine* we read:

There were numerous catacombs in Egypt and Chaldea, some of them of a very vast extent. The most renowned of them were the subterranean crypts of Thebes and Memphis. The former, beginning on the western side of the Nile, extended towards the Libyan Desert, and were known as the *Serpent's* catacombs, or passages. It was there that were performed the sacred mysteries of the *kuklos anagkes*, the "Unavoidable Cycle," more generally known as the "circle of necessity." (Vol. I, p. 379)

Again, the same writer says (*op. cit.*, 588, note) that there are "crypts in cis-Himālayan regions where Initiates live, and where their ashes are placed for seven lunar years." From various sources we have statements to the effect that there are vast Crypts in the East in connection with Gonpas. One of these is referred to in *The Secret Doctrine*:

In all the large and wealthy lamaseries there are subterranean crypts and *cave-libraries*, cut in the rock, wherever the *gonpa* and *lhakhang* are situated in the mountains.... Along the ridge of Altyn-tagh, whose soil no European foot has ever trodden so far, there exists a certain hamlet, lost in a deep gorge. It is a small cluster of houses, a hamlet rather than a monastery, with a poor-looking temple in it, and one old lama, a hermit, living near by to watch it. Pilgrims say that the subterranean galleries and halls under it contain a collection of books, the number of which, according to the accounts given, is too large to find room even in the British Museum.

(Intro. p. xxiv.)

THE WISDOM-RELIGION

That the Wisdom-Religion existed during pre-historic ages, and that there are proofs of this in a “complete chain of documents,” H. P. Blavatsky confidently affirms. It is only by the aid of such documents, hidden in secret caves and crypts,” that much of the ancient writings, such as the Vedas, can be made intelligible. The initiates do not keep these books from the world through any policy of selfishness, but because to give out some of the things which they contain to a race of men steeped in selfishness would be like “giving a child a lighted candle in a powder magazine.”

The fact is not sufficiently kept in mind by some would-be teachers that after all, there is a power behind the visible course of events that makes real progress in all ages and lands depend on moral and spiritual growth.

In the course of modern progress we stumble onwards over the ruins of empires, frequently deaf to their voice of warning and instruction. It is possible to advance to a certain length in knowledge, or in power, but unless the moral and spiritual elements of our nature develop in harmony with the intellectual powers harm is sure to result; and in the end there will be a withdrawing of those powers which by their selfish exercise produced injury in the world. The Earth is strewn with the wrecks of great nations, and — great civilizations, because they were not built on the true foundation of the development and rule of the Higher Self in man. The Custodians of Wisdom have seen great material developments again and again crumble into dust. They have watched the new growths rise upon the dust and ashes of the past; and they know that the real progress of the race is always menaced by the giving of light before the eyes are ready for it; by the giving of power before the divine man within has sufficient control of the lower man to prevent the power from being used selfishly. Knowledge leads to power, and knowledge used selfishly injures humanity. Therefore it is the duty of the Custodians of the Secret Wisdom to keep knowledge for those who are ready or fit for it, and for them only. A Theosophical book says:

Desire power ardently. Desire peace fervently. Desire possessions above all. But those possessions must belong to the pure soul only, and be possessed therefore by all pure souls equally, and thus be the especial property of the whole only when united. Hunger for such possessions as can be held by the pure soul, that you may accumulate wealth for that united spirit of life which is your only true self. — *Light on the Path*, {pp. 3-4}

The fact that civilizations have grown up and perished, and that others have slowly and painfully risen upon their ruins has led many learned authors to find the beginnings of religious life and worship in the rudest and simplest forms existing among some semi-savage races. The Secret Wisdom points us to many cycles of progress and decay before that age began which our wise men believe to be the first, and from which they trace existing forms of religion. The learned editor of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Professor Robertson Smith, in his work on the *Religion of the Semites*, p. 180 says that

the great natural marks of a place of worship are the fountain, the tree, and grottos and caves in the earth. At the present day almost every sacred site in Palestine has its grotto, and that this is no new thing is plain from the numerous symbols of Astarte worship found on the walls of caves in Phoenicia. There can be little doubt that the oldest Phoenician temples were natural or artificial grottoes, and that the sacred as well as the profane monuments of Phoenicia, with their marked preference for monolithic forms, point to the rock-hewn cavern as the original type that dominated the architecture of the region. (See also Renan, *Phénicie*, p. 822)

But if this be so, the use of grottoes as temples in later times does not prove that caverns as such had any primitive religious significance. Religious practice is always conservative, and rock-hewn temples would naturally be used after men had ceased to live like troglodytes in caves and holes of the earth.

Closely connected with this theory about caves or crypts is the fact that recent archaeological investigation has shown a tendency to find a chthonic, or Earth-origin for many deities, even some which were supposed to be wholly celestial: Mr. Farnell, in Vol. IV of his great work on the *Cults of the Greek States*, holds that Apollo was not at first a Sun-god, but a god connected with the Earth, for in the early Greek cults there is little to connect him with the Sun. Afterwards he became a War-god; and still later a Sun-god, resigning the war-lordship to Mars.

The cave or crypt may have been in some places early associated with a sacred shrine, especially if it happened to be a rent in the Earth which sent forth hot air, or steam, or warm water, or peculiar vapors; but these facts carry us only a short distance into the past, and they do not explain the vast underground passages connected with ancient temples in Egypt, India, and elsewhere, in which occult teachings were given. Robertson

Smith regards the altar, the place of offerings, as the real origin of the sanctuary. Now this was in the outer court or *pronaos*, and may have been the symbol of exoteric religion; but it was not the true center or heart of the temple. Yet even this may have had an inner meaning; it may have spoken, to those whose ears were open, of the necessity for offering up the lower nature on the altar of sacrifice in the *pronaos* before the inner shrine could be approached. However, no doubt, to many it was the beginning and end of religion; just as to very many people today externals are the sum total of religion. It must be borne in mind that ancient temples were regarded as the homes of the Gods, and not as places of worship in the sense of modern churches. In most countries the temple was comparatively small, though there were some large ones, as the temple of Artemis at Ephesus, that of Hera at Samos, and some others. Dr. Seyffart says that

Only temples like that at Eleusis, in which the celebration of the Mysteries took place, were intended to accommodate a large number of people. The great sacrifices and banquets shared by all the people were celebrated in the court of the temple (*περιβολος*) which included the altars for sacrifice, and was itself surrounded by a wall with only one place of entrance.

From the description given of the Jewish Tabernacle, and afterwards of the Temple, no one can fail to perceive that a perfect system of symbolism existed throughout. The outer court, the holy place, and the most holy place, roughly corresponded to the three-fold character of some Greek temples, viz. the *pronaos*, the *naos*, and the inner chamber (*οπισθοδομος*), which was behind the image, and where valuables were kept. The *pronaos*, or outer court, was the place of offerings.

There can be no doubt that the triple nature of man as body, soul, and spirit was signified by this form of Tabernacle and Temple. The Holy of Holies corresponded to the *Âtman-Buddhi* or Divine Spirit in man. Man was regarded as the little image of the Universe; and the temple, with its three divisions, was a type of man, "the temple of God." A story is recorded of a celebrated Rabbi who was mocked by a heathen for supposing that the Most High could be regarded as present in the Jewish Holy of Holies. The Rabbi brought forth a very large mirror and a very small one, and held them before his antagonist, asking him what he saw. The man answered that he saw a very large image of himself in the one mirror, and a small image in the other. Thus, said the Rabbi, do we regard the Universe and the Holy of Holies as both revealing the image of the Most High.

Nature herself continually reminds us that there is an inner aspect to all things. The molecule, the atom, the electron, or whatever name we may give the ultimate of matter on this plane, suggest an inner life, and an inner

meaning everywhere. Why should the *pronaos* of Nature's great temple contain for us the whole of what is worshipful? There is no fear that we shall exhaust the marvels and teachings she has in store for us. When we reach the holy place in any department of truth, and veil after veil is removed — as in the Tabernacle — there will remain veil after veil behind.

The movement of light and life is from the center outwards. The development of wisdom has been from the most holy place to the outer court. The teaching is in parables, that, as Swedenborg explains, men may see a certain measure of truth without the danger of profaning what as yet they are unable to appreciate fully. For, as Jesus taught, to cast pearls before swine is to be guilty of a double folly; they will trample them underfoot, and then they will turn and rend the giver.

Looking at history as Theosophy presents it to us, not as having emerged from barbarism about ten thousand years ago, but as a vast succession of waves, with hollows between, we may at first imagine that the work of the Great Teachers of the past has been one continual failure. How puny the wisdom of today compared with that of the Sons of Light in the Third Race! How far short do we come of the material progress of the Fourth Race in its palmy days! How much has Egypt declined from the time of the early divine rulers! How much has India gone backward! The greatness of Chaldea is marked by shapeless ruins. Is this continual declination to mark forever the history of humanity? Why were the Mighty Masters of Wisdom impotent to bequeath a growing light to future ages; and to prevent a corruption of the Mysteries? We may answer this when we understand why the shadows of evening lengthen, and why the Sun gives less warmth in winter, and why all things have their spring-time and their winter.

The process of creation or manifestation, is from the spiritual towards the material, and then back again to the spiritual. This is the character which is stamped upon all things. Birth and youth, manhood and old age, are not accidental things in Nature. And if the decline of the Ancient Wisdom were to be continuous we might well be pessimistic. If the process were to be always towards materiality the world would be a huge mistake. But it is not so. The darkness breaks, here and there it is shot through with shafts of light. When the lowest point of darkness or materiality is reached, then the Sun of Life and Progress begins to turn, and there will again be springtime and summer. We know this is the way of Nature in the smaller cycles of our common experience, and we may rest assured that the same great law extends throughout those realms of the manifested Universe which as yet we can grasp by intuition rather than by scientific knowledge or intellectual sight.

THE SOURCE AND RISE OF DOGMA

No form of teaching, it would seem, can be guarded absolutely against the risk of misconception. Words often change their meanings, and can easily be misunderstood in the course of time. Teaching by actions which are symbolical, or by pictorial representations, cannot secure to future ages a correct understanding of the meaning of those symbols, or of the suggestive actions. The Egyptian hieroglyphs in the *Book of the Dead* had already become extremely doubtful when later writers gave in the margin their explanation. And to the ordinary reader today the later explanation is often quite as enigmatical as the mystic characters which it attempts to elucidate. The same is true, though in a much smaller degree, in the case of the Hebrew *Talmud*; the ancient writing being in the middle of the page, and the explanation around it. And in the case of the Bible, or even of Greek and Latin classics, who does not know that where a real obscurity occurs in the text the commentators not infrequently leave it more obscure? As to symbolical acts, the things done by Jesus the Christ at the Last Supper are regarded in very different ways by Romanists and extreme Ritualists from what they are regarded by other professing Christians.

Now creeds and dogmas must be viewed in this light. They are, first of all, the presentation in the outer court, so to speak, of deep spiritual truths. Then the process of materialization becomes more or less rapid until we have a crystallization into church dogmas. It is a process similar to the Cosmic process from the fire-mist to earth or solid rocks. Thus the defect of all dogmatic systems is an incurable defect. Or, it can be cured only by the return to that from which the materializing process took its origin. But, besides this, there are other defects in the dogmatizing process which might be, in a great measure, prevented. The dogma-creating spirit is essentially the action of the lower *manas*, or lower mind. It is not simply that it is an attempt to give form and materiality to the Infinite, or the Spiritual, it is the mind, as apart from feeling, giving things its own embodiment.

Now, it is a strange but well-known fact, that no perfect agreement is possible between men so long as truths are viewed from the standpoint of the intellect only, whereas, all men instantly agree on matters of the heart. We can see the truth of this by supposing any good action done before men of the most dissimilar mental status. They will all at once recognize that it is a good thing to help those in distress, to save a person from drowning, or from being burnt. But no two people, very likely, have quite the same idea of God, or would explain any great spiritual truths in quite the same way. Therefore the mischief of creeds and of men being dominated by them, springs from a radical error. Unity; for ordinary men, can never be reached on the plane of the brain-mind. We agree as to what is good, but

we cannot reach the same unanimity in regard to what is true, except, perhaps, in geometry or mathematics. And, still further, the creeds have nearly always changed natural ideas into ideas bounded by merely human-legal relations. Christianity has suffered in this way owing to the fact that a Latin spirit took the place of the Greek spirit. A well-known, and even orthodox professor in Great Britain has said that the change from the Greek *nomos* to the Latin *lex* aptly indicates the change that came over the spirit of early Christianity. Truths, from being vital or natural principles, as the Greek conception favored, became legal in the sense of a Roman law-court. This vast and radical change of spirit runs through all the centuries, and it may be called the spirit of petrification that has changed the living tree into a stone. No wonder then that the Professor just mentioned declares that Christ has been buried for over 1000 years in sacramentarian theories, dogmas, and even in the Bible itself.

No doubt Christianity has retained, though in a changed form, many Greek ideas, as it has borrowed many things from other sources; but the Latin spirit became the spirit of theology, of dogma, and creeds; and the mystic, spiritual element, like the dove sent forth by Noah, found no resting place. Nor did the Reformation cure this lamentable condition of things. The hard dogmatic spirit sprang up in Protestantism as much as ever it had done in the Roman church. And, while there were great and good men, men with spiritual aspirations in many places, their voices were drowned in the general clamor for dogmatic teaching. And even yet the dogmatic spirit rules in the churches, though there have been many hopeful signs during the last forty years or so of a return to the spirit of Jesus. But the creeds and dogmas will die hard, for they are entrenched in rich endowments, and fortified by trust-deeds and all the machinery of ecclesiastical courts. The dying process is sure to come, however; indeed, it is already here. The knell of dogma has sounded. Humanity is moving on the ascending cycle. The great Theosophical Movement, which has never ceased through the ages, is now moving like the birth of Spring, both in the East and in the West. A brighter day is near for those who sat in darkness and in the shadow of death. The time for the prisoners to become free, and for the fetters of creeds and dogmas to fall from the souls of men that they may walk forth in a large liberty and do the works of righteousness, has now come.

Although the birth and decline of dogma in the Western world claim our attention chiefly, it must not be supposed that human nature and the history of religions have been very different in the East from what they have been in the West.

In Europe, church missionaries, for reasons of policy, incorporated native ideas in the new teaching. The old cults baptized with new names made the work of conversion much easier and quicker. Jesuit missionaries in the East, in more recent times, carried this principle of accommodation

to such a length that even Rome thought they were going too far — the line had to be drawn somewhere!

Similar phenomena may be observed in the case of other religions. There is the growth of ecclesiastic power. There is the withholding of knowledge from the people — for knowledge leads to power — in order that the people may be more pliant, and more easily ruled by the hierarchy. There is also the natural tendency of the lower human nature to drag down things spiritual to the material plane; and then, on the part of the teachers there is an insensible, but constant giving way to this worldly tendency in order that ecclesiastical control may be more easily maintained. It has ever been the temptation to gain influence for religion by worldly means. This was part of the temptation of Jesus — worship me and your laudable object of saving humanity will be gained in the shortest and easiest way, all the kingdoms of the Earth shall be thine. This temptation has existed in all ages,— and it is all the more powerful and dangerous, because, in its first stages at least, it is related to a true principle of conduct. When a reformer or teacher wishes to uplift, or help any portion of humanity, he must, of course, put himself on the plane of those he wishes to teach or help. He must be born. He must come to them. He must not antagonize them. He must accommodate himself, and his teaching also, to their needs and capabilities. All this is very simple, and it is very easily seen, and it is most reasonable. But it is just on this matter of accommodation that the ground becomes slippery. As a matter of necessity Truth is veiled to the finite comprehension. The danger is in keeping the same veil too long, instead of gradually withdrawing it in order that a more spiritual perception of the truth may be reached by the people generally. If this were done the process from the outer court to the holy place would be natural and continuous. But in most cases the symbol, or representation, has been allowed to degrade or materialize the conceptions of the worshipers instead of becoming an avenue of more light. This is, in a word, the history of the growth of dogma. It is the growth of the material, the outward, instead of the spiritual. The history of religions is an illustration of this. Even in modern history we see it clearly presented. From the days of the Puritans, say, until now, what a change there has been in giving way to the pleasure-loving side of men's natures. No doubt the Puritan was wrong in supposing that joy was to be banished, and that sour looks and ways were virtuous. But, consider now how the lower nature is petted and pleased. In how many cases do we not see the bribing of the lower nature to get people to attend church and become religious, or appear to be so! While it is not the part of wisdom to antagonize those whom we would uplift, it is not the part of wisdom to pander to the lower natures of those whose lower natures we wish to purify and transmute into perfect oneness with the Higher Self within.

This fundamental conception lies at the root of all religions. It has to be seen clearly if we would trace the working of Truth and Justice in the education of humanity. Every revelation veils while it reveals. The danger is when this is forgotten, and when the imperfect and impartial representation is taken for what is perfect. We read that in the Jewish tabernacle the ends of the staves which were in the rings of the Ark protruded so that the veil which concealed the most holy place was pressed outward. This was a continual reminder to all who saw it, that the Ark *was there* behind the veil. In all religions the thought should be kept in mind that the symbol is only a symbol and not the thing itself; that the dogma or creed is only an imperfect, tentative presentation of deep spiritual truths as seen by imperfect minds; and that the creed or dogma is capable of revision, and should be revised from time to time. An old writer says, "Words are the wise man's counters, but they are the money of fools." The same may be said of all attempts to put in concrete form what is spiritual. To the wise man it is a symbol only, a reminder of the truth, but to the foolish it takes the place of reality. This limiting, materializing, or crystallizing tendency, this mistaking of the outer court for the holy place, is a great danger to which humanity has been liable through all the ages, and it is a danger still. The temptation to imagine that perfection has been reached, or that the complete Truth has been attained is one which we need continually to guard against. It has always ministered to the feeling of self-content, or self-sufficiency to think — "We have the only true religion, the only correct doctrine" — and men in all lands and ages have thus been hindered from further progress. Closely related to this is the tendency to condemn others. We need the wider outlook and the larger heart to enable us to regard all men as our brethren, and learners in the same great School of Life.

DIFFERENT DOGMAS OF BAPTISM

If we begin with the life of man in the flesh we shall see that from birth until death he has been encased in dogmas. Baptismal regeneration is first in order of time. With some churches baptism is said to make the child "an heir of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." It was the strange fiction of the church that the child came into this world under the power of evil. Instead of thinking with Wordsworth that "heaven lies about us in our infancy"; or that "trailing clouds of glory do we come from God, who is our home," the Council of Trent confirmed the dogma of centuries, that "from the fall of man till his baptism, the Devil has full power over man, and possesses him by right." This gives the priesthood a very powerful control over the parents, and also over the child from the very beginning of life. If the child is born with an evil spirit which has to be cast out, and the priest is the only person who can exorcise the evil

spirit, then it goes without saying that the priest must be all-important, and baptism of the utmost necessity. If the dogma be true, no father or mother could wish to neglect such a miraculous rite as this. There is a double exorcism of the evil spirit, first when the priest says, “come out of this child thou evil spirit, and make room for the Holy Ghost”; and afterwards at the font when the priest again exorcises the evil spirit, and rubs a little of his own spittle with the thumb of his right hand on ear and nostril, saying, “be thou opened” (*ephphatha*), in imitation of the action of Jesus (Mark vii. 34). Then, after anointing with oil in the form of a cross between the shoulders, and calling on the child to renounce the Devil and all his works, the priest pours holy water thrice on the child’s head in the name of the Trinity.

Did the church get this elaborate rite from Jesus, or the early apostolic practice, or did it concoct the thing partly out of its own fancy, and partly out of scraps of ancient religions? Anyone can see from the New Testament what a simple thing baptism was. We read that great crowds went out to the baptism of John, “Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and they were baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.” (Matt. iii. 5.) In the days of the apostles, “repent and be baptized, every one of you,” are the words which St. Peter is said to have used. From the former passage it is evident that baptism had been in use before the coming of Jesus. The Christian church did not invent it, but adopted it. Jesus was baptized, though it is not said that any of the apostles were ever baptized. At any rate the rite was a very simple one in the earliest days of Christianity. It had a very beautiful significance. As water cleanses the body, and keeps us in health, and without it we could not live, it was regarded as a fitting symbol of the action of truth in cleansing the mind, and producing mental well-being. All must be familiar with such expressions as, “Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.” “Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.” But, in later times baptism became a very elaborate rite; and Professor Lindsay in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, after describing some of these ceremonies, says: “It could easily be shown that a great deal of this complex ceremonial took its origin from the introduction of Pagan ceremonies into the Christian worship.” H. P. Blavatsky shows how the Romish church has borrowed extensively from Paganism, without always making acknowledgment.

Among the ancients one form of purification was symbolized by the use of water, and another by fire. In *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I, p. 519, we read concerning the great pyramid:

Internally, it was a majestic fane, in whose somber recesses were performed the Mysteries, and whose walls had often witnessed the initiation scenes of members of the royal family. The porphyry sarcophagus, which

Professor Piazzi Smyth, Astronomer Royal of Scotland, degrades into a corn-bin, was the *baptismal font*, upon emerging from which, the neophyte was “born again,” and became an *adept*.

According to Apuleius, cleansing by water always preceded initiation into the Egyptian and Eleusinian Mysteries. Among the Jews, converts were admitted only after purification by water, to signify that they were cleansed of all their sins. Fire and water were sometimes combined. Ovid (*Fasti* iv, 727) says, “Often, in truth, have I leaped over the fires placed in three rows, and the dripping bough of laurel has flung the sprinkled waters.” Dionysius tells us that Romulus, while building the city of Rome had fires kindled and made his people jump through them for purposes of purification or expiation. Payne Knight says that among the Hindûs, Irish, and Phoenicians, passing through the fire was a well-known ceremony. In *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 566, *note*, we read that,

In the Cycle of Initiation, which was very long, water represented the first and lower steps toward purification, while trials connected with *fire* came last. Water could regenerate the body of matter; FIRE alone, that of the *inner* Spiritual man.

In *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. II, pp. 134, 138, it is said that,

Baptism is one of the oldest rites and was practiced by all the nations in their Mysteries, as sacred ablutions.... In the Mithraic sacrifices, during the initiation, a preliminary scene of death was simulated by the neophyte, and it preceded the scene showing him himself “being born again by the rite of baptism.”

And again, we are told that the Brâhman priest, in order to wash the images of the Gods from the sins of the people, plunges them three times into the water in the name of the mystic trinity. This is very suggestive of the Romanist ritual, in which, as we have seen, there is a threefold application of water; in the name of the Trinity. In the time of Tertullian baptism was well known to be an ancient rite. In reference to the worship of Isis, he says: “In certain sacred rites of the heathen, the mode of initiation is by baptism.” And in his day there were some who protested against water-baptism as being opposed to the spirituality of Jesus’ religion, and a revival of heathenish and Jewish customs. But these early Quakers were rebuked by the Fathers in the choice language often adopted by early religious controversialists, and were called *serpents*, for, says Tertullian: “vipers, asps, and king serpents themselves mostly look, after places that are dry and without water.” (Bonwick, *Egyptian Belief and Modern Thought*.)

The rite of baptism seems to have been practiced in all the great countries of the world. The dogmatic teachings in regard to it are evidently not derived from the teaching or practice of Jesus, or his immediate disciples, but are in part a transference of ancient ceremonies used when adults were being admitted into the Mysteries. It is but fair to say that most of the Protestant Churches regard baptism as coming in the room of the Old Testament rite by which the children of the Jews were, on the eighth day, admitted into the Jewish Church; and, except for the use of water, they also abjure all forms and dogmas in connection with baptism. Among Protestants, baptism and the Eucharist, or Lord's Supper, are the only recognized sacraments; because it is held that a *Christian* Sacrament must be an ordinance instituted by *Christ himself*. At the same time it is acknowledged that baptism existed before the time of Jesus, just as the Passover existed before the Lord's Supper. It is held, however, that Jesus gave a new significance and power by his command to observe these two rites.

THE "LORD'S SUPPER"

About no point, not even about baptism has the conflict been waged more fiercely than over the meaning of the Eucharist. The four places in the New Testament where the institution of the Lord's Supper is mentioned are Matt. xxvi, Mark xiv, Luke xxii, and I Cor. xi, and they substantially agree. The account is, that after a meal with his disciples on the night before the betrayal, Jesus instituted an ordinance which the disciples were to observe in his memory. It is said that in doing so,

as they were eating, Jesus took a loaf, and blessed, and brake it; and he gave to the disciples, and said, Take, eat, this is my body. And he took the cup and gave *thanks* (hence the term Eucharist), and gave to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the covenant which is shed for many unto remission of sins. (Matt. xxvi.)

St. Paul, whose account may be the earliest, mentions only one giving of thanks, that before breaking the bread. The phrase, "unto remission of sins," is peculiar to the gospel of Matthew. From the four accounts it is evident that Jesus used the bread and wine to represent himself, his body and blood, and that the disciples were to keep the rite in his memory. Out of this simple ordinance the most astounding dogmas have grown. What was intended by Jesus to help towards a real unity, or *communion*, or oneness, has become "a stone of stumbling"; and an occasion of foolish pretension, and uncharitableness. St. Paul, too, dwelt on the idea that the Christ-spirit should be realized as the One Life in all disciples; just as in a family all partake of the same physical food, and have bodily nourishment.

Very soon, however, something of a magical influence was ascribed to the bread and wine after having been blessed by the priest. And, in an early canon (xviii, *Nicaea*) we find that deacons must not give the bread and wine to priests, but receive it from them; also the deacons must not sit on the same row of seats with the priests! Alas! for the true spirit of communion, or oneness. This striving for front seats has had much to do with the delay of the coming of the Christos. How different this from the spirit of Christ! How different is this canon of the council of bishops from the teaching of Theosophy, "Step out from sunlight into shade to make more room for others."

The doctrine of transubstantiation is the name given to this dogma promulgated by the Roman church concerning the Lord's Supper. According to this dogma, after the priest blesses the bread and wine they are changed into the "body, blood, soul, and divinity of Christ," and they have a magical effect upon the recipient. It is not maintained that the *qualities* of the bread and wine are changed, but it is held that their *essence* is changed. That is to say, no priest would take the bread and wine if he knew that some person had put poison in them. Though the priest declares that his blessing changes the *essence* of the bread and wine into the essence of Christ he does not pretend that it alters the *qualities*, or phenomena! For it could be too easily proved that it does not.

Luther held that while there was no change of essence, yet there was a real presence of Christ *together with* the bread and wine. This dogma is called *consubstantiation*, and it is the view held by the Lutheran church. Zwingli regarded the Eucharist as mainly a commemorative act. Calvin held something of a middle position between Luther and Zwingli. The "Confession of Faith" made at Westminster, and established by acts of Parliament in 1649 and 1690, declared very clearly that the Lord's Supper was not to be regarded as a "sacrifice," but only commemorative of Christ and what he had done. It also declared that in this sacrament there was no change either in essence (substance) or qualities; and that the true partaking of it was a spiritual realizing of Christ in the heart of the believer. It is important to notice the teachings regarding the Eucharist because it is a very vital question in connection with the Reformation in England, and it is coming up at the present time. In a work on the *History of Ritualism* recently published, it is maintained that while the struggle between Henry VIII and the Pope was mainly over the question as to who was ruler in England, yet the deeper cause of division between the Reformers and the Romanists was the so-called "Sacrifice of the Mass." In an extant letter from Pole, the Pope's Legate, this is clearly stated. Latimer declared that he had "read the New Testament over seven times, yet could not find the mass in it." The word "mass," by the way, had no essential connection with the Eucharist, but is a (presumed) contraction of "*Ite, missa est*," the words of dismissal to the congregation. {Literally, 'Go, it is sent.' Or as

used, 'Go, the mass is ended.')} It is a term entirely inappropriate as applied to the ceremony of the Eucharist and it cannot be traced back beyond the time of Ambrose.

While the Eucharist is said to be traced back to Jesus, like many other Christian rites and dogmas it finds close parallels in the religious customs of ancient times. In *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. II, pp. 43, 44, we read:

Nor does the Mystery of the Eucharist pertain to Christians alone. Godfrey Higgins proves that it was instituted many hundreds of years before the "Paschal Supper," and says that "the sacrifice of bread and wine was common to many ancient nations." Cicero mentions it in his works and wonders at the strangeness of the rite. There had been an esoteric meaning attached to it from the first establishment of the Mysteries, and the *Eucharistia* is one of the oldest rites of antiquity. With the hierophants it had nearly the same significance as with the Christians. Ceres was *bread*, and Bacchus was *wine*; the former meaning regeneration of life from the seed, and the latter — the grape — the emblem of wisdom and knowledge; the accumulation of the spirit of things, and the fermentation and subsequent strength of that esoteric knowledge being justly symbolized by wine.

Froude is said to have written in 1891 to Professor Johnson, author of *Antiqua Mater*, saying: "I have long been convinced that the Christian Eucharist is but a continuation of the Eleusinian Mysteries. St. Paul, in using the word *teleiois* (I Cor, ii. 6) confirms this." And he (Froude) refers to the words in Cicero, *De Natura Deorum* (xvi): "although bread is called Ceres and wine Liber, no one can be so foolish as to imagine he eats and drinks God." Bonwick (*Egyptian Belief*, p. 417 *et seq.*) says that the Egyptians declared the bread after the sacerdotal rites to be mystically the body of Isis and Osiris. The cakes were round and were placed on the altar. He quotes Gliddon and Melville as saying that they were "identical in shape with the consecrated cake of the Roman Catholic and Eastern churches," and that "the Egyptians marked the holy bread with St. Andrew's cross." Bonwick adds, that

The *Presence* bread was broken before being distributed by the priests to the people, and was supposed to become the flesh and blood of the Deity. The miracle was wrought by the hand of the officiating priest, who blessed the food. Singularly enough, the mark of that action is still to be seen in specimens remaining in Egypt; for Rougé tells us, "The bread offerings bear the *imprint of the fingers*, the mark of consecration."

In Egypt, as in Rome, the bread was given to the people, but not the wine. In this the difference between the words of Jesus in the New Testament, and the Egypto-Romanist rite is very marked. The Persians had a similar rite in which a solid and a liquid were used. In the Dionysiac cult

wine was used to represent the life of the world. Justin Martyr speaking of the Eucharist says:

In imitation of which the Devil did the like in the Mysteries of Mithras, for you either know or may know that they take bread and a cup of water in the sacrifices of those that are initiated, and *pronounce certain words over it. (Ibid.)*

In regard to the rites of Mithras it may not be out of place to quote the words of such a learned Asian scholar as Renan (*Hibbert Lecture* 1880, p. 35 *et seq.*). He says:

In the second and third centuries Mithraic worship attained an extraordinary prevalence. I sometimes permit myself to say that if Christianity had not carried the day, Mithraicism would have become the religion of the world. It had its mysterious meetings; its chapels, which bore a strong resemblance to little churches. It forged a very lasting bond of brotherhood between its initiates: it had a Eucharist, a Supper so like the Christian Mysteries, that good Justin Martyr, the Apologist, can find only one explanation of the apparent identity, namely, that Satan, in order to deceive the human race, determined to imitate the Christian ceremonies, and so stole them. A Mithraic sepulcher in the Roman Catacombs is as edifying, and presents as elevated a mysticism as the Christian tombs.

King, in his work on *The Gnostics and Their Remains*, p. 126, says:

The worship of Mithras long kept its ground under Christian Emperors in the capital itself, and doubtless survived its overthrow there for many generations longer in the remote and then semi-independent provinces.

The point of chief interest in comparing Romanist ritual and dogma with those of pre-Christian times, is not simply the fact that the primitive simplicity of Jesus is lost in the picture composed of colors borrowed from ancient religions; but the chief interest is found in the fact that in the course of time those ancient rites and symbols became darkened with superstition and enthrallment. Liberation can only come through men waking to the light of Truth; in that light they can, if they will, walk forth as freed men. As the light of the New Age, upon which we have now entered, becomes greater and greater it will be impossible for humanity to sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death. It will feel shame for having crouched so long beneath the reign of dogmatic forms. The study of comparative religion, and the gradual turning over, by archaeology, of the leaves of a forgotten past; the general advance of thought on many lines; and last, but not least, the fuller revelation of the Ancient Wisdom-Religion, given in Theosophy, is making it impossible for the old dogmas to retain their dogmatic influence much longer. The sunlight still floods the land, though we may

shut our windows. We do not change things by hiding our heads in the sand.

THE TRINITY

The dogma of the Trinity is another of those dogmas which is older than Christianity. But here, perhaps, less than anywhere else can Christianity be said to spring from ordinary Judaism. The Divine Unity — “Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is One” — sounds from every synagogue. The Jews before the Captivity were given to various forms of idolatry, but their conception of the Most High as a Unity, not as a Trinity, marks Jewish thought from first to last. In other words, they kept the First Commandment, even when they did not keep the Second. And yet the esoteric teaching with them was wonderfully like the esoteric teaching of other ancient peoples. Franck, writing of the *Sepher Jetzirah*, says:

The last word of this system is the substitution of absolute divine Unity for every idea of Dualism, for that pagan philosophy which saw in matter an eternal substance whose laws were not in accord with the Divine Will... in fact, in the *Sepher Jetzirah*, God, considered as the Infinite, and consequently indefinable Being extended throughout all things by his power and existence, is while above, yet not outside of numbers, sounds, and letters — the principles and general laws which we recognize.

In the *Kabbalah* we have Unity as the highest conception of the Illimitable One:

In Him is an illimitable abyss of glory, and from it there goeth forth one little spark which maketh the glory of the sun, and of the moon, and of the stars. (Mathers, *Kabbalah Unveiled*, p. 19.)

The Illimitable One exists as a Trinity in the veils of the first three Sephiroth. From this proceeds the *Intellectual world*, considered as a trinity: *Kether*, the crown, *Binah*, intelligence, and *Chokmah*, wisdom. In fact the esoteric teaching in the *Kabbalah* and that found in Eastern philosophy very closely correspond. This may be seen at a glance in *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. II, p. 264. But, for the ordinary Jewish thinker the Divine Unity, or Monotheism, has been the chief, if not the only teaching.

The success of Islam is due in no small degree to its theological definiteness, and its simplicity: “There is no God but Allah and Muhammed is his prophet.” We might sum up Judaism in similar words: God is One and Moses is his prophet.

The Divine Unity, and the Divine manifested as a Trinity are equally true, and both may be traced to the Ancient Wisdom-Religion. But the modern anthropomorphic Trinity is a very degraded fiction which later

ages have fashioned and worshiped. Some theologians have tried, without much success, to show that there is a great difference between a triad and a trinity; the former, of course, being the Asian, and the later the ecclesiastical term, and concept. The ordinary dogma concerning the Trinity is to this effect: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are not three Gods, but only one God, yet each is God. They are three, and yet only one. They exist as three persons. It should be noted that the term "*person*" as employed here is claimed to be not the "*persona*" from which the word was originally derived. The ordinary conception of personality implies limitation, but the theologian does not admit that the Persons of the Trinity are finite. Nor are they merely "*aspects*," though that certainly comes nearer it than any other term that can be employed. In truth, when we try to describe, in words of human language, the Infinite, we must very soon become aware of their inadequacy. Our words are born of finite ideas, and are often closely allied to material things, therefore it is impossible that they should suffice to define, describe, or denote the Illimitable, the Absolute. Even our word *spirit* refers originally to the "breath," and the terms "Infinite," and "Absolute" are simply negative terms. "Most High" carries with it the conception of higher and lower and we know that such ideas cannot apply to Deity. Every term in language must be more or less anthropomorphic; but there is a very low form of anthropomorphic conception popularly in use in regard to the Trinity. The first person of the Trinity is stern, and is looked upon as a judge; the Son is merciful; the third person of the Trinity is less capable of being expressed in human language, therefore ordinary conceptions are much more vague, much less definite about the Holy Ghost than about the Father and the Son. These very narrow and imperfect conceptions of God might be regarded as comparatively harmless, were it not that such frightful dogmas have been built upon them. The common orthodox theology is fabricated out of misunderstood esoteric teaching. Indeed all metaphysical teachings must be more or less misunderstood by the mass of humanity. Few now regard Adam and Eve as the progenitors of humanity 6000 years ago. The idea of a garden in which trees of knowledge, and of life, grow, is seen to be allegorical. The "Fall," as taught by orthodoxy, never existed except in theological imagination, and it is only a travesty of the true, Ancient Teaching. The fall was the descent of spirit, of the Sons of Light, into matter; and it was part of the great evolutionary process, leading from good to better, best.

But even theologians themselves have not always been of the same mind in explaining the functions of the Trinity. For about 1000 years it was the orthodox teaching that Christ by his death paid the Devil in order that man might be thus redeemed, or bought back. Man, it was held, had sold himself to the Devil; and even the Devil must not be cheated! From the time of Anselm onward the "improved" explanation was that Christ

paid the penalty to God the Father, seeing that man by his sin had become the prisoner of divine justice. It was the old Roman law (*lex*) idea, of God as a judge, again becoming prominent. Justice had to be satisfied. Man had sinned against the INFINITE, and that was held to be an *infinite transgression* — therefore no amount of suffering on man's part could exhaust it, man being finite. Karmic retribution was held to be inadequate. Spurgeon and others held that sin could not exhaust itself: "Man sinned while he suffered, therefore by the very nature and necessity of the case, sin was an eternal evil; eternity could not exhaust it." Man could only be saved by an infinite sufferer in his stead, *i.e.*, by Christ. Against this, many of the more liberal theologians held that a *finite creature* (man) could not commit an *infinite sin*.

The whole theological conception is a miserable nightmare of ages of darkness. Truly man makes his God in his own image; and the supposed relationship of the persons of the Trinity to each other, and to man, is very much on the level of the ordinary law court. It is often said that Christ came to reveal God to man as the heavenly Father; but in a very few centuries the churches, saturated with the legal and materialistic spirit of Rome, made a trinity in which the first person is an implacable judge who must have full payment even though the innocent should suffer for the guilty.

Now, this dogma of the Trinity, this unworthy conception of the Eternal, truly belongs to the outer court. What then is the truth, the inner teaching, of which the ordinary theological dogma is such a perversion? It is a fact that on the great stairway of the Universe the higher helps the lower. The soul must descend into matter to fulfil the great cycle of evolution, of the Great Breath. The Great Helpers may be truly said to lay their lives down as a pathway for weaker lives. As the Sun gives light and life to the planets, so in like manner does the divine principle run through all from the highest down to man and beyond. It is in a sense suffering for others; but it is that of the mother for her child; that of the teacher for his pupil; not that of a guilty person going free by casting his sins on someone else.

The Eastern conception of the One Life manifesting itself under the threefold aspects of Brahmâ, Vishnu, and Śiva, has probably become nearly as much materialized in India as the corresponding dogma has in Western lands. The right conception can be reached only by seeking the primitive teaching, the shrine, not the *pronaos*. To study the septenary constitution of man is the best way to get a true conception of what is above man: above, and yet in man; for we are even now temples of God, and the Holy Ghost dwells in us, as the Christian scripture says.

This is the Ancient Teaching which is needed to give wisdom to man. To realize that there is in us the potency of all the planes of the Universe, while, at the same time we feel, "not as though we had already attained,"

this is to have true humility and sublime hope. "For now are we the Sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be." Man has within him the Holy of Holies, the Spark of the One Flame. To lift the lower nature into closer and closer union, or harmony with this Central Shrine is to live in harmony with the Soul and movement of the Universe. Nothing can prevent the perfect justice, or Karma, of the man of sin within us reaping what he has sown; but by the union of the lower nature with the Christ in us a mighty change of relation is brought about. As this is studied and realized by men generally the crudities of ecclesiasticism, and all the ecclesiastical fabrication and manipulation of sacraments to secure heaven will vanish like the shapes of darkness before the rising Sun. Much of it has already vanished. And every few years the world of thinking people is bursting through dogma after dogma, as the growing tree casts its bark.

THE DEVIL AND ATONEMENT

Next to the Trinity the most important dogma to be found in ecclesiasticism is concerning the Devil. Many have maintained that without the Devil the church could not exist. It is one of the saddest aspects of our lower human nature that in the East and West alike such horrible pictures of devils and hells should have been invented. Happily this dogma is no longer accepted by intelligent men; though not a few among the ignorant and superstitious are still in the bondage of fear. No doubt there may be a certain loosening of restraint as the old terrors pass away, and the lower selfish nature has not yet come under the control and impulse of the soul within. No doubt men who have been terrorized into morality by fear of the Devil, or hell, will not all at once learn to hate evil in itself and avoid it, and to do good for the love of it; but true morality is in the motive, and fear is an infinitely lower motive than love.

Closely connected with the dogmas of the Trinity and of the Devil, is that of the atonement, which we have touched upon already. The true atonement is the transforming of the lower nature into the image of the Christos within. This is the real alchemy, the change of the lead of the lower man into the pure gold of the higher. Of all miracles, or wonders, this is the greatest; compared with it the transmutation of physical substances would be trivial. But dogmatic teaching has completely changed this great fact of Nature into a legal or mercantile transaction. By the "propitiatory sacrifice" of Christ, as it is called, God is said to be reconciled to man, or as others put it, man is reconciled unto God. The Ancient and True Teaching is that a great vital change takes place in man, in harmony with Cosmic Law, or the Life of the Universe. The inmost of man is indeed the secret place of the Most High. The lower nature of man corresponds to the *pronaos* of the temple. Instead of this, orthodox dogma makes God a something outside of man, who must be propitiated for

Adam's offense in the Garden of Eden. Instead of the return of the prodigal son which Christ pictures; instead of the great Cosmic process of return to the Divine, of which the change in man is a clear type and illustration, dogmatic theology gives us the noisy machinery of a law-court. For the heavenly Father revealed by Jesus we have the Roman magistrate. And Man, instead of being a Son of God, as the Bible says, is declared by the church to be the child of the Devil. Salvation is made a legal or mechanical thing, for the supposed magical power of the properly ordained priest is said to drive out the Devil and introduce the Divine Spirit. There is still need for Jesus to say, "the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you they are spirit, and they are life."

It may easily be seen that the whole vast structure of dogma is like an inverted pyramid. For if the story of Adam and Eve be allegorical teaching about primitive man before he had a coat of skin (that is, a *physical* body) then how baseless are all the dogmas which have been reared upon this allegory read as a literal fact! History is the great drama of the soul. There is no such thing as *profane* history; all is the shadow of the Divine. The Incarnation is the very life of the Universe, and true on all planes. It is the indwelling of the Christ, or Christos, "Christ *in you* the hope of glory," as the apostle says.

DIVINE INCARNATIONS

As part of the great "Redemption," or "Return," it has been the Ancient Teaching that in times of great need in the life of humanity, at certain cyclic periods, a lofty embodiment of the Divine takes place. Thus, in the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*, ch. iv, Krishna says:

I produce myself among creatures, O son of Bhârata, whenever there is a decline of virtue and an insurrection of vice and injustice in the world; and thus I incarnate from age to age for the preservation of the just, the destruction of the wicked, and the establishment of righteousness.

It is this great world-fact that helps us to understand the wonderful resemblances recorded concerning the Great Teachers throughout the ages. It is well known that the idea of the Logos was common to Egyptians, Hindûs, Persians, Chaldeans, and other nations. From what source except the great Wisdom-Religion could these different nations have obtained it? Among the Egyptians Thoth is called the Word, or Logos. "I know the mystery of the Divine Word," is the translation of the characters found on a stele in the Louvre. Lenormant speaks of the doctrine of the Logos as being almost universal. Bonwick says: "The Incarnation idea is well illustrated in Egyptian theology. It is not the vulgar, coarse and sensual story as in Greek mythology, but refined, moral, and spiritual." (*op. cit.* p.

406.) And in this connection the author of the Tract Society's work on Egypt writes:

This most ancient theology, taught to the initiated and concealed from the vulgar, that God created all things at first by the primary emanation from Himself, his first-born, who was the author and giver of all wisdom and all knowledge in heaven and in Earth, being at the same time the Wisdom and the Word of God.

According to Mr. Sharpe, the Egyptologist, the whole idea of the incarnation and birth by a virgin is depicted on the wall of a temple at Thebes. Gerald Massey in his *Egyptian Exodus*, has these words:

We shall see the good Osiris, and his Son the Word made true,
Who died and rose — the Karast! — in the Aah-en-Ru.
He who daily dies to save us, passing Earth and Hades through;
Lays his life down for a pathway to the Aah-en-Ru.

Among the Assyrians the Logos was known as the *Marduk*. He was the eldest Son of Hea; and was named the merciful one. In Kitto's *Biblical Cyclopaedia* we read concerning the Logos:

This mysterious doctrine of Emanation is at once the most universal and the most memorable of traditions; so universal, that traces of it may be found throughout the whole world; so ancient, that its source is hidden in the grey mists of antiquity.

It must be acknowledged by every impartial student of the history of comparative religion that the dogmas of all religions represent a very materialistic, and a very inadequate conception of the One Life and Its manifestations. But, notwithstanding the great changes and obscurations produced by dogmatic theology, there is generally some point or points which serve as a connecting link between the Ancient Wisdom-Religion and the ecclesiastical dogmas of today. We have seen how unworthy are the modern anthropomorphic conceptions of the Eternal. Man has made his God in his own image truly, not according to the glory of the inner sanctuary, but after the likeness of the outer court, the lower human mind. And humanity as a whole must suffer on account of these false conceptions of the Highest.

“ORIGINAL SIN” AND PERFECTION

There is another matter of vital importance — man's idea of his own nature; and in regard to this the church dogmas have exerted a most baleful influence. The doctrine of innate human depravity, or of original sin, has

settled like a dark cloud over a large part of the human race. The true, celestial origin of the real Self was lost sight of in the course of ages, and man's conception of himself became more and more confined to, and identified with the body and the lower mind. Hence it is that in the Old Testament we find very little said about the real nature of man. The true knowledge was no doubt concealed in symbols and in ritual; but, for the mass of the people, the Old Testament scriptures teach little about the hereafter. In the New Testament the consciousness of immortality becomes clearer; but even in the writings of St. Paul we do not find a very distinct teaching as to our human nature. So much is this the case that scholars maintain that the threefold nature of man as spirit, soul, and body, cannot be very clearly deduced from the New Testament use of these words in one or two places, soul and spirit being often used interchangeably. So it came to be the common notion that man was a body possessing a soul, instead of man realizing that he *is a soul*, and that the body is only a temporary covering — an outer coat — and no part of the real man at all. It thus remained for the scientific materialists of the present day to discover that man is only a collection of atoms, some of whose functions are called mind! Who will deny that humanity has reached the lowest point of the arc of descent into matter? The materialist is a monist, but to him matter is the one and only thing, and not spirit. And yet St. Paul had said plainly that there is a natural body and that there is a spiritual body. And the image of the grain of wheat which he uses was a teaching which he either saw, or might have seen in the Mysteries. The ancient oracle "Know Thyself," must ever be regarded as of supreme importance; and, what we know ourselves to be is the yardstick by which we measure all things else.

For popular teaching it is perhaps sufficient to speak of the higher mind, and the lower mind; or the carnal man, and the spiritual man, of St. Paul. Everyone is at once conscious of two forces struggling within; a selfish power, and an unselfish power. This struggle is the Great War, the Holy War. But for many thoughtful people the knowledge of man as septenary, and his correspondence, therefore, with this septenary Universe, as taught by Theosophy, must prove to be a revelation of the greatest importance. It is not merely a speculative truth, it has many practical bearings also. As we study ourselves and get to understand better what we are, we see more clearly the path to deliverance. We understand better the tyranny of the lower nature, whose selfishness has caused so much misery in the world; and we are enabled to reach to the true and harmonious order and relationship of all the principles. This is that state when the Divine Will is 'done on Earth as it is in heaven.' This is the real meaning of the "coming of the Kingdom." We may be perfectly certain that nothing can be more hurtful to man than this low and erroneous idea of human nature which dogmatic teaching has foisted upon the world for

nearly two thousand years. On the other hand, the true conception of man's sevenfold nature, and the realization of his inherent divinity, must prove a source of light, hope, and strength. Being conscious of the Christos as our *real Self* within, we must feel that "upward calling" of which the initiate apostle speaks.

Dogmatic theology as expressed in creeds may be likened to a hard shell which prevents the germ inside from expanding. There is a germ of truth which may be traced to very ancient times, but this germ, instead of being allowed to expand and become a tree of wisdom, is imprisoned through the ages. The whole system by which creeds have been made and perpetuated is entirely hurtful to man's inner nature. In the first place, from a very small beginning, a vast and complicated statement is concocted through much debate, passion, and conflict. The decision, of perhaps a bare majority of men, prompted in some instances by spite against some person, is the foundation of a creed, or some part of a creed. And even were the elements of passion and prejudice absent: even if absolute unanimity existed among those making the creed, there is no reason why their opinions should become a binding law upon future generations, making progress difficult or impossible. In the very nature of things men's minds should expand, their views widen; therefore, there should be a revision of creeds periodically. Even the best statement of beliefs must be regarded as tentative. Instead of this, we find that by a majority vote of not very learned or impartial men, in a semi-barbarous age, a dogma is fastened round the neck of future ages of progress and enlightenment. It is then regarded as heresy to attempt to amend the creed; which, though it may be called the "subordinate standard," becomes virtually the only, and infallible standard and authority. But this is not the whole of the mischief. Every charitable person who endows a church holding such or such a creed is making creed-revision more and more impossible. It is a well-known fact that trust-deeds have more than once tied the hands of reformers. The celebrated case of the Free Church of Scotland is a case in point. There, the whole body of the church, almost (1100 churches out of 1128), voted to join with a sister church, the United Presbyterian, holding the same creed; but the minority of 28 held out on some small points of church government, and eventually got a decision in its favor by the House of Lords. The result was world-wide consternation, for if the highest legal authority in England was right, the effects would be very far-reaching. It required a special Act of Parliament to settle matters on any sort of logical basis, and even then, so it is reported, the 28 ministers and churches of the minority got all they could reasonably use of the total property, which had amounted to many millions, in colleges, schools, etc. in Scotland, India, and elsewhere. May be there was some working of Karma in this for the action of the Madras people to H. P. Blavatsky in 1884.

With the best of motives those endowing creeds, and the like, may be doing much mischief to posterity. And it is difficult to know how to improve matters permanently in this respect. For, it is clearly a good thing to assist with money, or the like, a form of teaching which a man believes to be true. In connection with this the general law should be kept in mind, the more particular the creed, the less is its extension. The shorter and more general the creed, then the greater its extension, or the greater number of minds that can accept it. But the radical difficulty arises out of the nature of the lower mind itself. It should be possible for men to unite on a *love of what is good and true*, rather than on the basis that they will all agree as to certain dogmas. As a step to this, the creeds should be laid on the shelf — and kept there — as historical documents; interesting relics of an outlived past, along with the thumbscrews and other mementoes of “the good old times.” Religion should be a healer and unifier, but dogmatic religion has been a prolific source of strife in all lands, and in all ages. And often, the smaller the points of dispute, the more fiercely has the war of sects raged.

In this age, the Ancient Wisdom-Religion, Theosophy, comes to point the disputants to the source, the one source, from which religions and philosophies as well as races and nations have sprung. The dogmatic teachings have obscured and perverted the truth, and produced lack of unity and then strife, among men who should be living together as brethren. At first, many do not like this. Each person and each sect claims a higher position than others. The very name of Comparative Religion has been hateful to narrow-minded people. Nevertheless, the process of light-bringing goes on, and even those churches which are the last to progress have advanced a little; though, if one may judge by the public utterances of some, the tendency is to go backward rather than forward. A recent telegram states that the Professor of a celebrated British University declared that the cure for the present unrest in religious matters would be a return to Calvinism! Many have not advanced much from that position, therefore the return would not be a long journey.

THE SEAT OF AUTHORITY

There are two other dogmas which deserve mention — the plenary inspiration of the Bible, and Papal infallibility — though neither can be said to spring from the Ancient Wisdom-Religion.

As to the dogma of Papal Infallibility, while it does not directly concern any church except the Roman, yet we find in other denominations something of the same tendency to make someone, or something, a standard by which to measure right and wrong. It is an infallible book, or an infallible creed, if not an infallible pope. The absurdity of regarding any person as infallible, even when speaking *ex cathedra*, is too evident, even from the history of the Roman church itself, to deserve serious attention.

It finds its reason of existence only from the fact that very many people wish someone else to think for them, on religious matters at any rate. But, however useful external helps may be, the primary authority is the conscience, the voice of the God within; as Dr. Martineau has clearly shown in his well-known work, *The Seat of Authority in Religion*. Indeed the most servile worshiper of external authority must, at least once in his life, exercise the privilege of judgment, when he abdicates to another his own right to judge in matters of religion. The true cure for this folly is to understand the real nature of man, as made known in Theosophy, and to respond to the voice of the Christos within — that voice which comes from the inner shrine of the human soul. The same applies to a book supposed to be infallible. The different parts composing this book had, at one time or other, to be examined and judged by men no better than ourselves, as to whether or not they should be made part of the canon of scripture. The judgment, the conscience, had to be used to decide in the first instance what writings should be regarded as the Bible. Sometimes one book was rejected, sometimes another was rejected. And as Reuss has shown in his history of the Canon, its formation has been the result of a gradual growth, and not accomplished in a little while, as many suppose.

Then, as to the question of inspiration, while it is a self-evident fact that certain scriptures carry with them the evidence of a lofty source, it is quite a different thing to declare that all the words of the Old and New Testaments are God-inspired. This is the doctrine of plenary inspiration — an infallible book — and it is based specially on II *Timothy*, iii. 16, “all scripture is given by inspiration of God” etc. The Revised Version more correctly renders it, “every scripture inspired of God is also profitable,” etc., which conveys a very different meaning from that commonly given to it.

The question of “what is Inspiration?” cannot be discussed here; but the general principle may be noted, that every channel through which light comes has a modifying influence on it. This is true in the spiritual as it is in the material world. Human thought, human language, individual peculiarities — all these stamp themselves on any message, even: if given from the highest source. Then, as to the transmission of this scripture, all we can venture is to hope and believe that it is substantially as first given. Absolute infallibility cannot be entertained for a moment. And, after all, what better criterion can we apply to a writing than that it has met human needs and stood the test of time, that it has become a great classic? The more human the scripture is, the more it is divine. Jesus appealed to his hearers to accept or reject his: words on the ground of their inherent truth. We cannot improve on that.

There are other dogmas, such as that of the resurrection of the physical body; the second Advent; the Last Judgment, which are but partial and therefore imperfect conceptions of certain truths, and as such

do not occupy the place they once held. Here we are in the tomb of the flesh; at death we drop from us this mortal body, as we put off a garment, and rise into a higher state of existence. This is shown very graphically in an ancient Egyptian picture. Neith, the Divine Mother, is the firmament. The physical body, colored red falls to the ground, but the real man, colored blue, rises up towards heaven. It reminds one of St. Paul where he speaks of the natural body being sown, the spiritual body being raised, in I Cor. xv. The only sense in which we can be said to have a physical resurrection is through Reincarnation. We do stand again on Earth in a physical body; and it may have been from this truth that the notion of a bodily resurrection sprang into existence.

H. P. Blavatsky tells us (*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II. p. 459) that the *sarcophagus* or tomb in the shrine of the temple was regarded with the greatest veneration. It was “the symbol of *resurrection* cosmic, solar (or diurnal), and human.” The Sun was the great symbol of this in heaven, man was the symbol on Earth. The materialization of this esoteric teaching well illustrates the change from the Crypt or Adytum to the Pronaos.

The “Second Coming” was in the first instance a conception based on the words of Jesus, that some of the generation then living should not taste of death until the coming of the Son of Man. All through the centuries the idea has come to the surface again and again, sometimes producing very extraordinary popular delusions. But there is a real sense in which the Christos, the Christ in man, is coming with power and glory. As the Christos develops in each heart the general manifestation of the Christos in Humanity is drawing nearer, until at last “every eye shall see him.” But, before this grand consummation there must be more than one Day of Judgment. Such days of sifting, or separating, come at the close of cycles. The Great Day; or the “Last Day,” is when the manifested Universe returns into the bosom of the Infinite — The Great Day “BE WITH US,” mentioned in *The Secret Doctrine*. This part of the Wisdom-Religion has been narrowed and materialized in the Christian ages, not only by theologians, but even by poets and painters. The *pronaos* here, more than in most other cases, has degraded the teaching of the shrine.

We have now entered upon the New Age. The Ancient Wisdom-Religion is being restored. The horizon of the human mind is being extended, and the light of the Christos is shining. A natural result must be the passing away of dogmas and creeds, and everything else that fetters intellectual growth, and all that “hinders or impedes the action of the nobler will.”

The best and surest way to remove false teachings is to show how they arose. The best way to remove animosities is to demonstrate that we are many members in one body, that we have had a common origin, and always have a common interest. This is the mission and aim of the Wisdom-Religion.

It has been the natural tendency of dogma to produce strife in the human family. It has often been the policy, even of those called Christians, to divide men and nations from each other, so as to rule them more easily. It is time for all this to cease. The command has come to us as it came to Moses: "Speak unto the Children of Israel, THAT THEY GO FORWARD." The bondage of dogmas, the slavery of creeds, and all the darkness of medieval theology we must leave behind us. A more glorious Land of Promise than ever poet dreamed of beckons us onward. The Ancient Wisdom, and the Ancient Teachers are here again. Man is awakening to the consciousness that he is divine, and he hears a divine voice within him — a voice from the Holy of Holies — say: "Arise, shine, for thy Light is come!"

Earth: Its Parentage

Its Rounds and Races

A Student

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INTRODUCTORY

The past history of humanity is one of the most important subjects within the scope of Theosophy, and in its fulness is one of the most difficult to comprehend; for man was not always constituted as he is now, and some of his former experiences are not easy to be realized by the materialistic mind cramped by the idea that intelligence or self-consciousness requires a physical brain and nervous system for its existence. Still the idea is dimly penetrating the most intuitive minds of the age that conscious life in subtle or ethereal forms is possible; it is even suspected that this may become a matter of actual knowledge, and not of faith in some authority. The recent advance of science in its bold guess that “solid matter” is merely an “apparent or phenomenal” manifestation of electricity (whatever that may be), has prepared the ground for new ideas about subtler degrees of matter as vehicles of consciousness. As H. P. Blavatsky truly prophesied many years ago, the twentieth century is already providing suitable conditions for the reception and comprehension of the invaluable hints that Theosophy has brought to the world, real “missing links.” The breakup of materialism in intellectual spheres of thought and the cautious acknowledgment of the existence of certain kinds of psychic phenomena, such as hypnotism, by educated people, has prepared many to accept as at least possible, facts which were scouted with contumely by the learned ignorance of thirty years ago when H. P. Blavatsky set forth the epoch-making teachings with which she was entrusted, and illustrated them by a few demonstrations of her control of forces behind the veil as yet unknown to science.

But notwithstanding the modern boast that thought is free, it has only been possible for a very small portion of the Secret Doctrine of the ages to be given out by its Custodians, little more, in fact, than a few leading suggestions and pregnant hints for the intuitive; for the world is not ready nor anxious to hear the plain truth. One of H. P. Blavatsky’s Teachers said: “Lead the life necessary for the acquisition of such knowledge and powers, and Wisdom will come to you naturally,” a course that was none the less necessary in the time of Christ than today: “If any man will do his will he shall know of the doctrine,” (John, vii. 17). In *The Secret Doctrine* the following passage occurs, in the course of a full explanation of the origin of the work:

The outline of a few fundamental truths from the Secret Doctrine of the archaic ages is now permitted to see the light, after long millenniums of the most profound silence and secrecy. I say “a few truths” advisedly, because that which must remain unsaid could not be contained in a hundred such volumes, nor could it be imparted to the present generation of Sadducees. But even the little that is now given is better than complete

silence upon those vital truths. The world of today... has now become a vast arena — a true valley of discord and of eternal strife — a necropolis wherein lie buried the highest and most holy aspirations of our Spirit-Soul... but there is a fair minority of earnest students who are entitled to learn the few truths that may be given to them now.

This was written in 1888 and the progress of thought has been sweeping in the Theosophical direction ever since.

H. P. Blavatsky's work *The Secret Doctrine*, from which most of the facts mentioned in this Manual are obtained, contains a mine of suggestions of extraordinary value in clearing up the darkness of the past. *The Secret Doctrine* was written largely to support the fundamental Theosophical principle that man is a divine soul, temporarily obscured by the conditions through which he has to fight in order to obtain higher states of wisdom and perfection; also to prove the existence of a widely extended knowledge of history, natural science, and a more profound understanding of our human nature, in remotest antiquity, as well as to show that all the ancient religions have a common basis of truth. It also contains much positive teaching, and clear directions about the way to obtain more.

DESIGN IN NATURE

Who does not remember the story of the good fairy that came to the rescue of the distressed maiden who had thousands of feathers to sort in a single night? When the fairy waved her wand, lo! the feathers all flew into their places. Theosophy is the fairy that brings order into the chaos of anthropology, biology and archaeology; it studies the traditions and so-called superstitions preserved orally and in ancient inscriptions and manuscripts such as the Egyptian *Book of the Dead*, the Indian *Purânas*, the American *Popol Vuh*, the Chinese writings, the Hebrew *Pentateuch*, etc., and it proves that the archaic traditions are not mere fairy stories made up by simple innocents, ignorant and credulous, to please other childish minds more credulous than themselves. Theosophy repudiates the materialism of the “animistic” theories, the crude and superficial “phallic-worship” explanation of primitive myths, as well as the popular hypothesis that the time-honored mythologies are nothing but Solar Myths or fanciful renderings of the physical phenomena of outer Nature, on the ground that all or any of these are inadequate to meet the facts as a whole. Theosophy proves that the myths preserve correct traditions of past history and a profound knowledge of the hidden laws of Nature, but until H. P. Blavatsky brought the key they remained a sealed book, for they have been so much obscured and distorted by design and erroneous transmission that all the learning and research spent upon them had never revealed the deeper meanings.

To the average man who thinks at all about the circumstances of life, but who has no clue to the meaning, this world is a very curious and barbarous place, and if he really believed it the work of a Personal God, it is no wonder that grave doubts of either the power or the beneficence of such a Deity should arise in his mind. He wonders how he got here, why things are not in better shape, why evil should apparently triumph, and why it is easier for humanity to sink below the normal than to rise above it in so many cases; in short, what the real object of the conflict of life can be. The world of intelligence has almost outgrown the theological idea that a Personal and Anthropomorphic God made everything — including Eternal Damnation for the majority, the unbelievers — for his own good pleasure, “for His own glory,” — unless, of course, that is taken in a profoundly mystical sense — and yet people generally take such short views of life that existence seems meaningless and inconsequential; they live on, as far as they know, because there is really nothing better to do, and so they continue to chase the ever-elusive mirage called “pleasure” and to dread a change of conditions which might mean the falling out of the frying-pan into the fire.

Theosophy turns for us the first key of knowledge, and renders our greater and lesser lives comprehensible as a whole, as parts of an intelligently ordered, progressive and righteous Plan. But the existence of a plan does not imply a Personal Anthropomorphic Designer, separate from the work, “made in the image of man.” The Theosophical concept of Divinity is far too high to admit of limitations, and to speculate upon the nature of the Absolute is as profitless as it is blasphemous to attach human attributes to That which is immeasurably removed from the grasp of brain-mind thought. The Bible says darkness is around His pavilion, and Manu, the prehistoric Indian lawgiver speaks of “Him who exists by himself, whom the spirit alone can perceive, who is imperceptible to the organs of sense, who is without visible parts, eternal, the soul of all beings and whom none can comprehend.” Luther writes: “God is indivisible and indefinable; what we can define or see is not God. Men desire in their speculations to apprehend God; they apprehend in his place — the Devil, who would also pose as God.”

But as the “Spirit of God,” the active principle, “moves upon the face of the waters,” *i.e.*, as the Divine Thought takes form, the Universe begins to manifest the Kosmic Plan inherent in the very nature of things, for the Triangle of Spirit, Matter, and Energy is One in essence.

Before beginning and without an end,
As space eternal and as surety sure,
Is fixed a Power Divine which moves to good,
 Only its laws endure.
It maketh and unmaketh, mending all;

What it hath wrought is better than hath been,
 Slow grows the splendid pattern that it plans
 Its wistful hands between.
 Such is the law which moves to righteousness,
 Which none at last can turn aside or stay;
 The heart of it is Love, the end of it
 Is Peace and Consummation sweet. Obey!
 Light of Asia

H. P. Blavatsky speaks of Compassion as the one indestructible characteristic of all manifestations of Deity, and Theosophy does not sentimentally teach universal oneness as a pretty theory of human invention, nor as a mere pious aspiration of what might be, but as a fact firmly rooted in the very nature of things; and even the comparatively limited portion of the Theosophical philosophy yet brought to the attention of the West supplies enough material to prove that a rational order exists in Nature, and that there is a real evolution, *i.e.*, an Evolution or Unfolding of the inner powers of the immortal “thread-soul” throughout ages of successive incarnations in changing forms of ever-increasing complexity.

Darwinian evolution, a heroic effort of the partly emancipated spirit of the age to revive the memory of the Kabbalistic formula of antiquity, “The stone becomes a plant, the plant an animal, the animal a man, the man a spirit, and the spirit a God,” so long obscured by theological ignorance and tyranny, was only an imperfect statement of the truth, for it ignored the vital question: What is it that profits by or needs the interminable series of transformations from the inorganic to the divine? In this Manual a brief outline will be given of the world-building process according to Theosophy, but for a fuller understanding of the subject and of the historical and scientific corroborations of the views advanced, the student is advised to consult *The Secret Doctrine* and *Isis Unveiled*, by H. P. Blavatsky. No one has given these works a careful perusal in the spirit of honest inquiry without finding his outlook upon the past and the future profoundly modified. *The Century Path*, the official organ of THE UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD AND THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, has a department specially devoted to the recording and consideration of the continual stream of new scientific and archaeological discoveries which illustrate and corroborate the principles of Theosophy.

THREE FUNDAMENTAL PROPOSITIONS

Without going too deeply into abstract metaphysics, it is sufficient for our present purpose to know that Theosophy sees one fundamental line of progress manifesting in everything, smaller cycles repeating, in little, the process more grandly displayed in greater ones, and all being swept along in the vast cosmic periods of alternate manifestation and rest. This

is the meaning of the ancient maxim repeated by the Kabbalists, “As above, so below.” Once understood, this law of correspondences between the action of the forces upon higher and lower planes clears up many difficulties and unveils many mysteries. It is a necessary conception in view of the existence of Absolute Unity behind all manifestations. According to H. P. Blavatsky, the three fundamental propositions at the base of the Esoteric Philosophy are:

(a) An Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless, and Immutable PRINCIPLE on which all speculation is impossible, since it transcends the power of human conception and could only be dwarfed by any human expression or similitude.

(b) The Eternity of the Universe *in toto* as a boundless plane; periodically “the playground of numberless Universes incessantly manifesting and disappearing,” called “the manifesting stars,” and the “sparks of Eternity.” “The appearance and disappearance of Worlds is like a regular tidal ebb of flux and reflux.”

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

— (*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 14 *et seq.*)

The Divine Life manifests in Cycles of Eternity, vast periods of objective and subjective Being, with the object of expressing Its infinite possibilities. The Evolution of the human soul is called the “Ever-becoming,” because the path of the pilgrim towards the Divine Ideal is endless, resembling the mathematical concept of an asymptote to a curve, a straight line that continually approaches yet never quite touches it, however far it may be produced. This grandiose picture of the Ever-becoming, of the everlasting aspiration of the “Monad” or overshadowing Spiritual Self to an ever-widening idea, implies its activity during past “eternities” of immense duration, alternating with periods of repose or pralaya, during which the results of experiences were stored up within,

though they are not available to our brain-minds in their present state of imperfection. That this idea is gaining credence is seen by a perusal of popular literature; for instance Lafcadio Hearn says: "I cannot rid myself of the notion that Matter, in some blind infallible way *remembers*; and that in every unit of living substance there slumber infinite potentialities, simply because to every ultimate atom belongs the infinite and indestructible experience of billions and billions of vanished universes." But the potentialities had to be there *first* before they could be manifested, or we should have the old absurdity of something coming out of nothing! The plan for us in this existence is to transmute and dominate the lower animal tendencies and so to obtain Self-knowledge, or unity with the Higher Self. As we do this it is possible to help the less advanced to rise more quickly, but we need not wait for full illumination before commencing humanitarian work; quite the contrary. Every uplifting thought and every unselfish deed raises the whole status of a man, even down to the "infra-atoms" composing the body which have a consciousness of their own; and every time we poison our bodies with alcohol or evil indulgence we degrade the infinitesimal lives of which our tabernacle is built. As the elect of humanity rise through inner conflict towards undreamed-of heights of compassion, wisdom, and spiritual knowledge by the attainment of the Higher Self, they will gain the power to take part in the "creative" or fashioning processes of Nature. The elect of a past humanity is helping today in the "process of the suns." But for the existence of these intermediary Agencies — call them archangels, Dhyân Chohans, Gods, or what you will, who have ages ago passed through the stage in which we now are and have attained what to us would seem almost Omniscience — there would be a gap in the evolutionary scheme; a necessary hierarchy of "Builders" would be missing, and man would indeed be desolate and his future uncertain. Science, however materialistic and short-sighted many of its votaries may be, has accepted the possibility, nay probability, of such supreme intelligences existing, through the voice of Huxley, who said that there must be beings in the Universe whose intelligence is as much beyond ours as ours exceeds that of the black-beetle, and who may take an active part in the government of the natural order of things.

The divine "Creative" Principle needs intermediaries for the working out of the details. of the evolutionary scheme, the main idea of which is nevertheless, *ex hypothesi*, inherent in every "atom-soul"; and although the word "gods" sounds a little strange in our ears, these supreme Agencies are as divine Beings compared with us. H. P. Blavatsky carefully pointed out that to limit the character of the Unknowable Divine Unity by *personalizing* in any way, however sublimated, would be a fundamental error, as it would make God and the Universe two separate things — two gods; but it is perfectly logical and correct to admit the existence of beings

so high as to be right fully called personal *Gods*. This the ancients knew well, but behind all the ruling divinities they believed there was a Sustainer of all: Parabrahman in India; Ain-Soph, the Hebrew secret Essence of the Kabbalists; and others.

The Egyptian Hermes in the *Divine Pymander* says: "God is not a mind, but the cause that Mind is; not a spirit, but the cause that the Spirit is; not light, but the cause that the Light is."

Even in the exoteric Old Testament we find the "Gods" mentioned in many places, although efforts which cannot be called honest have been made by the translators to conceal it. In the first chapter of Genesis the word God is "Elohim," a plural term, signifying creative powers or deities; they are the same as the "Dhyânis" of Indian philosophy. In the third chapter of Genesis one of the Elohim, Jehovah, refers to the existence of others such as himself in the famous sentence: "And the Lord God (Jehovah) said: 'Behold the man is become as one of us.'"

The hierarchy of the gods, the Dhyânis, must act strictly within the lines of the great evolutionary plan of which they are a part; their action resembles that of a breeder of pigeons, who can modify the shape and color, the size and habits of his birds within certain degrees, but cannot revolutionize their nature and turn them into hawks or owls. We ourselves even now can direct a few of the minor currents in the Earth's evolution in a very small way, and we shall continue to do so in ever-increasing measure as we rise nearer to the stature of divinity, although the general plan cannot be changed. As humanity becomes conscious of the Higher Self within, overshadowing the personal self, it must develop hidden faculties capable of assimilating the mysterious and transcendental wisdom of the Gods, for the Higher Self is one with Them.

In the Current of the great Manvantaric sweep of evolution, the current of the Life-Wave, "Îśvara," composed of innumerable "Sparks" of the one Flame, descends from higher states through the material and upwards again to the spiritual, obtaining self-consciousness by the development of intellection, and enriched by the vast series of experiences gained on the pilgrimage. The stupendous Cosmic process of cyclic manifestation and withdrawal is repeated in smaller degrees, cycle within cycle, until we reach the limit of material segregation and apparent separateness — the individual personalities of men. When this is reached, progress is contingent upon the ability of the individual to throw off the veil of illusion separating one soul from another and to recognize the real unity of all. Many, many times has the "Eternal Pilgrim" to repeat this "Fall" into matter during the terrestrial journey, many times does the Higher Ego (Manas) descend from "Devachan" (a high state of spiritual existence, the "heaven which is our home" of the poets) to incarnate in the physical body through its own emanation, the brain-mind, in order to gain that experience which can be found in no other way: then to re-ascend to

inner states of holy peace and rest again to assimilate the lessons of the last battle of life. The struggle will continue until the sense of separateness between each man and his “other selves” (humanity) has disappeared. H. P. Blavatsky quotes the following from a *Catechism* of the Eastern School in which she received instruction:

“Lift up thy head, O Lanoo; [Disciple.] dost thou see one or countless lights above thee, burning in the dark midnight sky?”

“I sense one Flame, O Gurudeva, I see countless undetached sparks shining in it.”

“Thou sayest well. And now look around and into thyself. That light which burns inside thee, dost thou feel it different in anywise from the light that shines in thy brother men?”

“It is in no way different, though the prisoner is held in bondage by Karma, and though its outer garments delude the ignorant into saying ‘Thy Soul and My Soul.’”

The process of daily waking and sleeping, of alternate objective lives on Earth and of subjective life in Devachan (the rest after death), is a perfect correspondence in little with what takes place in the history of nations, of races, and of worlds, culminating in the great Planetary, Solar and Universal alternations of life-activity and repose. Endless progression is the rule, and each period is higher than the last. At the close of the Rest following on the great period, or Manvantara, from out of the subjective state of Nirvâna — at present inconceivable to the majority of men because of the limitations of mind caused by passion and desire, but which is not a state of annihilation as erroneously supposed by some — the Monads will start out on a fresh pilgrimage on a higher Manvantara, possessing, in reserve, the wisdom gained in the past. This knowledge may be temporarily locked up while new experiences are being gained in other directions. This is the case with us at present, for we are only conscious of the smallest part of our mysterious past and stored-up knowledge.

In the calculations of the East, which in certain cases to which she gives the key H. P. Blavatsky tells us are nearly accurate, the great Mahâ-Kalpa, which includes all the lesser Manvantaras, includes one hundred “years of Brahmâ,” and as each year of Brahmâ contains 360 “days and nights of Brahmâ,” each 4,320,000,000 terrestrial years in length, it will be seen that the grandiose conception of Eternal progression suggested is the most impressive and awe-inspiring picture the mind can contemplate. It is a curious example of modern vanity that our age, until now bound down by the preposterous notion that the Universe was only about six thousand years old, should think itself the first to spell out the letters of the word Evolution, whereas the principle has been known for ages and given out in the allegories of all nations.

Herbert Spencer made a heroic effort to put into complete form the modern theory of Evolution, and the result was a marvelously correct one considering the attitude of his school towards the world of causes, whose borderland is commonly but erroneously called the “supernatural,” of which he was entirely ignorant. Spencer defines the part of the great evolutionary scheme known to him as “an integration of matter and a concomitant dissipation of motion, during which the matter passes from an indefinite incoherent homogeneity to a definite coherent heterogeneity; during which process the retained motion undergoes a parallel transformation.” This definition though “coherent” is painfully limited. As he refused to recognize any kind of spiritual world, and had not even glimpsed the possibility of an astral or semi-spiritual world permeating the material world, its model and support — a half-way house to the world of causes — his blindness to the greatest factors in the problem rendered his life-work materialistic, incomplete and ephemeral. As the materialistic school ignores the possibility of thought without the phosphated fats of the brain, it must disregard the factors of Cosmic Ideation — the Universal Mind, and the intelligent Agencies ceaselessly at work beyond the illusions of Time and Space in which we are confined. The partial version of the story of Evolution now in vogue is a stepping stone to the deeper knowledge brought by Theosophy; it looks as if humanity can only stand a little actual illumination at a time. The full blaze of Truth would be blinding.

H. P. Blavatsky says the “Esoteric Philosophy only fills the gaps made by Science and corrects her false premises,” and one of the widest gaps is the omission of the descent of spirit into matter and its ultimate ascent, the conqueror of worlds and a ruler in “heaven.” It is not possible in these few pages to indicate more than the barest outline of this enormous subject, but we must carry from the outset the idea of the law of Periodicity running through all Nature or confusion will result. H. P. Blavatsky took immense pains in collecting records from a large number of sources, ancient and modern, of the partial revelation of the Earth’s past history she was allowed to publish. Speaking of the contents of *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine* she says:

The proofs brought forward in corroboration of the old teaching are scattered widely throughout the old scriptures of ancient civilizations. The *Purāṇas*; the *Zendavesta* and the old classics are full of them; but no one has ever gone to the trouble of collecting and collating together those facts. The reason for this is that all such events were recorded symbolically.

— (*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 307)

Even in the Bible there are many corroborations of the evolutionary system of Theosophy. The first portions of Genesis when compared with

the *Purânas* and other antique records, are seen to be modified and abbreviated allegorical accounts of the early history of the Universe and of humanity.

Professor Drummond in his *Lowell Lectures* regarded Evolution as “a living power working its way through endless transformations.” Add to this the conception that the manvantaric Life sustaining all becomes subject to limitation immediately the Divine Ideation or Thought (the Logos or “Word”) begins to manifest the first faint causes, the primitive outlines of the worlds to come; and that as matter becomes denser and form more defined the limitations of consciousness increase. When this is dwelt upon, the reason for the Theosophical belief that there is only one heresy, the “heresy of separateness,” will become clear. As long as we, as personalities, refuse to recognize *in actual life and practice* the basic Unity of that Flame whose *sparks* we are, we shall make no real progress. The principle of Universal Oneness without the substantial reason suggested above, would be mere sentimentality and could not stand any criticism. Once it is understood that the overshadowing Monad, or “Monads,” are one spiritual unity in their essential nature, and that an isolated selfish life is an illusion of matter, every act will become a noble creative force in harmony with the “Law which moves to righteousness.”

The current of the Divine Breath, “Īśvara” or Spirit (the last from *spirare*, to breathe), the out-breathing or manifestation of the activities of the One Life whose only attribute is “Eternal Motion,” possesses an inherent characteristic of numerical relationship. “God geometrizes,” and one of the fundamental numbers of the manvantaric period is seven. There are seven great “divisions” of the great Breath, which manifest in countless forms during the Outbreathing, which is an age of such enormous duration that to us it is a veritable eternity. These seven divisions are called Tattvas, and are manifested in the laws controlling the physical forces of Light, Sound, the Septenary groups of the “elements” of chemistry, etc. Science has lately proved to its satisfaction that seven is the dominant number in the sensible world, but it has not carried the discovery to its far-reaching conclusions. The sevening principle runs through all the activities of the Cosmic process from the first faint outbreathing at the dawn of this Manvantara to the ordinary physiological processes of reproduction and disease in human and animal life on the Earth. There are many other numerical relationships in the descent from the spiritual to the material, but the sevenfold division in its simplicity and its multiples is enough for a general comprehension of our story of the Earth and its Rounds and Races.

THE SEVEN ROUNDS

An examination of the diagram below will give the student some plain hints as to the general trend of Evolution from the potential state of existence in the One Life, Parabrahman, (which H. P. Blavatsky speaks of as “BE-ness” rather than Being — a subtle but very important distinction), through the state of embodiment in forms and then up to higher conditions. The diagram may be applied, with the necessary modifications, to the greatest Manvantaras; the minor world-periods through which sentient life has passed before coming into the present one; or to the smaller cycles through which we are passing today. H. P. Blavatsky gave us the clue to the labyrinth of involved confusion as to the past history of the Earth which has come down from antiquity in legend and symbol, so that we now can see the places in the puzzle into which the apparently fanciful stories fit. No archaeologist has been able to clear up and reduce to order the chaos of fact and allusion, but now it is only necessary to work out the details, for the design has been laid out on the trestle board by the Custodians of the wisdom of the ages. The following is a brief abstract of the main plan:

From the establishment of the center of energy which is now the Earth, the evolution of life proceeds in seven clearly marked Cycles or “Rounds,” during which the Life-Wave journeys seven times through, or better, lives seven periods upon seven distinct “Globes” or states of existence or consciousness. The six companion “Globes” of our terrestrial sphere are of finer substance than the Earth, but it would be a serious error to consider them as spheres separated *in space* from the world we live in; they should be looked upon more as different degrees or conditions of substance, interblending, and corresponding to different states of consciousness. The first “Globe” is the most ethereal or shadowy (from our *present* view-point), and the conditions surrounding the Monads starting their pilgrimage on it, the most spiritual. Our present Earth-state is the densest and the least spiritual; the three “Globes” to come will become more ethereal again as we progress towards perfection, and ultimately we shall be able to leave this Earth-Chain of “Globes,” as it is called for convenience, to enter into still higher conditions.

The Earth-Chain of seven “Globes” is the “*reincarnation*” of a preceding planetary Chain on a lower evolution, of which the Moon is the visible relic. When the Life-wave had passed seven times round the seven “Globe-conditions” of the Lunar Chain and had assimilated all the experience possible there, that Chain began to die out, and instead of entering upon a period of less activity, or “obscuration” such as all the “Globes” undergo between the Rounds, a complete dissolution of the cohesive forces of all the seven “Globes” set in, and *after* an interregnum or *pralaya*, the Lunar energies commenced to vivify a new center of “cosmic dust” in space, and the Earth-Chain started on its aeonian career.

The Moon, scored and riven by Titanic forces, its frozen face eternally watching the Earth, is the decaying shell, or corpse, of what is now the spirit or informing Principle of the Earth.

When the Life-wave on Earth shall have passed through the seven Rounds, from the most ethereal to the densest and back again to the spiritual-ethereal, the inhabitants will leave the Earth shell or corpse to decompose into Cosmic dust, but they, and its “principles,” will be the richer by the vast experience gained during the wonderful pilgrimage.

We are at present about the middle point of the Fourth Round, the least spiritual Round, and we are in the Fourth “Globe” too, the most material “Globe” of all in each Round. We are at the time when spirit and matter are practically at an equilibrium, but we have passed the exact balancing center and so we are really on the upward grade. The process is so slow that we cannot expect to find any marked improvement in a few years, but fortunately we can hasten the speed by removing the stumbling-blocks we have planted in our own way in the past.

The only object Theosophists have in bringing this philosophy of the ages before the world, is to demonstrate the possibility and the need of greater efforts being made by humanity to raise itself. Through the spread of the true philosophy of life amongst earnest persons and the establishment of Râja Yoga Schools throughout the world, humanity will receive the seeds of the future great civilization which can only rise as a result of the actual living of oneness in act and thought. Theosophy thus proves that human solidarity is a fact in Nature in two ways: the first by the presentation of a philosophy sound in its logic and based upon knowledge of all the facts of the case, and not merely upon material illusive appearances; secondly by actual demonstration of this philosophy of life in the lives of those who are striving against their lower natures.

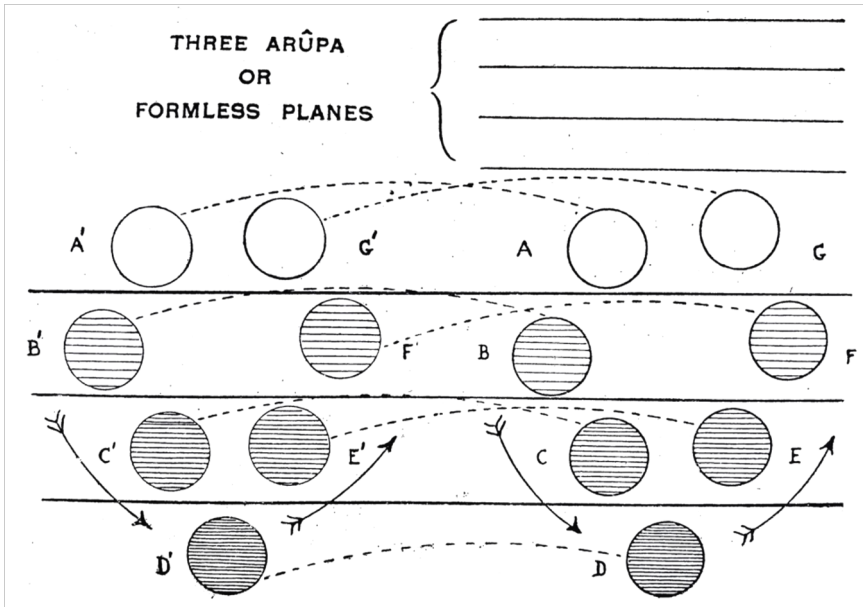
CONVENTIONALIZED DIAGRAM

OF THE

LUNAR CHAIN (left) and EARTH CHAIN (right) of "Globes."

This diagram represents the transmission of the Life-wave from the seven "Globes" of the Lunar Chain to the corresponding "Globes" of the Earth Chain. Each circle represents a "Globe" or state of consciousness; it must be remembered that "Globes" A B C D E F G of each Chain, really interpenetrate and are interblended. They are drawn separately for clearness only. The "Globes" now being considered are on the four lower planes or conditions of being, the higher three planes are formless (*arûpa*) and beyond the possibility of speculation for us at present.

"Globes D and D' are the physical Earth and Moon. Note that the right hand "Globe" of each of the Lunar and Terrestrial pairs is a little higher up than the left hand one, showing the progress achieved. The dotted lines represent the energy passing from the Lunar conditions to the similar ones in the Earth Chain. Like all diagrams this one is very incomplete, but it may be a little help to the thoughtful student.



The “Globes,” or great planetary world-states through which the Life-wave passes in the Seven Rounds, are usually numbered from A to G, and the diagram will give a rough illustration of their relationship. The “Globes” are not really separated by any spaces but are *fused* together; one might say that they are aspects or conditions of a single entity — Mother “Earth”; and as consciousness is different upon each, when we occupy one the rest are invisible to normal sight. “Globe” D is the present material Earth, and as it is the balancing point it is the great battleground where the soul has to gain the victory over the lower order of matter and material separateness — or selfishness.

H. P. Blavatsky gave an emphatic, and, as it turned out, not at all unnecessary warning of the danger of materializing ideas when they have to be reduced to diagrammatic form. The six companion “Globes” of the Earth through which the Life-wave takes its course must be carefully distinguished from the planets of the solar system known to astronomy; Mars, Jupiter, etc. The Globes of the Earth-chain are different gradations of consciousness, and of atomic, or perhaps interatomic, vibration, reaching from very ethereal conditions through the astral to the material, and upward again, shading into each other like the colors of the spectrum. The writer of *The Secret Doctrine* says the “Globes” “are in CO-ADUNITION BUT NOT IN CONSUBSTANTIALITY WITH OUR EARTH,” and thus pertain to quite different states of consciousness. The action of the hypothetical ether of space, whose vibrations are supposed to pass through the densest substances, somewhat resembles the interpenetration of one “Globe” by the others.

Man (the Monad, which can only be called Man in view of later developments) passes through all the kingdoms of Nature in the First and even the Second Rounds, but it is not until the Fourth Round that the Monad — Âtman-Buddhi — undergoes the awakening of the latent quality of intellection, called “the descent of the Mânasaputra or Sons of Mind”; and it is not until the Third and Fourth *Root Races* of that Fourth Round that what we can recognize as present humanity appears; this was over eighteen million years ago. In the first Rounds the Monads have to pass “through the... kingdoms in their most ethereal, filmy and rudimentary forms in order to clothe themselves in and assimilate the nature of the newly formed Chain.” This primitive condition is far more ethereal than any form of matter with which chemistry is acquainted; compared with it the most nebulous fire-mist would be coarser than granite is denser than hydrogen gas; it is almost subjective, almost unmanifested. The development of humanity as we know it is treated elsewhere, in which the process of life through the Races on “Globe” D, in the present Round, the Fourth, will be considered.

As the subject of this sketch is quite new to many readers it will be well, before going farther, to summarize its main features.

1. The spirit in man (called the “Monad” or Âtman-Buddhi) is immortal both in the past and in the future. It has lived many lives on Earth, the intervals between which have been spent in rest and assimilation of what it has learned.

2. The great process of the evolution of the Universe consists in the gradual descent of spiritual conditions into material ones and then the return to the primal state *plus* the experience gained. This evolution applies to the past of man as well as to that of Nature in general, for the law of cyclic progression is endless.

3. The process of the special evolution in which we are at present immersed carries us through seven great journeys or “Rounds” during which the Monad or Ray of the Divine, which is our Higher SELF, gains experience in seven conditions of substantial existence, called “Globes.” These seven “Globe-conditions” are passed through seven times during the terrestrial evolution, each journey being one Round, a period of enormous duration. On each of the Rounds the Monad finds the conditions denser than the last until it reaches the Fourth. Then more ethereal conditions begin to reappear, and the Fifth and Sixth Rounds become increasingly immaterial, until the last Round will find man a godlike being living in harmony with the most spiritual conditions in Nature.

4. We are just past the middle of the Spiral of spirals, the balancing point of spirit and matter, and the great struggle for each unit now is to throw himself consciously into harmony with the advancing spiritual wave. Those who fail to work in unison with the divine plan will be rejected from the Master’s House, though not until after every possible opportunity has been given them to reform, and they will have to recommence the long journey at some future date. It is possible to resist the march of progress for a while, and to act as a brake on the wheel, but not for ever.

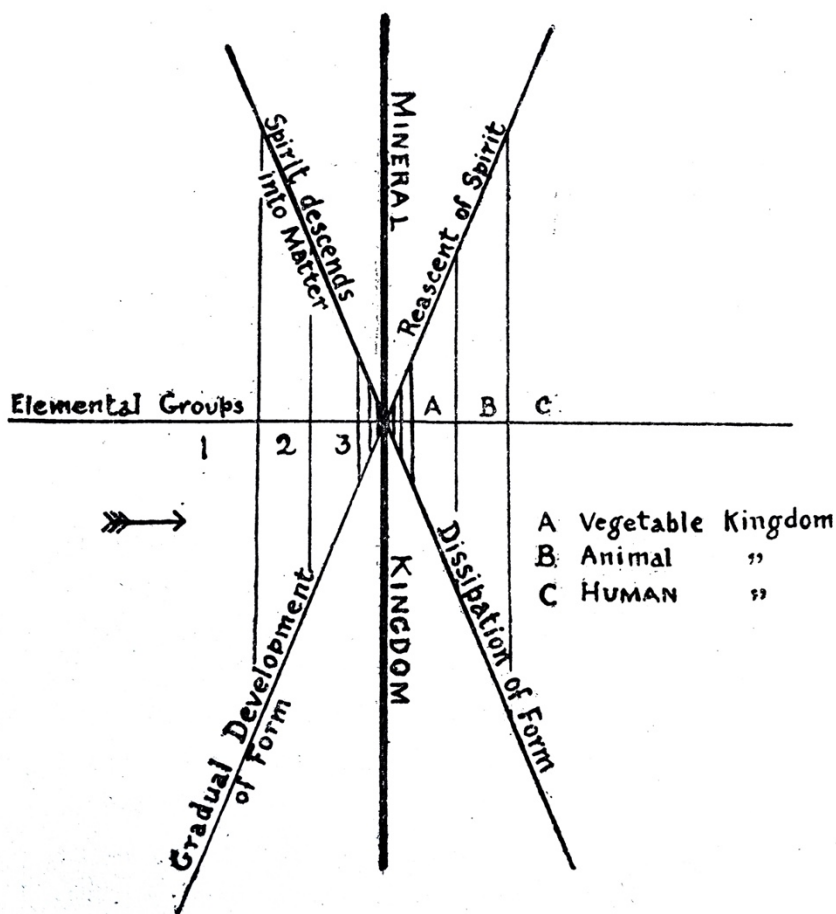
5. In each “Globe” there are many races or types through which the Monad gains almost infinite experiences. On the Earth, the densest of all the “Globes,” there are seven great human Root-Races, one succeeding another (our Black, Yellow, Red and White Races are minor subdivisions, not the Root-Races of which we are speaking). We are in the Fifth Root-Race and are therefore beyond the densest point of materiality and are on the slow upward climb. There are seven sub-races in each Root-Race, and innumerable family races and blends. We are in the fifth sub-race of the Fifth Root-Race.

6. The process of human evolution during the first Rounds and well on into the Fourth consists in the formation of a conscious vehicle, the lower animal-man (not the Darwinian “missing link”), which becomes overshadowed by the Intelligence, the “Manas” or Mind-Principle, which has itself pursued its own course of evolution. This blending of the Mind or Manas with the non-intelligent — from our poor human mental

standpoint — but intensely spiritual Monad, which is the energizing force behind the mindless ‘embryonic animal-man, is the making of man as a *consciously* responsible being. This takes place during the Third Root-Race on this terrestrial Globe, at a period of about eighteen million years ago. Since then there have been many rises and falls and many alternations of barbarism and civilization; continents have risen out of the waters and others have been destroyed by flood and fire, and man has gained his dearly-bought experience; but the Higher Ego has not yet had time to gain the upper hand, except in the rarest cases.

7. In each Round certain different principles of our compound nature are evolved from potentiality into action and certain Elements in outer nature are developed in harmony with them; the next step will be the manifestation of matter in more refined or ethereal forms and of more potent forces than those we know today; but this period is still far distant.

The remembrance of our marvelous past is locked up in the mysterious chambers of the Higher Ego; the brain-mind, which was only e-volved “yesterday,” cannot penetrate into these sacred arcana until it has arrived at the pure condition of impersonality which will permit the Higher to unite fully with it. Even in certain abnormal states, cataleptic and other, extraordinary powers of memory can be displayed. These are the functions of the astral man, and although surprising, are nothing to the semi-omniscience of the Higher nature.



THE SEVEN KINGDOMS

In the stupendous effort of the One Life — the “Unconscious” of some German philosophers — to express Itself in ever-advancing degrees during the evolution and destruction of universes, the descent of spirit into matter is carried on, according to the law of correspondences, by means of Planetary Chains. Of course these Chains may be of infinite variety, and of those connected with the other planets of the Solar System we have not yet been given definite information. We shall therefore necessarily confine our study to the Earth-chain. Although all the other planets, except Neptune, are closely connected with us in many ways, they are themselves planetary Chains upon which distinct waves of life are flowing. We should not feel at home upon any other planetary Chain, because we have not had the age-long preparation for the entirely different conditions prevailing

elsewhere. But although the other planets are not in *our* Chain, many of them exert a powerful influence on Earth-life, though Science has not yet traced their action. The Moon especially exerts such an influence, although it is “dead.” Being the “Mother” of the Earth, its influence is peculiar. Physics can see no more in the Moon than its attractive action in lifting the tides on the Earth, but Theosophy traces results of the former existence of terrestrial life on the Lunar Chain in many other directions, which will be considered later. Then again Occult Science calls the Earth the “adopted child and younger brother” of Venus in one aspect, and its “Twin Sister” in another aspect — size, speed of rotation, etc. *Venus is far in advance of us* in development, and it is a singular “coincidence” that that planet has been seen on a few occasions to be self-luminous or phosphorescent. The writer of these pages once had the good fortune to see this remarkable phenomenon, of which astronomy gives no explanation. Possibly the inhabitants have discovered the secret of the glow-worm and are self-luminous!! Mercury is also ahead of us in its life history, but Mars is a little behind, and is at present under a minor “obscuration” or suspension of its highest activities.

The statement in *The Secret Doctrine* that Neptune is connected very slightly with the Sun receives some confirmation from recent discoveries showing that its atmospheric spectrum shows unique features; and its extreme distance suggests the need of a different evolutionary scheme from that of the rest of the planets. It is the only one of the planets that disobey Bode’s rhythmic Law of distances.

As the Monad travels in its spiral progress around the seven “Globes,” it first becomes imprisoned in three successive kingdoms of “Elementals” or Nature-Forces; then in the Mineral, Vegetable and Animal kingdoms, finally gaining self-consciousness as Man, for there are really *seven* sentient kingdoms in Nature, and no “dead matter” at all, though science has not yet learned anything about the three Elemental kingdoms, and has hardly dared to recognize the obscure consciousness in the Mineral, of which chemical affinity is one manifestation. The kingdoms of the Elemental semi-intelligent forces are very difficult to understand, and little definite information has been given to us about them; but we can glean from the few teachings available that in passing through those stages the Monad is experiencing the peculiar consciousness of the “automatic” and semi-“automatic” natural forces which have a different consciousness from that of even the lowest animal. A reference to the diagram on page 458 will make it clear that the Monad was in a lower condition when in the Elemental kingdoms than even when locked up in the Mineral, through which the Life-wave has to pass before rising to the Vegetable and onward up through the Animal forms to the union with (*or awakening to the descent of*) the Mānasic principle, which has been pursuing another line of evolution, and which is what makes us Man (from a Sanskrit root

“MAN” to *think*), the highly complex being now embodied in the tenement of clay.

The Monad must not be regarded as having obtained separate individuality in the lower kingdoms during the time the vestures were being organized and prepared for the incarnation of the *human intelligences* (*Mānasaputra* = Sons of Mind) to come. The first faint beginnings of the spiritual flame dividing into units is suggested in the vegetable kingdom, or even in the mineral as in the families or groups of “elements,” but there it is hardly more than a dim potentiality. In the highest animals the sense of individuality is almost attained; but it is the prerogative of the Monad only after the descent of the Mānasic element, making it Man — a “Thinker” — to possess and fully comprehend the sense of *self-consciousness*, of apparent *self-identity* or *personality*. This illusory feeling of separateness must be gained: it is a part of the training resulting from the immersion of the lower Manas — the shadow of the Higher — in Matter; but it must be struggled with and vanquished and seen for what it really is, before the Unity of all beings can be understood. It is by this struggle that progress is made in spiritual life. Spiritual life is the actual realization of the Unity of all, and Compassion, Peace and Wisdom are its natural concomitants.

THE “COATS OF SKINS”

There is a wide abyss between the Theosophical teaching upon the important subject of the Evolution of Humanity and the hypothesis of biology in vogue today, with its materialistic affirmation of the descent of intellectual and spiritual man from nothing but a supposed race of brutes, ancestors of the anthropoid apes and of ourselves. This popular ape-ancestry idea recognizes man as nothing but a more highly specialized animal with a larger cranial capacity produced by the blind struggle for existence and other physical causes. Science has nothing to tell us of a spiritual principle existing before birth and surviving the death of the body. It knows nothing of the evolution of the Mānasic or Human Soul. It repudiates a “tendency towards progress” in any special direction, attributing the existing complexities to “accidental favorable variations or ‘sports’” acting in harmony with the conditions of environment. The materialistic hypothesis of Evolution ignores any pushing force or Intelligence behind the visible phenomena, and reduces its adherents to the curious dilemma of explaining the building up of the complex nature of man with his marvelous intellect and feelings, the moral and spiritual attributes of conscience, judgment, reason, etc., by laws of chance! The laws of mere physical action and reaction to varying stimuli which are supposed to have brought about the present state of things could as easily work downwards to the destruction of highly organized intelligences;

Huxley says the possibility of the Thames valley becoming unfit for human life and only being able to support that of the jungle or the desert is quite reasonable and would be an example of the survival of the fittest. If we imagine a complete change in terrestrial conditions through some “accidental” cause, such as a sudden increase of the Sun’s energy, man would soon disappear, a “discreditable episode upon one of the meanest of the planets.” The abyss between Theosophy and materialistic science is further shown in the doleful prospect the latter holds out that when living beings die out for want of water or heat there will be nothing left as the outcome of all the past activity but a horrid blank! and as the alternative, the orthodox creeds offer the illogical and puerile notion that one life spent on Earth by a just-“created” soul, is sufficient to decide its whole future fate, and that it passes into some “supernatural” state of which we can know nothing while here.

But to return to the materialistic hypothesis, which demands acceptance from the thinking world under pain of intellectual contempt and ostracism, we find that notwithstanding its claim to uphold the existence of the unerring Law of Cause and Effect, it really accepts the idea of Fortuity, of chance, and of secondary causes producing primary effects. Theosophy teaches that if anything *evolves*, it must have had the potentiality of its future *involved* within itself which had to come out sooner or later, and it asserts that science simply needs to get rid of prejudice and to set about its investigations in a new way — in a *natural* way — to find that intelligent law does reign in Nature and that there does exist a tendency towards progress pushing consciousness into higher and higher degrees. Theosophy, of course; admits the operation of the laws of Selection and of the Survival of the Fittest, *within certain limits*, as *secondary* laws *only*, but it shows plainly that these are but *secondary* causes, modifying agents of the great irresistible flow of the Monadic stream of evolution. Theosophy, with its wide outlook over past time, shows that the world *cannot* lose the power of supporting intelligent manifested life until the cycle closes and the stream of Monads overflows into the preparation for the rebirth in a higher Chain. Patañjali, the great Indian philosopher and teacher of the Yoga Philosophy, said ages ago that Nature energizes for the soul’s experience; and according to the Ancient Wisdom — Theosophy — the attainment of full self-consciousness of its greatness and of its divine powers by the god within, is the present aim of evolution. Once this is attained a glorious Path opens out, transcending all imagination. H. P. Blavatsky says in *The Secret Doctrine*:

Between man and the animal — whose Monads (or Jīvas) are fundamentally identical — there is the impassable abyss of Mentality and Self-consciousness. What is human mind in its higher aspect, whence comes it, if it is not a portion of the essence — and, in some rare cases of

incarnation, the *very essence* — of a higher Being: one from a higher and divine plane? Can man — a god in the animal form — be the product of Material Nature by evolution alone, even as is the animal, which differs from man in external shape, but by no means in the materials of its physical fabric, and is informed by the same, though undeveloped, Monad - seeing that the intellectual potentialities of the two differ as the Sun does from the Glow-worm? And what is it that creates such difference, unless man is an animal *plus a living god* within his physical shell?

Turning to the diagram on page 452, and keeping in mind the warning against materializing such things too rigidly, notice that the dotted lines passing from each lunar “Globe” to a corresponding but higher Earth “Globe,” may represent the awakening of life on Earth by the arrival of the Monad — or perhaps we may now say, with due reserve, the Monads, in their seven stages of progress. The lunar “ancestors,” the ethereal vestures of the Monads, called Pitris or Fathers, commence to project their “doubles” onto Earth but are not at first individualized under the new conditions of the primitive ethereal or almost immaterial “Globes” of the early Rounds; still on the first terrestrial “Globe” (A), that portion of the Monadic essence which has gained the greatest possible experience upon the Lunar Chain starts upon its new pilgrimage with more energy than the other six divisions, and rapidly pushes ahead, working out forms of shadowy substance into more and more suitable vehicles for the reception of the Human Intellect, the link between the Monad and the lower vestures. The three together compose the complete Man (the seven principles are subdivisions of these three). This class reaches segregated individuality very slowly in actual measurement of time, but quickly when compared with the other “laggards.” The remaining six divisions gradually incarnate on the Earth-Chain until all have arrived. A few of the most advanced reach the “human germ-stage” in the First Round, and make such progress that their astral vestures soon begin to acquire a certain individuality, in the Second and Third Rounds, though they are still very ethereal and are not yet possessed of mind. But those Monads occupying animal forms (physical) after the middle of the Fourth Round will not become men at all in *this* Chain, with the exception of some of the anthropoid apes.

The vestures of the soul, the semi-conscious astral forms to the plan of which the physical body gradually conformed, and the passional Desire-principle, “Kâma,” were formed by projection from the Lunar Chain first; and afterwards when the hour struck, the Higher Manas (or Higher “Ego”) settled in and illuminated the semi-conscious forms. Even yet we are hardly conscious of the higher condition of existence of the Ego; and of the sustaining and illuminating Monad — Âtman-Buddhi — the ordinary man has practically no knowledge at all. It may seem strange to speak of a portion of the human soul so far removed from daily life that the *personal* self may pass a lifetime without recognizing its existence, but the fact is

that we know. little or nothing of the profounder depths of our nature: that glorious heritage of wisdom is the ultimate reward of victory over personal selfishness. But psychologists are aware, though they have not followed their observations to their logical conclusion, that the lower mind may act for half a lifetime in a partly intellectually disabled condition, while the judgment and higher qualities are in abeyance, and suddenly the intellect may resume its sway as if nothing had happened. Du Prel gives a curious illustration of the presence of the clear intelligence in a state of suspended animation for years, but not decayed nor feeble in the least. He quotes from Dr. Wolfart's researches on Mesmerism the case of a patient who had been intellectually disabled for thirteen years and yet manifested perfect intelligence, memory, and normal sanity, upon falling into the somnambulistic condition, in which she even referred to the fear she had expressed before her misfortune, lest her brainpower should fail. It was only when in the somnambulistic state that she could communicate her rational thoughts. This occurred only a few times and she died apparently insane. This and other similar cases shows that high intelligence may be latent, and only waiting for its opportunity to manifest. So it is with the Higher Ego; it so seldom gets the opportunity of unveiling that most persons are unaware of its existence. When it succeeds in showing a fraction of its Light we say — Lo, a genius!

The substance of the “Globes” in the early Rounds, and of the first “Globes” in this Round, is not of the nature of present molecular matter. Its subtlety is entirely different from that of hydrogen or helium, those lightest of gases. H. P. Blavatsky says it may fitly be called “astral,” meaning “starry, shining or pellucid, in various and numerous degrees from a quite filmy to a viscid state,” and although in later periods it arrived (“materialized”) nearer to the condition of the thinnest gases we know, there will be endless confusion if it is not plainly understood that the matter of the primitive degree would not be perceptible to our physical senses or instruments, which are adapted to slower and much less intense vibrations. The Monadic essence, in passing through the preparatory pilgrimage necessary before the beginning of intellectual life was possible, clothes itself in the most filmy and ethereal suggestions of the future mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms in order to assimilate the nature of the newly formed Chain. As the different “Globe-states” are experienced by the pilgrim on its journey, a gradual densifying takes place in its own constitution and in its environment in each Round until the Fourth, during which Round the reascent into the spiritual condition commences. The Fourth Round being the densest, and “Globe” D in each Round being at the bottom of the spiral, we find ourselves in the position when spirit and matter are nearly in equilibrium, for we are on “Globe” D in the Fourth Round *now*. We are, however, beyond the pivotal point of matter and spirit. Each “Globe” of the seven forming our Chain supports seven great

Root Races of Humanity in succession, and we are now past the Fourth Root Race and well on in the Fifth, and so are on the upward climb though not out of danger yet.

H. P. Blavatsky says that

every “Round,” (on the descending scale) is but a repetition in a more concrete form of the Round that preceded it, as every globe — down to our fourth sphere (the actual earth) — is a grosser and more material copy of the more shadowy sphere which precedes it in their successive order, on the three higher planes.... Every Round, as well as every subsequent globe.... having been, and still having to be the arena of the same evolution, only repeated each time on a more solid material basis.

— (*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 256, *et passim*)

In studying the diagram on page 452, notice that the seven “Globes” are on the four lower planes of being, and that each right hand “Globe” is a little higher than the corresponding left hand one. This shows the progressive flow of the life-wave. It is noteworthy that “Globe” D, the present Earth, is alone on its plane and stands as if it contained the potentialities of all the rest, which are displayed above.

Science has no record of the life that existed in the primitive nebula out of which the physical Earth consolidated, for nothing which our physical eyes could read has been imprinted upon the whirling mass of attenuated vapor. There were no stratified rocks to preserve the impressions of the rudimentary centers of life, even if they had any forms, but Theosophy affirms that some kind of organized life has never been absent from our Earth since the first ethereal state of the Fire-mist, long antecedent to what physical science believes the earliest date, for it shows that “no evolution is possible without the Monad as the vivifying agent” (W. Q. Judge). There is no dead matter, the Earth is a living thing, the body, as the ancients believed, of a great goddess, and its progress cannot be separated from that of humanity. The student will find valuable clues to the spiritual nature and consciousness of the atom in *The Secret Doctrine*.

The idea of ethereal states preceding the material is so novel to most people of Western training and is so important for the understanding of the true scheme of Evolution, that it is necessary to give a little more attention to it. The idea of a semi-material body being built up around the Monad on a semi-material Earth is not unreasonable when materialistic prejudice is laid aside, and the existence of one such body within the physical frame at the present day has been amply proved by the researches of a few bold men of science who have dared to defy the sneers of their ill-informed colleagues. Among others Sir W. Crookes, Dr. A. R. Wallace, M. Camille Flammarion, and more recently Professor Botazzi of the Naples University, have been successful in demonstrating the existence of the

“astral double.” That this ethereal counterpart of the physical body, invisible to normal sight usually, enwrapped fiber to fiber with the flesh, (“clothed in skins” according to the allegory of the Rounds and Races in Genesis) can exude from the body and display under certain rare conditions a partly independent existence and a surprising coherence and energy, is now established by the rigorous experiments of the acute observers who have satisfactorily eliminated the hypothesis of fraud. Of course this astral double or “eidolon” is not the soul; it has no mind or conscience of its own; and there is nothing really new in this supposed discovery. It was universally known in antiquity and is widely credited today by multitudes who have not had their intelligences warped by materialism. The Egyptians had an accurate scientific knowledge of its functions and painted or carved the *Ka* or double at the side of the living man on the walls of the tombs and temples. The existence of this ethereal vesture of the soul being proved, the question naturally arises: How did it originate? The answer, which requires a fuller treatment of the action of the Lunar Pitris, is discussed elsewhere, but a remark of H. P. Blavatsky, written at the time when the grossest misrepresentation and crucifixion was the reward of that brave pioneer, is worth careful thought by those who look for corroborations of the Esoteric Philosophy:

The whole issue between the profane and the esoteric sciences depends upon the belief in, and demonstration of, the existence of an astral body within the physical, the former independent of the latter.
— (*The Secret Doctrine*)

MATTER AND FORCE

The Nebular Theory of Laplace has been found wanting of late, and many other attempts to solve the mystery of the Earth’s formation have been made with little more success than the demonstration of the high probability that there was a primitive nebula out of which the physical world condensed. We see many forms of nebulae, but the spiral form with two centers has recently been discovered to be the commonest type, an important corroboration of a fundamental principle in Occult Science, *i.e.*, the duality of all forces. Some of the shapes of the nebulae seem inexplicable upon the ordinary hypothesis of condensation, but there is no reason to suppose that they are all in the same phase of existence. However this may be, and no doubt astronomy will bring many new factors to light which will clear up much that is obscure in the physical development of nebulae, Theosophy carries back the origin of the Earth-Chain far beyond the manifestation of the nebulous matter visible to our senses, into astral conditions not subject to physical tests, though they have left, nevertheless,

their imperishable records, which can be read by those who have the right to investigate.

The various nebular hypotheses are helps to some understanding of the “descent of spirit into matter,” though they only take into consideration the condensation of ordinary matter. Physical science has no means, as yet, of tracing the origin of the matter of which the nebulae are composed, but some daring speculations have lately been made by advanced thinkers which show an approach to Theosophy.

For instance, Professor S. Newcomb, the well-known American astronomer, and a conservative thinker, ventures to criticize the hitherto-accepted belief in the eternity of matter. He says:

But we doubt whether any physical philosopher of the present day would be satisfied to accept any determination of the eternity of matter. All he would admit is that as far as his observation goes, no change in the quantity of matter can be produced by any known cause.... But he would at the same time admit that his experience no more sufficed to settle the question than the observation of an animal for a single day would settle the duration of its life, or prove that it had neither a beginning nor an end. He would probably admit that even matter itself may be the product of evolution.

This is a striking admission from a scientific authority; the last sentence is pure occultism.

From the wider evolutionary standpoint of Eastern philosophy, which includes the spiritual aspect of the Universe as well as the material in its scope, the necessity of matter having evolved from an invisible condition is apparent. Theosophy carries the imagination back to a state in which the Solar System was trembling on the verge of Becoming, and to the time when a new condensation was preparing for the development of the worlds as theaters of life and evolution. This condition, of course, precedes the ethereal. The observations of Zöllner, an unfortunate German scientist who was in advance of his time, Sir W. Crookes, and others, have brought out undeniable proofs of the possibility of at least the temporary materialization of invisible substance. Zöllner recorded a curious apparition he observed of a jet of water spouting in every direction from a point in the air, as if from an explosive center. This is exactly what should happen if astral invisible matter from another plane of existence had been suddenly materialized, condensed, so to speak, and poured into the physical plane through an invisible “leak.” Lovers of Humanity who wish to penetrate deeply into Nature’s laws to use their knowledge unselfishly, must know that by the study of the laws governing the intelligent and semi-intelligent forces behind the familiar forms of matter, an infinitely valuable knowledge of *causes* may be gained, causes of which the phenomenal effects we now see are but the inevitable concomitants. But like Sigurd,

who understood the voices of the birds in the forest after tasting the dragon's blood, this hidden world cannot be entered until the dragon of selfishness and personality has been slain within us, the dragon that keeps humanity from the golden fruit of the Tree of Knowledge *and* Life. Modern science in its experimental research does not recognize that the knowledge of Nature's processes in the ultimates — the only real Wisdom — is not — *cannot* be — separated from altruism and the highest morality. The key to attainment is in the aspirant himself; the desire to obtain knowledge solely to place it on the altar of humanity. is the only one that leads to Enlightenment. Everything else is illusory or evanescent.

There are certain fundamental divisions or aspects of the universal Cosmic Life, the seven "Tattvas," spiritual and invisible at one pole, but appearing at the other in the form of the physical forces of Light, Heat, Electricity or Gravitational attraction and Repulsion (the latter not yet recognized by physical science), etc. Control of the passions and desires, efforts to lead a really altruistic life and to sink the lower personal egotism, gradually lead to the acquirement of a state of impersonal wisdom in which the Adept becomes conscious of his unity with the higher intellectual and spiritual aspects of these forces, the higher pole. The attainment of this wisdom is not the outcome of any ordinary process of mental application alone, such as a University course, but is the culmination of many lives of endeavor to break down the wall separating the "me" and "thee." The arcane knowledge is the opening of the inner perception. Nothing but absolute selflessness will bring the world to the point where it can begin the study of the real causes of the phenomena of Nature; causes never to be understood by the ordinary personal man, however brilliantly endowed with intelligence. The greatest thinkers today are reasoning entirely upon the basis supplied by the physical senses, but there are a few highly developed souls who have broken through the veil of time and space. These stand as Protectors and Guardian Walls for Humanity, unknown philosophers of altruism; but in time, all men will open their hearts to the higher truths. Theosophy evokes a picture of the future so glorious that the mind hardly dares believe it, yet it is no fanciful vision, laboriously built up from ingenious guesses of what might be, but is the result of actual knowledge of the nature and powers of the Higher Self by those Teachers who sent H. P. Blavatsky with a few crumbs to feed the hungry. The Elect of the present humanity will be the guides and instructors of a future humanity whose Monads are now imprisoned, semi-conscious, in the most intelligent of the animal kingdom, or perhaps are struggling in the lower ranks. The hierarchies of spiritual "Builders" at present controlling the ethereal machinery of the Universe are the Elect of past humanities; and it is even hinted that to be an "atom" in some future Manvantara will be higher than to be a human being now!

Returning a moment to the Tattvas and the atoms of science. We have no clear idea what an atom is — an electron still less, as, according to the postulate it cannot have parts or size nor can it rotate or turn upside down. Theosophy cuts the Gordian knot and declares from knowledge that the atoms are centers of consciousness — *lives*, and therefore *Metaphysical*, *i.e.*, beyond the physical that we measure and weigh. The Tattvas play through them; in fact, they are the Tattvas in one form. The Tattvas, in their higher aspects, are the higher principles in us; as we gain self-control, we gain control of the whole range of the Tattvas. The Adept uses them consciously. H. P. Blavatsky was severely criticized for refusing to believe in the existence of inorganic matter and for endowing atoms with intelligence, yet we find many of the brightest minds of today accepting the same; for instance, Edison says:

I do not believe matter is inert, acted upon by an outside force. To me it seems that every atom is possessed by a certain amount of primitive intelligence: look at the thousand ways in which atoms of hydrogen combine with those of other elements.... Do you mean to say they do this without intelligence?

A great Theosophical Teacher says Nature is ever attempting to attain consciousness in organic rather than inorganic forms. Many illustrations of the action of the divine Creative Wisdom, the Intelligence behind all the Forces — Eros, the oldest of the Gods according to Plato — the divine Ray or “Fohat,” in the production of the Earth-Chain, are given in *The Secret Doctrine*, but one important form of its action must again be referred to here, *i.e.*, that the law of progress in time and space, physically and metaphysically, is spiral. This spiral process is polarized after leaving the One Unity, so we find Fohat manifesting in duality throughout all Nature. This is the root of the “pairs of opposites,” the “Love and Hate “of Empedocles, the positive and negative. The energizing Fire, Fohat, is said to hiss as it glides hither and thither in serpentine coils; this is the root idea of the Serpent allusions found in all symbology, and it played a prominent part in all the allegories of the Mysteries. Christianity is not exempt from it, for Jesus said: “Be ye wise as serpents,” etc. As the spot of undifferentiated “cosmic dust,” or “laya center,” in which the new earth started was “informed by the freed principles of a just deceased sidereal body,” it became serpentine, something of the nature of a comet, and then collecting more and more ethereal “dust” condensed into a brilliant sunlike body, which gradually settled down into a state habitable by material forms.

According to the Archaic Teachings we should expect to find evidence in the starry spaces of the dual action of Fohat, and such evidence is forthcoming, for the results of the photographic charting of the heavens have shown an enormous number of nebulae — the majority — to be

spiral, and to stream from two centers in twining wreaths of luminous haze. The ancient Greeks considered the “law of vortical movement in primordial matter” to be fundamental, and the very latest speculation of modern physics is that each atom is composed of immense numbers of “corpuscles” of “negative electricity” moving in rapid rotation. We are just rediscovering what has been lost in the night of the dark ages.

Fohat also energizes another kind of spiral, a cyclic spiral, for the paths of the celestial bodies are spiral curves of the utmost complexity. No astronomer has plotted out the *real* path of the Moon, for instance, which is composed of (1) its own motion round the Earth, (2) the Earth’s orbit round the Sun, and (3) the solar motion in its mysterious course. The action of Fohat in primeval space is thus given in *The Secret Doctrine*:

Fohat turns with his two hands, in contrary directions, the “seed” and the “curds” or Cosmic Matter; in clearer language is turning particles in a highly attenuated condition, and nebulae. — (Vol. I, p. 672)

The descent of the Monad into Matter and its pilgrimage through the seven Rounds on the seven “Globes,” is the effect of the spiral working of Fohat in time, and here again the dual action is well marked. The Monad is the substratum of the dual intellectual and psychophysical evolutions which ultimately unite in forming the perfect man, each process having been spiral in itself.

CORRESPONDENCES IN EVOLUTION

H. P. Blavatsky warned her pupils that the teachings and interpretations of the hidden symbolism of antiquity which she was giving were only a very small portion of the whole philosophy in the possession of the Masters of Wisdom; and that according to the reception given by the world to the hints given, so would be the future opportunities of obtaining more light. We have to bear in mind then, that to understand the ideal framework of the Universe, necessary faculties will have to be developed in us which are yet in embryo. We must never forget that behind the general outline of the Rounds and “Globes” there must be much more hidden meaning. Certain exponents of Theosophy in the earlier days of the Society, whose considerable lucidity of expression rendered them qualified to place the broad facts before the reading public, showed a tendency to materialize them in harmony with the materialistic trend of thought at that time; but H. P. Blavatsky was most emphatic in urging that not until we come to the consideration of the human race on “*Globe*” D, in our *Fourth Round*, do the conditions become fairly comprehensible to our present brain-intellection, for the early Rounds and the states of

consciousness which the Monad passed through in them are matters about which we may only speculate with the greatest caution.

While we know that we shall not have to unlearn anything that has been definitely established by H. P. Blavatsky, she herself pointed out that some of her teachings were in forms suitable for beginners — for in these tremendous subjects the most acute minds are only spelling out the A, B, C — and that the partial expression and elucidation of the mysteries of Nature and being which we have received will not find its full exposition until the world develops the faculties for comprehending it.

Having been thus warned that there is more meaning in every record than appears at first sight, we may try to get some idea, even if an incomplete one, of the passing over of the life-forms from the Lunar to the Terrestrial Chain.

The spiritual units called the Monad or Monads (it is difficult to draw a dividing line between what is really One Light, though multiple in Rays) whose evolution upon the Earth-Chain is being studied, come in a stream of which various parts are in different stages of progress, for they are not newly created “out of nothing.” As they leave the last Round of the Lunar-Chain to start on their journey into matter on the higher Earth-Chain, the most advanced portions of the stream may be called the “potentially human.” These are destined to pass before the others through the first Rounds and “Globes,” reaching the really human condition before the least developed Monads have reached the dense mineral embodiment. Then in order of progress and activity come the “potential” animal, vegetable, mineral, higher elemental, middle elemental and lower elemental, the one class *shading into the other*. As the matter of the first Rounds and “Globes” was very unsubstantial in comparison with the present physical, the forms of life were equally so — mere shadowy sketches, so to speak, of future possibilities. They were the archetypes or thought-forms of the coming complete worlds. It is impossible for us to grasp more than a vague picture of the conditions prevailing at this period, and to express anything about it in words is full of the danger of misconception. As space is so limited, it is impossible to dwell at length on the subject or to give illustrations which make it clearer; for the most complete account of these difficult points the Stanzas of the *Book of Dzyan* and the Commentaries given in *The Secret Doctrine* must be consulted. Their poetical language and the illuminating expositions of H. P. Blavatsky convey positive impressions to intuitive minds. What is not transmitted may be safely left until we unveil the faculties necessary for the comprehension of these spiritual and ethereal states. There can be no rigid lines drawn in Theosophical teachings: Katherine Tingley and all the Teachers of Theosophy have told us that the time will come when all sincere workers for humanity will obtain absolute certainty concerning these and other mysteries; but it will not be by ordinary methods of instruction such as a

typical University course, but chiefly through healthy and normal development of the powers of the Higher Ego, the real Man, enabling them to investigate and prove for themselves. Theosophy does not encourage the so-called dogmatic style of teaching. Those who know the facts beyond all possibility of doubt are the least dogmatic; they say, "The facts are thus and thus, and if you investigate the right way, with a pure motive and a ready mind, you can prove them for yourself." It is a source of great pleasure to the pupils of H. P. Blavatsky to find so many of her teachings which were scouted by the wiseacres of her time, now being accepted as established facts; but the proofs of the deeper mysteries she referred to, and many other parts of the philosophy that she held in reserve, cannot be approached by the means at the disposal of physical science, which does not recognize the necessity of purity of life as an essential factor before the unveiled truth can be approached.

One feature in the general plan of development is of primary importance as it is reflected in many minor degrees, *i.e.*, that each successive Round is more material than the last, until the Fourth Round is reached, and also that the lower "Globes" in every Round are denser than the higher ones. "Globe" D contains all the potentialities of the rest and co-exists with them until the close of the life-period on the Chain, once it has become consolidated. Our visible Moon, "Globe" D of the Lunar Chain, the most material, has not yet decomposed, though it is in process of constant dissolution.

It is well known to Physiology, and still more completely worked out in Theosophy, that the human embryo runs through the past stages of human life in its ante-natal development, and as it passes through the stages the race has experienced (far more complex than anthropology knows yet) in a few months, so the potential human Monad passes through the Second and Third Rounds at a rapid pace in comparison with the slow progress of the laggards — the less progressed Monads. In the Second Round there is a change in the order of development for a while, but we need not discuss that here as it does not materially affect the plan. In each Round a new "Element" is manifested, and as we pass through the three future Rounds we shall become familiar with states of Matter at present utterly unknown, but which are lying latent (for us) and waiting until we develop the senses to appreciate them. Each cycle or Round specially develops one human principle, and as we are now in the Fourth Round, we find the principles up to the fourth, the Kâmic, the passional-emotional one, in full sway; but, as we have passed the fourth Root *Race* of this Round and are now in the fifth Root Race, the intellectual principle has gained strength, though it is necessarily governed by the passional undertone, or tonic, of the whole Round. The keynote of the next or Fifth Round will be the higher Intellectual or Mânasic principle; that of the Sixth Round, Buddhi, the Spiritual Soul; and the Seventh Round will shine forth

in the full radiance of Âtman, which includes all. Those who have slain the tiger of self, have carried themselves over the critical stage of the battle humanity is now waging, into the Fifth or even Sixth Round conditions, and are “the saved,” forerunners of what the entire Race will be ages hence.

The great cycle of the Rounds and Races is repeated in the life-cycle of the individual. His astral body is built up as a matrix for the physical, which is formed on its model; then passion and sex develop later in life, intellect becomes dominant, and towards the close of his earthly career should come a higher spiritual perception. Not only is the cycle repeated in human life, but in intra-uterine development the embryo traces the same course: sex becomes distinguishable in the third month, the convolutions of the brain associated with thought appear at the fifth, and the seven-months old child is capable of independent existence. *The Secret Doctrine* says:

On strict analogy, the cycle of Seven Rounds in their work of the gradual formation of man through every kingdom of Nature, are repeated on a microscopical scale in the first seven months of gestation of a future human being. Let the student think over and work out this analogy. As the seven-months-old unborn baby, though quite ready, yet needs two months more in which to acquire strength and consolidate; so man, having perfected his evolution during seven Rounds, remains two periods more in the womb of mother-Nature before he is born, or rather reborn a Dhyâni, still more perfect than he was before he launched forth as a Monad on the newly built chain of worlds. — (*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 257.)

THE DESCENT OF MANAS

We must refer once more to the most important event in the history of the evolution of humanity on our planet, the lighting of the flame of *Manas*, or Mind, the descent of the real Higher Ego, which made the “senseless” Monad encased in its vestures of substance into the complete Man — the *Thinker* — ready to “run the race.” The development of the human shadowy vehicle, overshadowed or inspired by the energizing force of the Monad, has been touched upon slightly. As time passed, the lunar and other spiritual forces built up denser forms in harmony with the new conditions of thickening, manifesting in the different Rounds and “Globes,” until in the midway period, on “Globe” D of the Fourth Round or present Earth, the descent of the spiritual Hierarchy of the Higher Manas, the self-conscious Intelligence, takes place, and man becomes the seven-principled being of today, although the higher Manas (the “Transcendental Self” of Du Prel, [*Philosophie der Mystik*.] a German philosopher who has not succumbed to the sophistries of materialism) is hardly known yet except through its emanation, the brain-mind.

The Monad is not conscious in *our* meaning of that word until it links with the Mânasic or human thinking principle. The Monad is Âtman-Buddhi, and is One in essence throughout the Universe; as it is the One Flame of which each of us is a Spark, the meaning of universal oneness being a fact in Nature becomes clear. Oneness is a fact waiting to be recognized; not to be artificially made. In one sense the Monad becomes individualized as the Higher Manas unites it with the physical vehicle, but in its essence it remains a part of the whole like the drop in the ocean. The Third Race of rudimentary humanity in the Fourth Round on “Globe” D (our Earth), over which the Monad brooded, gradually received the Reincarnating Egos, spoken of in *The Secret Doctrine* as the “Heart of the Dhyân-Chohan body,” the hierarchy of semi-divine spiritual intelligences that had been preparing in other worlds to incarnate in the Monadic vehicles forming. Some “projected a spark” (of intelligence) only, others incarnated fully. There was no need for them to pass through the primitive stages through which the Monad was energizing into form the complex vehicles they required. With the appearance of the Higher Egos, a portion of whose light gives us our ordinary intellect (for we are not yet endowed with the full consciousness of the Mânasic principle) the separation of the race into sex, with its involved problems, and the present conditions, gradually came into being. This was over 18 millions of years ago, and a mere outline of the history of man since that period requires a Manual to itself.

The Monad or Jîva, as said in *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I, p. 302, is, first of all, shot down by the law of Evolution into the lowest form of matter the mineral. After a sevenfold gyration encased in the stone (or that which will become mineral and stone in the Fourth Round) it creeps out of it, say, as a lichen. Passing thence, through all the forms of vegetable matter, into what is termed animal matter, it has now reached the point in which it has become the germ, so to speak, of the animal, that will become the physical man. All this, up to the Third Round, is formless, as matter, and senseless, as consciousness... this conscious, rational, individual Soul (*Manas*), “the principle, or the intelligence, of the Elohim,” to receive which, he has to eat of the fruit of Knowledge from the Tree of Good and Evil. How is he to obtain all this? The Occult doctrine teaches that while the monad is cycling on downward into matter, these very Elohim or Pitris, the lower Dhyân-Chohans — are evolving *pari passu* with it on a higher and more spiritual plane, descending also relatively into matter on their own plane of consciousness, when, after having reached a certain point, they will meet the incarnating senseless monad, encased in the lowest matter, and blending the two potencies, Spirit and Matter, the union will produce that terrestrial symbol of the “Heavenly Man” in space — PERFECT MAN.

— (*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 246.)

Enough has been said to show that Theosophy has little sympathy with the one-sided theory of the Darwinians, for their hypothesis does not recognize some of the greatest factors in the case, such as the complexity of human nature, the existence of an astral form within the physical, the Higher Transcendental Ego, or Manas, and the overshadowing Âtman-Buddhi, all of which must be taken into consideration before any theory of evolution can be anything but imperfect. Theosophy looks on man as a spiritual being with a triple evolution — physical (including emotional and astral), Mânasic or Intellectual, and Spiritual or Monadic — and science has only partially traced the physical, the least important.

It should be clear from what has been sketched previously that Theosophy repudiates the abhorrent notion of the possibility of the real Man, the Manas, the Reincarnating Ego, overshadowed by the Monadic Light of Âtman-Buddhi, entering the body of a beast or insect. There is a possibility of the withdrawal of the light of the Higher Triad, Âtman-Buddhi-Manas, from the lower personal man as the result of many lives of utter selfishness; and also that the consciousness of the lower Ego, like the bodily frame, will gradually decompose, though more slowly and with infinite pain, possibly after many degrading incarnations in human form; but this in no way implies rebirth as a pig or a monkey. As H. P. Blavatsky says, there is the impassable abyss of Mentality and Self-consciousness between man and the animal. [See quotation on pages 459-460 above.]

Evolution having brought *Manas* the Thinker and Immortal Person on to this plane, cannot send him back to the brute which has not Manas.

— (*William Q. Judge*)

LUNAR INFLUENCE PERSISTS

Having gotten a general idea of the Rounds, a little more attention can be given with profit to the curious and very important question of the transfer of life from the Moon to the Earth. As the newly forming center of equilibrium, which ultimately became the solid Earth, drew this life to it, and the lower forms of consciousness or vestures of the Monad obtained greater solidity, the “atoms” composing them were busy assimilating the new conditions, which were higher than those they had experienced in the similar “Globes” of the Moon-chain. By the time the spiritual Manas, which is the real Ego of man, had incarnated at the midway period of the Fourth (our present) Round, the *habits* or cyclic impressions derived from the conditions of lunar existence had largely faded out under the fresh circumstances of Earth-life; but there are still some left which are a mystery to science, and which it has never made the slightest effort to solve, hardly even to face. Such are the various periods in human and animal life which bear a direct and unmistakable relation to the changes of

the Moon. In diseases the crisis, as a rule, comes at intervals of seven, fourteen or twenty-one days, and other physiological periodic events are governed by the lunar cycles. In lunacy the new and full moons are critical times; in the growth and generation of insects the seven day period is well marked; in the changes of the weather the farmers persist in declaring, in spite of the skepticism of science, that the Moon is the regulator.

Further information on this interesting subject is given in *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine*, but a new confirmation of the Theosophical knowledge must not be omitted here. The life history of the *Palolo viridis* worm of Polynesia, etc. has been known for some time to be very remarkable. It keeps accurate *lunar time*! The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* says:

About three o'clock on the morning following the third quartering of the October moon they invariably appear on the surface of the water;... soon after the sun rises they begin to break, and by 9 o'clock A.M. they have disappeared. The morning following the third quartering of the November moon they again appear in the same manner but in smaller quantities. After that they are not seen till October of the next year. They appear thus to deposit their ova.... Year by year these creatures appear according to lunar time.

Thinking that the tides might have something to do with this extraordinary phenomenon, the observers at the Carnegie Institution's Marine Laboratory at the Tortugas, in 1907, tried the experiment of putting some of the *Palolo* worms into tanks of still water. Under these conditions, *if exposed to the light of the Moon*, at the third quarter nearest the summer solstice, which is the period they keep in the Gulf of Mexico, the performance took place precisely as usual; but if the moonlight was shut off they remained quiescent at the bottom of the water, and if the eggs were liberated six hours even before the proper lunar cycle they would not fructify. Evidences like this are precisely what we should expect as the lingering remains of the influence of the former life in the Lunar Chain. The *Palolo* worm is a very simple organism and has probably changed very little since its first ethereal shadowy progenitor passed over from our satellite — satellite now perhaps, but parent then.

There are other peculiarities connected with the Moon, such as the shape of its orbit, which is not a cycloidal curve, like the paths of other satellites, but is concave to the position of the Sun; and the comparatively close approximation in size between the diameters of the Earth and Moon as compared with the great disproportion between the sizes of the other satellites and their primaries — peculiarities that have caused some astronomers to advance the hypothesis that the Moon is a companion planet to the Earth, and not a satellite, a view much more in harmony with Theosophical records.

RÉSUMÉ AND CONCLUSION

Looking back at the great world-periods called Rounds, we see taking place under the evolutionary push of the Monad a gradual change and development in primitive ethereal substance which had gained all the experience possible in the Lunar Chain. The Monad having left the seventh “Globe” of the Lunar Chain, after a period of repose commences to energize the higher evolution of the Terrestrial Chain in its most ethereal state, a state and a process of activity that have not been fully given out by the Teachers who have possession of the exact details. We should certainly not be able to understand the conditions of those early times if told in words which are only suitable to the conditions of today; the understanding of such things needs the power to change our consciousness into sympathetic vibration with them, and that is not the privilege of the untrained man. Descending more and more deeply into material conditions, the “Pilgrim” finds itself ultimately in the present Fourth Round, in the present Fifth Race on “Globe” D (our Earth, the most material of all the states).

Humanity is at present just a little past the lowest point of the arc, and slowly commencing the climb which will carry it into heights of spiritual life infinitely transcending the greatest flights of the imagination of poet or prophet.

With each new Round new conditions of matter manifested themselves on the “Globes” each time the rush of the life-wave reached them again. The next Round will manifest conditions of matter of which uninitiated humanity has no conception; and utterly unexpected and at present unimaginable conditions will become normal as the race progresses through the Sixth and Seventh Rounds, the last being highly spiritual and close to the Divine. During the process of evolution of terrestrial forms, and at a time when there were only the “unconscious” (from the intellectual standpoint) Monads, and the lower material principles, the real Ego incarnated, descending from higher realms (being a Dhyân-Chohan, or spiritual Intelligence, coming from past manvantaras), and gave the link needed to join the “unconscious” Monad with its material, semi-human forms. Then commenced the struggle for purification, for the higher to dominate the lower, and to polarize the whole complex nature of man in the direction of spiritual progress. This was the “Fall” of the angels, this was the casting of Prometheus to Earth after he had stolen the divine Fire from heaven; these and many other allegories have been woven round the great fact of the descent of the “Elohim” or the *Mânasaputra*, the Sparks or Sons of the Universal Mind. The “coats of skins” which were made by “Jehovah” (the “Lord God”) for Adam and Eve were symbols of the final entry into physical flesh-life in this present Fourth Round, long after the experiences depicted in the

earlier verses of Genesis, which are condensed accounts of the earlier Rounds and Races.

Theosophy opens our eyes to see that Earth is a very different thing from what mere outside appearance warrants. It is only our blindness that makes us believe that it is dark; it is only ignorance that allows us to fancy it is a lump of senseless clay; and if we make it a hell, that is our own fault. In reality it is a wonderful and magic place, full of mysterious profundities which we shall penetrate in time; and it is our *Home* in a very real sense. A survey of the evolution of the Races through the “Globes” in their cyclic sweep, shows that the Oneness of Humanity is not a partial or artificial thing; and that the Law of Evolution infinitely transcends the dreams of Biology, for it reaches from the Depths to the Heights of Being. As soon as humanity finds that there is no easy escape from Earth into some fanciful heavenly pleasure-ground for an eternity of personal enjoyment, it will soon see that the wisest thing to do is to set its own house in order, and by practical altruism in act and thought change even the face of Nature, and find the true Heaven which is all about us. When this wisdom comes to the race as a whole, and Compassion has become the recognized law of life, and all the experience possible to man on Earth has been gained, then it will be time for the heavens to “pass away with a great noise”; and then “the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up” to make ready for the future Rounds, “a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

Stronger than earth has ever seen; the veil
Is rending and the voices of the day
Are heard across the voices of the Dark.
No sudden heaven, nor sudden hell for man,
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Aeonian evolution, swift or slow,
Through all the spheres — an ever opening height,
An ever lessening earth... — *Tennyson*

Sons of the Fire-Mist

A Study of Humanity

A Student

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INTRODUCTORY

That there has once been a Golden Age is the universal tradition of Humanity. This belief is one of those larger factors in life which have either been neglected utterly or treated in the most prosaic manner as baseless myths created by a fond imagination. But a new spirit of inquiry is spreading in the world and even some of the leading thinkers in science have become dissatisfied with the contempt hitherto shown for the antique tradition. The Theosophical Movement has already had a large share in awakening a healthy skepticism in the infallibility of the purely materialistic conception of the origins of humanity, a conception which would limit the existence of rational man on Earth to a few paltry thousands of years, and which, neglecting the existence of the soul, insists that man is no more than a highly developed beast, and not a spark of Divinity striving upward through perishable and transitory forms.

The scientific writers on Folklore and Comparative Mythology declare that their painstaking accumulation of facts concerning the beliefs and customs of the savage and civilized races of the past and present are only for the purpose of tracing and understanding the workings of the human mind in its alleged march from the "Stone Age" to the Twentieth Century. They calmly assume that the time-honored legends of the past, and all the so-called superstitions of the past and the present are either baseless or are merely the fanciful renderings of the commonest natural phenomena, and that for anyone to imagine there is any real wisdom in them which we do not know is to reduce himself to a low level of culture. To the Folklorist the myths, etc., are of no importance except to the extent that they give material for building up his commonplace theories. He believes in no gods; to his unpoetic mind Nature is soulless.

Theosophy proves the error of this. The Theosophist is very little interested in the contortions of the savage mind in its efforts to preserve the vestiges of truth in its possession; he is employed in finding the truth behind the forms, so as to be better able to help humanity to progress on intelligent lines. Theosophy knows and is pointing out the pearls of truth hidden under the mass of rubbish that has grown up throughout the ages.

A feeling has arisen in the hearts of thousands that there is something vitally important in the traditions of the ancients, and that they were not all deluded fools; but the materialistic interpretation of the Bible that the orthodox theologians have forced upon the world, with its literal hell and its absurd chronology, its unjust "plan of salvation" and false science, still arouses prejudice not only against the veracity of the Biblical allegories but also against those of the Sacred Scriptures of India, Chaldea, etc.

It is not possible in the limited space at our disposal to give the full reasons why Theosophists accept the assertions that there were vast prehistoric civilizations ages before the supposed Flood of Noah or the

hypothetical “Stone Age” of archaeology; it is sufficient to mention that H. P. Blavatsky brought the key to the strange and not always beautiful narratives in the Ancient Records. Her great work, *The Secret Doctrine*, to quote her own words:

Asserts that a system, known as the WISDOM-RELIGION, the work of generations of adepts and seers, the sacred heirloom of pre-historic times — actually exists, though hitherto preserved in the greatest secrecy by the present Initiates; and it points to various corroborations of its existence to this very day, to be found in ancient and modern works.... No *new* philosophy is set up in *The Secret Doctrine*, only the hidden meaning of some of the religious allegories of antiquity is given, light being thrown on these by the esoteric sciences, and the common source is pointed out, whence all the world-religions and philosophies have sprung... its doctrines and sciences which form an integral cycle of universal cosmic facts and metaphysical axioms and truths, represent a complete and unbroken system; and that he who is brave and persevering enough, ready to crush the *animal* in himself, and, forgetting the human *self*, sacrifices it to his Higher Ego, can always find his way to become initiated into these mysteries.

[“The Babel of Modern Thought,” *Lucifer*, 1901.]

Referring students to the remarkable evidences given in *The Secret Doctrine* and *Isis Unveiled* of the accuracy of the fragments preserved under the strange Biblical, Purânic, and other accounts of the creations and destructions of the world, which read in the light of Theosophy, give a coherent story, we will pass on to our subject, the experience of humanity during the aeons of time that have elapsed while our present complex nature has been forming. The word experience is used advisedly, for the immortal principle in man, in its pilgrimage towards divinity, identifies itself with various states of existence, including numerous degrees of materiality, and endures many outward changes of earthly conditions each of which provides different opportunities for advancement.

Man has not been confined to his materially embodied state on the planet Earth from the outset; he has existed upon other planes of being, more subtle than the terrestrial as we know it now, not in a supposed “supernatural” heaven, but under conditions as normal in their cycle as the physical is today. Why should there be anything extraordinary in this idea? If, as all but agnostics and materialists believe, it is possible to exist after death, minus the body, and in a condition absolutely invisible to our five senses, why should there be anything unreasonable in the Theosophical teaching that ages ago humanity gained needed experience in conditions far more ethereal than those prevailing in this corner of the Universe now? The Earth was certainly far more gaseous in its nature at one time; why should we not have been formed then in harmony with the environment?

Theosophy teaches that in gaining the vast experiences already stored up in the memory of the soul, humanity has traveled many roads, developing certain faculties during one cycle, and others when that cycle had run its course. The bald notion that man is merely a highly organized animal, a *Primate* with a more complex brain, who has descended in a straight line from some primeval amoeba through reptile and mammal, does not explain the mystery of his nature. All honor must be given to Darwin, Wallace, Huxley, and the indefatigable school of evolutionists for breaking down the literal misinterpretation of Genesis, but the danger of materialism has become so great that it is time the Theosophical interpretation should be understood, for it shows there is no real conflict between true science and true religion, because they are one.

WHAT IS HUMANITY?

Humanity is far more than they know. They think they are the ordinary thinking, talking and eating, loving and hating, sinning and suffering personality of everyday life; but that is only the merest fraction of the real person; that is not the Being to whom Jesus said, "Ye are gods." Materialism says mind is a "by-product of the brain," but Theosophy shows that the brain-mind is, in a very profound sense, a "by-product" of the Higher immortal Mind, the Reincarnating Ego, the Man "for whom the hour shall never strike." [*The Voice of the Silence*. {p. 31}]

But "still it moves," and recent observations have persuaded many Western thinkers that there are really profound depths in man hitherto entirely unsuspected by them. Strange powers of memory under hypnosis, thought-transference, clairvoyance, movement of objects without physical contact at will, etc.,— things which are little more than feeble reflections of the real powers latent in man — have forced themselves upon the few independent thinkers, and have proved that behind the ordinary faculties, the five senses and the everyday mind, there lies a region totally unexplored by Western science.

But this vast region, the domain of the re incarnating Ego, is well known to the psychologists of the inner schools of the East, and Theosophy brings actual knowledge of our human nature.

The first thing we have to learn is that the evolution of the higher central nature has been carried on through enormous ages of time separately from the evolution of the lower principles — the passionate nature, the body, and the astral (or *model*) body. The real man, the Higher Ego, knows these things, for it has lived through ages of experience, and has knowledge far transcending that of the lower man, the physical personality. The Higher Ego knows so much more than the lower, which has only been in existence for the short period of one life-cycle, that it recognizes what experiences are necessary for its real evolution, though

they may not be always pleasing to the lower personality, Mr. A., or Mrs. B., which resents the apparently unjust blows of fate. But after death the withdrawal of the best part of the lower — the spiritual “aroma” of the past memories — into the Higher permanent Ego allows it to perceive that a great plan, like a silver thread, had been running through the events of the past life. Then as the lower nature becomes purified the “threshold of sensation” broadens, until when absolute impersonality is gained we shall know ourselves as we are, and realize the full continuity of purpose through the labyrinth of past lives.

A few independent psychologists of America and Europe have satisfied themselves that besides the “objective mind,” as they call the brain-personality of ordinary waking life, there is something, a “subjective mind,” possessing higher powers; but their “subjective mind” is not the Higher Ego, for it can be hypnotized and deceived with ease. It is merely the manifestation of qualities of some of the “sheaths” or subdivisions of the astral body which are brought into action when the physical senses are paralyzed, either through abnormal cataleptic conditions or by the hazardous practice of hypnotism. These sheaths of the astral body are possessed of remarkable powers, the result of processes of evolution extending over long periods. The astral body, though capable of displaying these powers is not to be considered a spiritual being; its consciousness is largely automatic and its cohesion breaks up soon after death in normal cases. When the terrible bondage of personality — that egotism whose strength is hardly suspected until the candidate for purification sets about its destruction in serious earnest — is broken, the astral principles will be at the service of the perfect man, but the attempt to arouse them artificially by hypnotic suggestion or other abnormal means is fraught with extreme danger to life or sanity. The ancient philosophers who were initiated into the Mysteries and who thoroughly studied the principles of man, and *knew their origin*, took precautions against the errors and dangers arising from hypnotic suggestion which are unknown to the amateur modern researcher who has received no training in the Esoteric schools. While these modern investigators who have made a few tentative efforts to investigate the lower psychic phenomena are playing with shells on the ocean beach of psychology, the adepts have sounded its depths and know its secrets and its dangers, and the long, self-sacrificing, and impersonal preparations required, before it can be safely traversed.

Speaking of the origins of man’s complex and mixed nature H. P. Blavatsky says:

... Man was not created the complete being he is now, however imperfect he still remains. There was a spiritual, a psychic, an intellectual, and an animal evolution, from the highest to the lowest, as well as a physical development — from the simple and homogeneous, up to the more complex

and heterogeneous; though not quite on the lines traced for us by the modern evolutionists. This double evolution in two contrary directions, required various ages, of diverse natures and degrees of spirituality and intellectuality, to fabricate the being now known as man. Furthermore, the one absolute, ever acting and never erring law, which proceeds on the same lines from one eternity (or Manvantara) to the other — ever furnishing an ascending scale for the manifested, or that which we call the great Illusion (*Mahâ-Mâyâ*), but plunging Spirit deeper and deeper into materiality on the one hand, and then *redeeming it through flesh* and liberating it — this law, we say, uses for these purposes the Beings from other and higher planes, men or *Minds* (Manus) in accordance with their Karmic exigencies.

[*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 87.]

CYCLIC PROGRESS

Though Nature's curves of activity appear circular when surveyed from one point of view, they are really spirals which never pass over the same ground twice. So the evolution of man, which is the most important event on our planet (for all tends to become self-conscious, or Man), proceeds through a spiral progress upon our Earth-chain of Globes, and more particularly, upon the many different states of existence through which our world has passed.

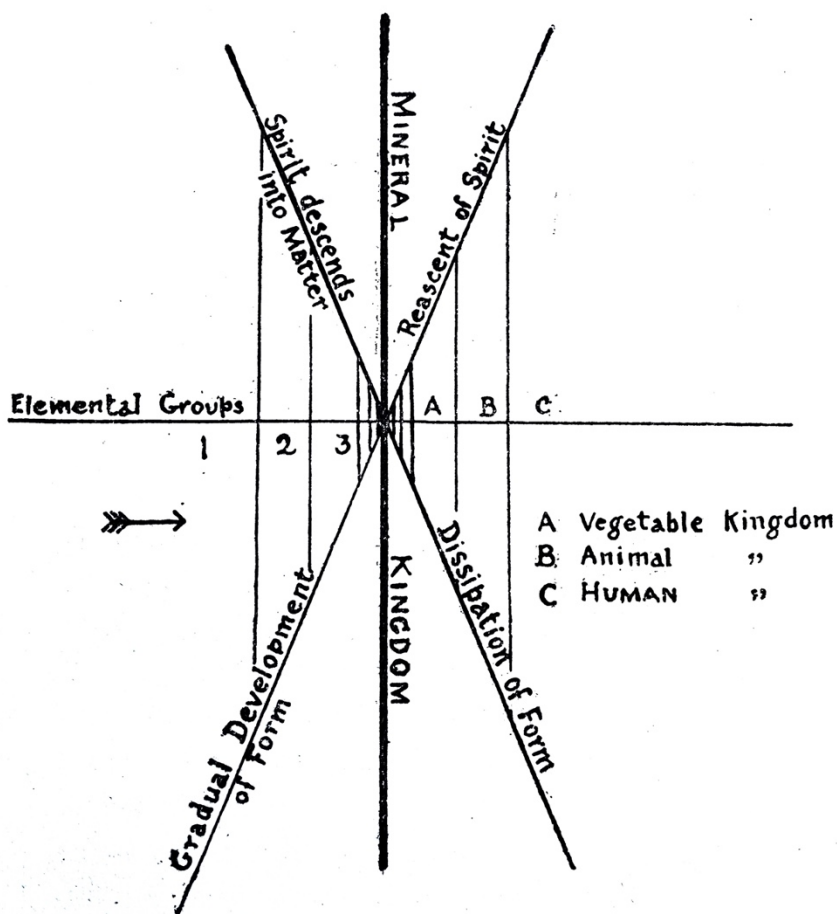
The uniformity of plan in Nature's methods in great and small things, is strikingly exemplified by the similarity of the general scheme of evolution guiding the Universal or Kosmic, the Planetary, and the Human development. The principle is firstly that the Divine Impulse causes the Universe to manifest periods or ages of alternate activity and repose,— or what seems repose in comparison with the intensity of life during the "*Manvantara*," as the objective or active condition is called; and secondly, that as the "*Pralaya*," or subjective repose, reaches its close, the objective world is called into being and proceeds from the highest spiritual states down in regular degrees to and through the densest materiality, and then back again to the original condition plus the experience gained on the vast pilgrimage.

The smaller cycles within the great Journey are spiral curves, each one of which consists of still smaller spirals until at last the individual life of man is reached. Each single life on Earth is but a part of the smallest spiral; the rest of the curve is traced in more ethereal states. The Reincarnating Ego, the real Man, descends for incarnation from the spiritual condition of "*Devachan*" through denser "*astral*" conditions to physical Earth-life, during which it passes through a regular series of phases; then at death it returns through the astral, semi-material conditions to the spiritual peace and rest of Devachan. This continues life after life until there is no further need of experience in that cycle, and, the greater spiral being rounded, a new path is entered.

There are seven great circuits called “Rounds” in the journey of the Monad or Ray of Divinity which ultimately becomes Man, during which it assumes many bodies and passes through many vicissitudes of which ordinary history has no conception. The succession of the “Globe-conditions” under which this journey has proceeded, and during which man has obtained present self-consciousness, is outlined elsewhere. During the First, Second, and Third Rounds, the Monad descended into matter, and in the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh it will be traveling upward. We are in the middle or Fourth Round, during which we have gained full self-consciousness, and now the real fight of the Higher nature for supremacy has commenced. We read in *The Secret Doctrine*:

Starting upon the long journey immaculate; descending more and more into sinful matter, and having connected himself with every atom in manifested *Space* — the *Pilgrim*, having struggled through and suffered in every form of life and being, is only at the bottom of the valley of matter, and half through his cycle, when he has identified himself with collective Humanity. This, *he has made in his own image*. In order to progress upwards and homewards, the “God” has now to ascend the weary uphill path of the Golgotha of Life. It is the martyrdom of self-conscious existence. Like Viśvakarman he has to sacrifice *himself to himself* in order to redeem all creatures, to resurrect from the many into the *One Life*. Then he ascends into heaven indeed; where, plunged into the incomprehensible absolute Being and Bliss of Paranirvāna, he reigns unconditionally, and whence he will re-descend again at the next “coming,” which one portion of humanity expects in its dead-letter sense as the *second advent*, and the other as the last “Kalki Avatāra.” [*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 268.]

Although we are in the middle or “lowest” Globe-condition of the Fourth, or lowest circuit of the spiral journey, we are not exactly midway in the Rounds. The present “Globe,” D, provides conditions for the evolution of seven great human races to succeed each other upon it, and we are now well on in the Fifth of these human races. As the *Fourth Race* is the most material (corresponding with the *Fourth Round*) it is clear that we have passed the center, but as nearly all the work preceding the Fourth Round, and a good deal of that of the early part of the Fourth Round, was merely preparatory building up of the being now complete as man, we are not very far on in our career as self-conscious responsible beings. The great battle, the final “moment of choice” between spirituality and materiality (the victory of the latter resulting in ultimate loss of the soul) will not arrive until the Fifth Round, but every act of today is a preparation for that critical period.



In the development of the unborn infant we find a perfect example of the repetition or reflection of the great plan of evolution in little. As its body is being built up by invisible forces in readiness for the incarnation of the immortal Ego all the conditions of the past history of humanity are repeated in miniature, and in order. This will be referred to again; it is mentioned here as an illustration of Nature's principle of correspondences, of reflecting the great in the small. The development and decay of the races, nations, and individuals on each "Globe," repeat the broad outline presented in the Cosmic system which includes the minor periods in its scope. The current of the life-wave passes through conditions, of greater and greater limitation and less and less spirituality called "Globes," as it descends along the First Round of the great spiral, but as they are extremely difficult for us to understand, very little is said about them until the present Globe "D" of the Fourth Round is reached.

William Q. Judge very clearly expresses the succession of the races on Earth (Globe “D”) during the Fourth Round:

The appearance of these great root-races is always just when the world’s development permits. When the globe was forming, the first root-race was more or less ethereal and had no such body as we now inhabit. The cosmic environment became more dense and the second race appeared, soon after which the first wholly disappeared. Then the third came on the scene, after an immense lapse of time, during which the second had been developing the bodies needed for the third. At the coming of the fourth root-race it is said that the present human form was evolved, although gigantic and in some respects different from our own. It is from this point — the fourth race — that the Theosophical system begins to speak of man as such.

In the archaic *Book of Dzyan*, quoted in *The Secret Doctrine*, it is said that “The first race on every zone was Moon-colored; the second, yellow like gold; the third, red; the fourth, brown, which became black with sin.” [*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 227.]

The present inhabitants of the Earth are composed of relics of the later Third and the Fourth Races and of the present great Fifth Race, of which America is producing the latest branch or sub-race.

THE SPARK AND THE FLAME

The Theosophical system differs from the popular scientific speculations of the day chiefly in its positive assertion, and demonstration in practice, that man is in reality an evolving soul traveling a well-defined path, and wearing down many physical bodies in its journey towards divinity.

Materialistic science limits human consciousness to the transient interaction of perishable brain-cells; it gives no particle of light on the past or the future of each unit; it repudiates the pre-existence of the soul, and regards everything subsequent to embodied Earth-life as unknowable or non-existent — a curious commentary upon the efforts of the centuries of “dogmatic theology”! Science regards the race as the only unit of progress; the individual being supposed to be as ephemeral as the “beasts that perish,” and his existence entirely subordinate to that of the race — which itself will perish utterly when the Sun grows cold!

But Theosophy, while admitting that the race as a whole is on the upward way — though not without many setbacks and failures — follows the progress of the “Monad,” the Ray of the One Divine Existence, which incarnates over and over again in every condition within the terrestrial environment, until, after being united with the real thinking Ego, the Higher Manas or “Human Soul,” it has exhausted the possibilities of the great cycle through which it has to pass. Then it is transported to another

garden of the Law to proceed on a still higher evolution of which we cannot have any conception at present.

Darwinian Evolution ignores the “Thread-soul” running through the consecutive existences of man; it gives no light on what it is that evolves; it confuses the immortal man of the past and future with his perishable body. Theosophy, on the other hand, offers a clear picture of the eternal progression of all Nature up to higher states of consciousness, like the mathematical line which continually approaches another but never meets it though prolonged to infinity. Theosophy does not fall into the theological fallacy that every man at birth is a newly created soul whose acts in one brief life are destined to make or mar its whole future for eternity.

The “Monad,” the immortal being, cannot be called a spirit, for it is not in essence separate from the Oversoul. H. P. Blavatsky calls it a Ray of Divinity, and it is the substratum round which the astral model, which itself formed the basis for the physical, was gradually built. Ultimately the Higher Ego, the part that makes a man a man, united with the Monadic Ray, like one beam of sunshine following another through a hole, and, merging with it, gave self-consciousness.

The relationship of the Divine overshadowing Ray, “Âtmâ-Buddhi,” with the Thinker, the Higher Ego, is difficult to understand, and in so brief an essay it is sufficient to mention that the former is a universal principle manifesting through forms, but is not humanly conscious until the Mind or Manas assimilates it. It is the substratum of Reality, toward the knowledge of which all evolution tends. It is the evolutionary force imprisoned within, and steadily pushing all things towards higher states. For a fuller statement of this difficult point a careful study of *The Secret Doctrine* is necessary, but truly we need a higher spiritual penetration than is common today before a full understanding of it can be gained; yet it is a logical necessity that there should be a Ray from the Unknown Divine Source permeating all things, countless sparks of the One Flame. In the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ* there are some wonderfully expressive passages referring to the Divine Monad:

He who seeth the Supreme Being existing alike imperishable in all perishable things, sees indeed.... This Supreme Spirit, O son of Kunti, even when it is in the body, neither acteth nor is it affected by action, because, being without beginning and devoid of attributes, it is changeless.... As a single sun illuminateth the whole world, even so doth the One Spirit illumine every body, O son of Bhârata. — (ch. xiii)

It is even a portion of myself which, having assumed life in this world of conditioned existence, draweth together the five senses and the mind in order that it may obtain a body and may leave it again.... Presiding over the eye, the ear, the touch, the taste, and the power of smelling, and also over the mind, he experienceth the objects of sense. The deluded do not see the

spirit when it quitteth or remains in the body, nor when, moved by the qualities, it has experience in the world. But those who have the eye of wisdom perceive it, and devotees who industriously strive to do so see it dwelling in their own hearts, etc. — (ch. xv)

Spirit and Matter are not regarded in Theosophy as two fundamentally different things, but as two aspects of an underlying Unity, the cause of both. Once they are launched forth into manifestation the Life-substance descends into material conditions, the interplay of the two opposite polarities produces all the phenomena of Nature, and Karma, the Law of cause and effect, comes into action. Thus the experience is gained for which all this wonderful Evolution and Involution is set in motion.

In order to become apparent, electricity must be in the positive and negative conditions, and so it is with the Divine Unity which manifests in Matter and Spirit. When Matter and Spirit are not apparent, unknown conditions exist; between the periodic appearances of universes this Nirvânic condition prevails.

During the cyclic career of the Monad in this World-Period it requires vestures suitable to show forth its different potentialities and latent states of consciousness. To obtain these the intelligent hierarchical forces in Nature touched the springs which aroused its powers and set in motion the Building Forces inherent in it, so that model archetypal forms were gradually projected from spheres of existence where they had been waiting for the evolutionary impulse; physical molecules were finally attracted to them, clothing them with the material suitable for the grossest form of life; the emotional and intellectual faculties were aroused; and after many ages, primitive dual-sexed physical man came into being. But not *perfect* man, for humanity has not yet developed all its intellectual principles, still less the spiritual. They are all within our grasp, but we have a weary road to travel before we can stand forth as a race of Christs or Buddhas, and the first step we have to take is the practical recognition of the real inner unity or solidarity of humanity. A mere nominal assent to the principle of Universal Oneness, though one may be fully convinced intellectually, will not avail, except as a preliminary step; the real consciousness of the inner divine nature of man only comes by the cultivation of the finer attributes of mind and heart, such as Compassion, that urge which feels an injury to another as keenly as to oneself, that inexpressible yearning that all humanity shall cease to live this death in life; by that courage which shrinks from nothing when the interest of others is at stake; and by the purification that comes only from joyous unselfish work for others.

Now we have come across a new idea hitherto unrecognized by science but which explains many mysteries. There is a model or semi-substantial “astral” form existing in man into which the physical particles of our bodies are built, which holds them together, and which persists for

some time after death. H. P. Blavatsky said that the question of the existence of this ethereal form was the only real point of difference between Theosophy and modern Science; and since she wrote things have changed in the scientific world. A large portion of it no longer denies the *possibility* of many psychic phenomena that it condemned unheard formerly, and, through the admissions which a large number of leading scientists have been compelled to make by the examination of the facts, the existence of an astral form, distinct from the physical, is becoming a matter of accepted knowledge. Once this is admitted the greatest difficulty in accepting the Theosophical teaching on many vital points, is removed. Theosophy is the only system which has been acquainted with kindred facts for ages and which has recorded their origins, and knows their significance.

But although Theosophy holds the keys of knowledge, *that does not mean they have all been given to the world*. On the contrary, the Custodians of the Ancient Records have withheld the greater part of their information, and have given out but the main outlines with a few details here and there; still there is more than enough for the present, and day by day fresh corroborations are coming up which enable students of Theosophy to interpret with more clearness the valuable hints that have been given.

THE LATENT POWERS AWAKEN

It is now possible to go a little more into detail concerning man on “Globe” D of this Fourth Round. For a general sketch of the Rounds and the position therein of “Globe” D in each Round the reader is referred elsewhere, and for a wealth of evidence from innumerable records of the past history of humanity preserved in living tradition, in manuscript, on palm-leaf or papyrus, carved in glyph or symbol on enduring stone, or set forth in other ways, *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine* should be consulted.

The “inherent and necessary law of development” spoken of by science, is contained in the Divine Spark or Monad (Âtmâ-Buddhi). The Monad is the cause of Evolution and lies behind all minor agencies such as Natural and Sexual Selection, etc., which are the instruments through which it works for progress. The Monad, after enjoying an existence upon the “Lunar Chain,” a condition of existence of which the Moon is a surviving relic, enters the Terrestrial Chain of “Globes,” clothes itself with the finer states of earthly matter, and assumes in orderly succession various changes of consciousness unknown to modern thought, on its way to become man.

Nature’s first attempts to form man were at first unsuccessful, for the unfoldment of the Monadic potentialities is unable to proceed beyond a

certain point without the addition of another principle, the Manas, or reflecting Mind, and this had to be evoked by Beings possessing this self-consciousness, who had been evolving under other conditions. They communicated to the imperfect animal man the divine principle of intelligence, which is not a “by-product of the brain.” Endowed with this, the rudimentary half-formed man became truly man, a thinker, and acquired that greater power of progression which renders him different from the brutes, who have not had the latent intellectual and self-conscious powers of the Monad aroused. The doctrine of the coming of the “Sons of Mind” into nascent humanity is one of the greatest revelations of Theosophy, for it explains the presence of the Higher Ego in us; and though it is found in more or less veiled hints in all the world-scriptures, it was not understood until they were studied in the revealing light of Theosophy. The doctrine is concealed under “blinds” in the first chapters of Genesis. The reader is urged to dwell upon this supremely important point carefully, and to observe how it completely alters the point of view from which the origin and nature of man must be studied.

The various “Angels,” “Gods,” “Powers,” and other subordinate divinities that were believed in until this materialistic age, by divers peoples, are the groups or Hierarchies of spiritual and semi-spiritual Beings, corresponding to the principles in man, which assisted the unfolding of the inherent powers of the Monad, by “projecting,” so to speak, the vivifying sparks in order to arouse the particular aspect or principle corresponding to themselves, each to each. One of the leading features of Theosophy, which opens a line of inquiry quite new to modern thinkers and without which they must continue to struggle to explain natural phenomena by means of inadequate materialistic hypotheses, is that humanity and all things make progress by responding to stimuli which arouse latent powers. These stimuli can only come from more advanced intelligences who already have these particular qualities in activity. Dwell carefully upon this fundamental concept.

THE FIRST AND SECOND RACES

When incipient man arrived upon Earth at the beginning of the Fourth Round, the Hierarchy called the “Lunar Pitris” or Fathers, furnished him with his first dwelling, a subtle ethereal form, the “shadow” of themselves, which afforded the elemental forces of Nature a model upon which to build. The consciousness of this highly ethereal First Race was instinctual and has gradually blended with our complex make-up so intimately that we cannot now distinguish it separately. Self-consciousness does not awaken until the end of the Third Race.

The first race of men were, then, simply the images, the astral doubles, of their Fathers, who were the pioneers, or the most progressed Entities from a preceding though *lower* sphere, the shell of which is now our Moon.... At the end of the Third Round, they were already human in their divine nature, and were thus called upon to become the creators of the forms destined to fashion the tabernacles of the less progressed Monads, whose turn it was to incarnate. [*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 115.]

After many ages this shadowy, almost incomprehensible state of humanity — or what was to become humanity later — changed, and the First Race gave birth to the Second, and that to the Third. Of the First and Second little can be said. There was no death at first, for this incipient humanity had no physical bodies to wear out; spirit and matter were not yet equilibrated.

Even the state of mental torpor and unconsciousness of the first two Races and of the first half of the Third Race, is symbolized, in the second chapter of Genesis, by the *deep sleep of Adam*... the slumber of the Soul and Mind. [*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 181.]

The Primitive Race merged into the Second Race and became one with it. The “man” of the second Race, which was a little more materialized than the First, produced offspring by “fission” or “budding,” in the manner of cell division. At this time, we may note, the Race was still devoid of the element of Desire and Passion, which did not evolve until the Third Race, and so hermaphroditism was the natural order.

In *The Secret Doctrine* H. P. Blavatsky published some remarkable Stanzas or Verses from an archaic MS., *The Book of Dzyan*, to which she had access, but which is not yet available to archaeologists. This antique record contains a brief *résumé* of the whole history of humanity, and it is from this and similar accounts that the Biblical and other sacred books derive their allegories. The following will give an idea of the spirit of the work:

The breath [or human Monad] needed a form; The Fathers [Pitris] gave it.

The breath needed a gross body; the Earth [lower elementals] molded it.

The breath needed the Spirit of Life [Prâna]; the Solar Lhas [the vital electric principle residing in the Sun] breathed it into its form.

The breath needed a Mirror of its Body [astral shadow]. “We gave it our own,” said the Dhyânis.

The Breath needed a Vehicle of Desires; “It has it,” said the Drainer of Waters [the fire of passion].

But Breath needs a mind to embrace the Universe; “We cannot give that,” said the Fathers. “I never had it,” said the Spirit of the Earth. “The form would be consumed were I to give it mine,” said the Great Fire....

Man remained an empty senseless Bhûta.... Thus have the boneless given life to those who became men with bones in the third [Race].

[*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 17.]

The “men, during the First and Second Races, were not physical beings, but merely *rudiments* of the future men”; the sexes had not become separated, and, above all, the descent of the *Manas*, that Spark of Divine Intelligence which transformed the (intellectually) senseless embryonic, and almost structureless sub-human forms of these Races into Men — potential Gods — had not taken place. But when “Adam” awoke from his *deep sleep* he found “Eve” beside him, and the “Fall” took place. The descent into matter, accompanied by the separation of the sexes, was thus allegorized; the material bodies being referred to in Genesis iii. 21, “Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them.” In these “coats,” the primitive, astral forms which had been weaving round the Monad for countless ages, perfecting the vehicle for the Mind to use, were enclosed. The earlier ethereal evolution of the Monad through the early Rounds and the first Races of this Round, the ages of innocence, is included in the first chapter and part of the second chapter of Genesis. With the eating of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge came personal responsibility and the power to rise or fall intelligently. This took place finally in the latest Third and the Fourth or Atlantean Race.

The First and Second Races, being boneless, and not material in the full sense of the word, have left no traces in the rocks; their relics have to be sought elsewhere. As the “men” of the First Race melted away they were absorbed in the denser, though still “viscid” forms of the Second Race, but not until the Third Race had been established for several millions of years, was there anything tangible enough to last until today as a witness. The most ethereal vestures of the Monad were forming around it, until then in harmony with the gradually condensing substance of the Earth-Chain of Globes: they are now to be found *within* the human frame, but few scientists have yet suspected the existence of these semi-material principles, the astral bodies. The Monad cannot act directly upon the material plane, where it is “unconscious” until it has acquired the intermediate Mânasic or Higher Intelligence or Mind, and that mind itself cannot act directly through the physical body; it also needs something more ethereal to serve as a “transformer” of the lower vibrations into higher ones which it can appreciate. This is the function of the complex system of astral and emotional (kâmic) bodies, which were, at one period, “naked, and they were not ashamed,” [Genesis, ii. 25.] for they were in harmony with the surrounding conditions. Gradually, as the Third Race developed and passed out of the sinlessness of “unconsciousness” into the

strife caused by the progress of evolutionary unfoldment and the descent into matter, the physical body took shape, molded upon the primeval archetypal form.

Man, in the course of the innumerable experiences of the Monad in the early Rounds, passed through and shed many slightly varying ethereal forms which were afterwards taken up and utilized by his “younger brothers,” the animals, and around or into which their physical bodies were molded. The possession of unused “rudimentary organs,” like the ear-muscles, is thus clearly explained by Theosophy, for it shows that Man is the storehouse of all forms, a few of which, though unnecessary now, still give evidence of their past existence. The development of the human embryo shows the possession of many more forms than are preserved in adult life (such as gill-clefts in the neck). The unborn child runs through the whole gamut of evolution from the mineral kingdom, through the plant-form and upwards, reproducing in little the broad conditions through which the Monad has passed throughout the preceding Rounds and Races.

It may be asked, What evidence is there that an astral body is still to be found within man’s physical frame? In the short space at our disposal it is impossible to quote authorities, but there is an immense mass of reliable information upon the subject which can be readily found by anyone who needs it. D’Assier’s *Posthumous Humanity* contains a well-digested array of cases only explicable by the existence of a fluidic body surviving the death of the material form. Professor Sir W. Crookes, Dr. Alfred R. Wallace, M. Camille Flammarion, Professor Botazzi of Naples, and others who rank among the foremost thinkers of the Twentieth century, have recorded with care their rigid scientific experiments in the demonstration of its existence, and to a limited extent, of its structure and powers. In several of the Manuals of this series the question of the Astral world is treated in the light of Theosophy, and in *Isis Unveiled* H. P. Blavatsky entered very fully into its relation to human life.

INCARNATIONS OF THE EGO

We have now arrived at the most important point in the history of forming humanity and one that is extremely difficult to render in simple language. While there was a Ray or Expression of the Divine in each primitive and potential human form from the very beginning, help was needed before it could advance towards *self*-consciousness. To give it this, to open the mental eye, other more progressed Spiritual Beings had to overshadow or blend with the Monad, furnishing it with the needed touch to arouse the latent fires. But as H. P. Blavatsky says, “Nature unaided fails,” that is to say, the efforts of the Nature-forces to create a thinking, intelligent man, merely resulted in the birth of grotesque creatures and progenitors of the animals, though these attempts were energized by the

evolutionary tendency active in the Monadic essence, which itself is part of the whole Kosmic movement towards higher conditions. The mysterious beings, the “Sons of Mind,” who merged their consciousness into the incomplete forms of the Third Race making them human, had passed through vast experiences in other spheres but had not got beyond the necessity of further incarnation in matter, and they had to blend with rudimentary man before further advance could be made.

But there are not two Monads in each human being, for with the formation of complete man by the arousing of the latent powers within, *he becomes a unit*. The Monad is not a substantial entity that may be handled in any way; though it has to be considered while speaking in general language as an apparently separate Ray of the Divine Oversoul, yet that Oversoul is really One. Could we see ourselves as we really are — as a whole — we should be greatly astonished. We should see how the innumerable Principles or Hierarchies of Creators in Nature had united to build up our complex structure, by drawing from the inexhaustible storehouse in the Monad those qualities which enable the far-stretching planes of Nature manifested in this Kosmic period to be entered upon and explored in due course. Of our real make-up the physical body is the least important and the most ephemeral, though, of course, an absolute necessity in contacting the present physical conditions.

In the early part of the Third Race a certain proportion of the Mānasic Intelligences entered the evolving forms, but the greater number deferred incarnating until later. The first were few; they became the teachers, guides, and helpers to the later comers, who were the larger mass of average humanity. There was a third section who were “not ready” at first, and they have had to put up with inferior bodily forms which had been degraded by evil living through ignorance, the direct result of those Higher Egos having held aloof from the sacrifice of the “Fall” into material life. It is their Karma. As a consequence, we are now suffering from many evils in the world that might have been avoided.

The Secret Doctrine is very reticent concerning the exact method by which man derived his physical body after the Monad had passed through the ethereal states of the Earlier Rounds and Races. H. P. Blavatsky says:

Finally, it is shown in every ancient Scripture and Cosmogony that man evolved primarily as a *luminous incorporeal* form, over which, like molten brass round the clay model of the sculptor, the physical frame of his body was built by, through, and from, the lower forms and types of terrestrial life.

[*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 112.]

On page 736, Vol. II of *The Secret Doctrine*, the writer gives some information which must have proved startling to materialistic minds. Speaking of the “midway point of evolution,” she says it is

that stage where the *astral* prototypes definitely begin to pass into the physical, and thus become subject to the differentiating agencies now operative around us. Physical causation supervenes immediately on the assumption of “coats of skins” — *i.e.*, the physiological equipment in general.... The known physiological contrivances in organisms [for eating, digesting, etc.] were almost entirely evolved subsequently to the incipient physicalization of the 7 Root-Types out of the astral — during the “midway halt” between the two planes of existence....

As to the former reality of the descent [of the astral] into the physical, which culminated in physiological man and animal, we have a palpable testimony in the fact of the so-called spiritualistic “materializations.”

In all these instances a complete temporary mergence of the astral into the physical takes place. The evolution of *physiological* Man out of the astral races of the early Lemurian age — the Jurassic age of Geology — is exactly paralleled by the “materialization” of “spirits” (?) in the seance room. In the case of Professor Crookes’ “Katie King,” the presence of a *physiological* mechanism — heart, lungs, etc. — was indubitably demonstrated!!

[*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, pp. 736-7.]

There are other passages in H. P. Blavatsky’s works which give more light upon this extremely important and interesting subject, but complete information concerning the details of the process has been reserved. Enough has been suggested to provide material for intelligent thought, and to show that the ape-ancestry theory *is not the only alternative* to the special creation Adam-and-Eve story taken literally.

With the general transformation of conditions the separation of the sexes took place. Until then there was no duality, no male and female, and as the present arrangement of mammalian reproduction is not the sole method in all Nature’s kingdoms even today, we need not be surprised at the Theosophical statement that the time will come when it will be obsolete. This will not be until man has learned the great lesson of self-control and has arrived much nearer the stature of the Divine. The Higher Ego is beyond the temporary illusion of sex.

With the incarnation of the “Lords of the Flame” — the Mind or Mânasic principle — in their three stages of progress, the true beginning of “Man,” the Thinker, is made. This took place about 18 millions of years ago, and ever since then we have been complete *septenary* beings while on Earth, experiencing the most extraordinary vicissitudes of climate, temperature, and civilization. Periods of barbarism have succeeded periods of the greatest intellectual brilliancy, the ocean has flowed over the sites of long forgotten cities, new lands have appeared many times, and humanity has had to start afresh more than once from the widespread ruin of nations and continents. There have been many destructions by water, fire, and earthquake, and the “primitive man” of the Stone Age of

archaeology is not primitive at all. Long before he appeared there were magnificent civilizations, of which practically not a trace remains in recognizable form. When the time comes for the revelation of the full details of the past civilizations which existed millions of years before the so-called primitive beginnings of our present one, there will be many surprises. Of course, as we ourselves are the heritage of the past, it will be clear that we have gained such experiences in what we have passed through in the immense period we have been on Earth, that it will not be necessary to repeat them in the same form. Our present age is different from every preceding one in the details of life, even in the natural conditions.

The first Race had three *rudimentary* elements in it; and *no fire* as yet; because, with the Ancients, the evolution of man, and the growth and development of his spiritual and physical senses, were subordinate to the evolution of the elements on the Cosmic plane of this Earth....

The following order on parallel lines may be found in the evolution of the Elements and the Senses; or in Cosmic terrestrial “MAN” or “Spirit,” and mortal physical man:

1 Ether	Hearing	Sound.
2 Air	Touch	Sound and Touch.
3 Fire, or Light	Sight	Sound, Touch and Color.
4 Water	Taste	Sound, Touch, Color and Taste.
5 Earth	Smell	Sound, Touch, Color, Taste and Smell.

As seen, each Element adds to its own characteristics, those of its predecessor; as each Root-Race adds the characterizing sense of the preceding Race. The same is true in the *septenary* creation of man who evolves gradually in seven stages, and on the same principles....

[*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 107.]

Though we have learned much which in the normal man of today is locked up in the mysterious storehouse to which the Higher Ego alone has access, and which only those who have “become one with the Father in heaven” can or dare remember, the Higher part of our being is awaiting fuller development in the future Races, the Sixth and Seventh; and for the completion of perfect Man there are the immeasurable vistas of the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh *Rounds* stretching in front of us with their unthinkable promise of glory. The Perfected Men who are helping humanity now and always are Those who have lifted themselves, by heroic effort, above the level of ordinary humanity of this Fifth Race, into the condition which will not be normal until the next Round. Ages must pass before that period arrives, but we can hasten the good time by the study and practice of altruism.

LEMURIA, THE CRADLE OF HUMANITY

The development of the Third Race is recorded in the Indian *Purânas* and other world-scriptures and traditions under various allegories, and its innumerable sub-races and divisions are referred to under the disguise of deities, heroes, kings, etc. The interpretations were reserved for students. The Third Race subdivides naturally into three great groups, the first of which may be called the "Sons of the Firemist." They sacrificed themselves at the beginning for the good of the Monads who were waiting their coming and failing their appearance would have had to linger on for ages in irresponsible, animal-like, though in appearance human, forms. Opposed to this lofty group came the lowest, which wandered far from the human fold at last. To the dregs of this group is attributed the origin of the anthropoid apes, of which we shall hear more later. These two groups were not the ancestors of the majority of the human race now on Earth. The Higher group was very limited in numbers, and the lower was so mindless that but for later crossings with higher races it might not have persisted in human form. The race that became the majority of later humanity was intermediate between the lowest and the highest, and it was under the guidance of the highest that they developed the civilization of Lemuria, the first inhabited continent, properly so-called.

It is a most difficult thing to place the succession of the later Third (Lemurian), the Fourth (Atlantean), and the Fifth (the present or Âryan), in right relation to the geological periods, because there is nothing definitely known to Science concerning the duration of any of the ages of sedimentation. The existence of the Earth in a stratified condition is variously estimated by geologists and astronomers as having endured not less than ten million years and not more than one thousand million, and as we have not the slightest evidence of the rate of sedimentation in the far distant ages there is nothing to prove definitely which small division corresponds with the Races and sub-races whose records we are considering. The above diagram represents, with no attempt at positive accuracy, the parallelism.

GEOLOGICAL PERIODS	
Cainozoic (Tertiary and Recent)	Recent Pleistocene Pleiocene Meiocene Eocene
Mesozoic (Secondary)	Cretaceous Jurassic Triassic
Palaeozoic	Carboniferous Devonian Silurian Cambrian
Primary	Archaeon

FIFTH RACE
— " —
ATLANTIC
— " —
LEMURIAN
— " —

The continent of Lemuria (a name invented by Science and adopted by Theosophy for public use in lieu of its own term) extended across the Indian Ocean and far on both sides of it. To the Northwest it stretched as far as Sweden and Norway. The great English fresh-water deposit called the Wealden — which every geologist regards as the estuary of a former great river — is the bed of the main stream which drained Northern Lemuria in the Secondary age. Towards the East it included New Zealand, Australia, and the Pacific Islands, and even a strip of California including Point Loma. The Pacific Islands are the remains of mountain summits belonging to this submerged region. Easter Island (110° W., 26° S.) contains remarkable gigantic statues, enduring witnesses to the artistic ability and mechanical skill of the later Lemurians. H. P. Blavatsky gives a few outlines of the primitive civilizations which slowly grew up through the efforts of the later Third Race men. She speaks of —

men and civilized nations, not Paleolithic savages only; who, under the guidance of their *divine* Rulers, built large cities, cultivated arts and sciences,... This primeval civilization did not, as one may think, immediately follow their physiological transformation. Between the final evolution and the first city built, many hundred thousands of years had passed. Yet, we find the Lemurians in their sixth sub-race building their first

rock cities out of stone and lava. One of such great cities of primitive structure was built entirely of lava, some thirty miles west from where Easter Island now stretches its narrow piece of sterile ground, and was entirely destroyed by a series of volcanic eruptions.

[*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 317.]

The Lemurians of the last ages were now complete men; in fact they had perceptive powers that have become practically atrophied since. They had physical bodies which reproduced their kind in present fashion. Between the sketch-humanity of the First and Second Races and the full development of the latest Third, Nature tried several modes of reproduction, and many offshoot and degraded races had come into being, but gradually the human stock settled down into an approximate uniformity in external appearance, though the inner development of individuals differed widely.

THE “THIRD EYE”

As the Monadic Ray illuminated by the light of the Higher Manas, like one prismatic ray of color blending with another and modifying it, associated itself more closely with the lower principles of the astral model-body, the passional-emotional principle of Kâma, the vital solar energy of Prâna, and the material molecular body, man lost many of the spiritual powers, while the intellectual ones — the rays of the Higher Manas — grew stronger. Even at the end of the Third Race man still possessed an organ of spiritual vision in activity. The Greek legend of the Kyklopes with an eye in the forehead was a recollection of this, for a Third Eye, the “Eye of Siva,” the organ of spiritual perception, was in full activity in Lemurian days. The mythological three Kyklopes, *the sons of Heaven and Earth*, symbolize the last three sub-races of the Third Root Race, and the legend of the famous hero Odysseus who put out the eye of Polyphemos, a Cyclopean giant, with a red-hot brand, is based upon the psycho-physiological atrophy of the Third Eye. The same legend with a few variations is found in Ireland, where Finn is said to have destroyed a wicked giant’s eye with a heated *iron* spit. Iron is a symbol of passion and desire.

Civilization has ever developed the physical and intellectual at the cost of the psychic and spiritual. The command and the guidance over his own psychic nature, which foolish men now associate with the supernatural, were with early Humanity innate and congenital, and came to man as naturally as walking and thinking. [*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 318.]

With the “Fall” of man into material conditions, the Third Eye, the spiritual organ of vision, was gradually transformed (physically) into a

simple gland, and ceased to perform its function in the vast majority of men. It is known as the Pineal gland or *Conarium*, and is deeply covered by the posterior part of the cerebral hemisphere. Certain saurians of the Secondary geological period possessed a well-defined third eye, and it is a singular fact that the most perfect known living representative of the reptiles with this organ developed, is an inhabitant of New Zealand, one of the surviving remnants of Lemuria. It is a small lizard, *Hatteria (Sphenodon) punctata*, which has a well-defined third eye with lens and optic nerve, under the skin of the top of the head. This eye may be sensitive to light, but is useless for distinct physical vision. The existing forms of life on Australia and New Zealand resemble those of the Secondary period more closely than those in any other part of the world.

While the Third Eye was in man, and still is when aroused by training, the organ of spiritual sight, (not ordinary astral clairvoyance, which requires no special purification) in the animal it was that of objective vision; having performed its function

it was replaced in the course of physical evolution from the simple to the complex, by two eyes, and thus was stored and laid aside by Nature for further use in aeons to come. (H. P. Blavatsky)

The “War in Heaven” of Christian Theology is related — in one of its meanings — to the Third Race. H. P. Blavatsky says:

The Third Race was pre-eminently the bright shadow, at first, of the gods, whom tradition exiles on Earth after the allegorical war in Heaven; which became still more allegorical on Earth, for it was the war between spirit and matter. This war will last till the inner and divine man adjusts his outer terrestrial self to his own spiritual nature. Till then the dark and fierce passions of the former will be at eternal feud with his master, the Divine Man. But the *animal* will be tamed one day, because its nature will be changed, and harmony will reign once more between the two as before the “Fall,” when even mortal man was *created* by the Elements and was not born. [*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 268.]

Physical changes in outer Nature accompanied the atrophy of the Third Eye and the development of the brain-mind; the climate, which had been pleasant and equable, altered, partly in consequence of changes in the direction of the Earth’s axis.

The eternal spring became constant change and seasons succeeded. Cold forced man to build shelters and devise clothing. Then man appealed to the superior Fathers.... Divine Kings descended and taught men sciences and arts, for man could live no longer in the first land, which had turned into a white frozen corpse. [*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 201.]

The first inhabited land upon which the earliest types of man appeared was around the North Pole, and during the Second Race this gradually extended. The Greeks preserved a tradition of this land of delight, calling it the Hyperborean region, the favorite abode of Apollo the God of light. Fossils of magnolias and other semi-tropical plants, lignite and coal seams are found in the strata now buried under the everlasting snows of the Arctic regions. These and the fossils brought back recently from the South Polar lands confirm some of the statements in *The Secret Doctrine* concerning the warm periods at both “ends” in various pre-historic ages. The climate of the habitable world at the commencement of the Third Race must have been almost perfect, but as man “fell” and the struggle between the higher and the lower commenced, the natural surroundings synchronously became less agreeable. The idea given in the Bible allegory that the animals “fell” under the curse with Adam, is founded upon the significant truth that man is the creator of his surroundings, and that Nature simply obeys the demands made upon her. As long as man is the sport of his passions, and crucifies the higher part of himself, the Christos within, Nature will produce the earthquakes, the storms, the extremes of heat and cold, and venomous and noxious animals will multiply. These things could not exist unless there was a cause for them, for “Nature exists for the soul’s experience.” [*Patañjali’s Yoga Aphorisms.*] They are instruments which the law of Karma has developed for the discipline of sentient beings. They are the “curses coming home to roost,” in a very literal sense. As H. P. Blavatsky says:

Intimately, or rather indissolubly, connected with Karma [the Law of Action and perfect Justice] then, is the law of rebirth, or of the reincarnation of the same spiritual individuality in a long, almost interminable, series of personalities. The latter are like the various costumes and characters played by the same actor, with each of which that actor identifies himself and is identified by the public, for the space of a few hours.... But the outer, visible character is supposed to be ignorant of the fact. In actual life that ignorance is, unfortunately, but too real. Nevertheless, the *permanent* individuality is fully aware of the fact, though, through the atrophy of the “spiritual” eye in the physical body, that knowledge is unable to impress itself on the consciousness of the false personality. [*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 306.]

RISE OF ATLANTIS

After the Lemurians had existed for ages as beings not very different from the humanity of later times, yet more spiritual than intellectual, a gradual division took place into two well-marked sections, the Sons of Light and the Sons of Darkness. Selfish desire increased and the decline of the Third Race set in rapidly, but was not allowed to proceed too far. The Law of Progress prevented too great a downfall by the destruction of

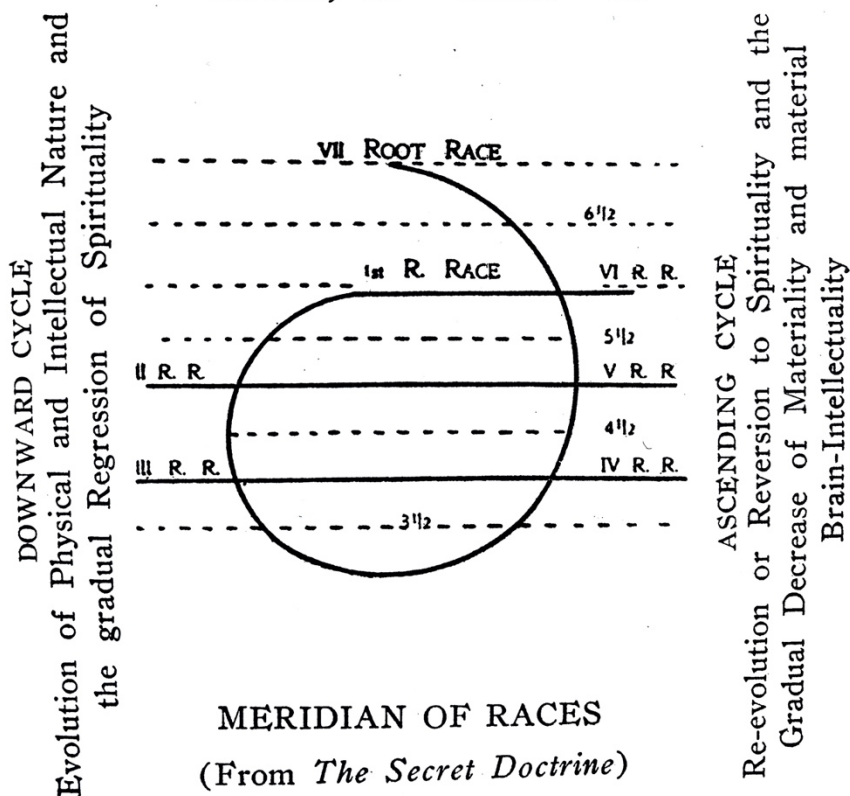
a large portion of the individuals through the breaking up of the Lemurian Continent. Simultaneously with the decay of the Third Race civilizations, the beginnings of the new type of man, the Fourth, began to appear, and new lands arose from the sea to take the place of the previous continent. Some of the islands of Polynesia are remains of some of the mountain tops of long-forgotten Lemuria, and the native traditions of a universal deluge, etc., greatly puzzled the early missionaries, who could not conceive how the ignorant savages, living in widely scattered islands, had obtained stories closely resembling those of the Creation and the Flood in the Bible. Australia and New Zealand are the largest parts of Lemuria now existing, but there are other portions, such as Ceylon, "Lanka," which is a remnant of a northern highland of Lemuro-Atlantis, and the Polar lands, though the latter belong properly to the First and Second continents.

Lemuria is said to have perished finally 700,000 years before the commencement of the Tertiary age of Geology. The highest group of its inhabitants, the comparatively few "Sons of Light," were not disturbed by the upheavals, for they had taken precautions and had moved away to safer regions; most of the small proportion of the average humanity that escaped centered towards land which is now under the waters of the north Atlantic. They formed the nucleus of the next Root-Race, the Atlantean, and from that land the coming great Atlantean civilization spread over the new continent that was rising. Nature never breaks the continuity of her processes, so no hard and fast line can be drawn as to when one race ends and another begins. For many thousands of years the first sub-race of the Fourth had been developing parallel with the culminating of the last sub-races of the Third, just as we see today a new sub-race of our Fifth Root-Race forming in America; so that the relic of humanity saved from destruction contained representatives in all degrees of advancement.

THE MERIDIAN OF RACES

The diagram following, taken from *The Secret Doctrine*, will make the scheme of human development during the Fourth Round a little clearer. It should be well remembered that it is not only humanity as a whole, but man as the individual Ego, whose progress we are tracing. The Races are the temporary vehicles of the larger life of the Egos constituting them, and though they may perish when they have served their purpose, and before they have fallen too deeply into degradation, the immortal Ego simply passes on to the next experience and will continue to do so until the succeeding Manvantara, or World-Period.

EVOLUTION OF ROOT-RACES IN THE FOURTH ROUND, ON "GLOBE" D.



FALL OF ATLANTIS

Far back in what we are accustomed to call antiquity, but which in true relationship to the ages of past human experience is but as yesterday, Plato, the Greek Initiate, revealed a glimpse of a surprising knowledge of the mysterious continent and civilization of Atlantis. His account is merely a sketch of the destruction of the last islands remaining after the greater catastrophes, for he was not permitted to give the full story of the lost antediluvian world, and of what he did give we have but a portion. But, fortunately, besides the legends in the Indian *Purānas* and elsewhere, which are difficult to interpret, there are other and more complete records in the possession of the Custodians of the Wisdom of the Ages, Theosophy; and it is from these that H. P. Blavatsky selected a few passages of importance to us in our study of the place of man in Nature.

It is not possible in these few pages to quote the geological, archaeological, and historical evidences as to the location and characteristics of the vanished continent of Atlantis. The student will find in *The Secret Doctrine* a mass of interesting evidence concerning it. The Indians of both Hemispheres, the Greeks, and other peoples, have handed down clear though partly allegorized accounts. Donnelly's *Atlantis* contains much — so far as data are concerned — that is valuable to students.

Atlantis gradually took form as Lemuria broke up under the turbulent disruptive forces of the adolescent period of Earth's growth, and as the portion of humanity which escaped the destruction spread afar, they peopled the newly risen lands and some of the old that were not submerged, with a race which subsequently touched the lowest depths of materiality that the world has seen. Since the Atlantean period man has been rising, though with many cyclic depressions, for the Atlantean civilization marked a turning-point in the history of the Earth. Until then humanity was *slowly descending into material conditions with a corresponding obscuration in spirituality*. The Atlanteans stand as the apotheosis of matter, and it was in those far-distant days that the heaviest Karma of the human race was generated, a Karma which is holding us back from the advance we should otherwise make, and whose existence explains many of the difficulties and anomalies of life. Humanity reached its fullest physical development in the Fourth Race, the physical bodies themselves being much larger than at present. The old saying that "there were giants in those days," was correct when applied to the Atlanteans. The curious decrease in the size of many organisms, which is so well marked in the case of the fearful saurians of the Secondary period — now represented by comparatively minute reptilian forms — also took place in the human kingdom; but as the practice of cremation was almost universal we are not likely to find many remains of gigantic human bones. Immense footprints have been found in the geologic strata of Nevada and Ohio, U.S.A., which seem to be human, but geology has not definitely sanctioned the claim that they are so. H. P. Blavatsky was very definite in her statements that undeniable proofs would be forthcoming, at the right time, of the conditions of life in the lost continent of Atlantis; so we can well afford to wait.

The Fourth Race started under far less favorable conditions than the Third, and towards its decline the story of Lemuria was repeated on lower levels; the same fight between the higher and lower natures within and without was waged, but more mercilessly; and as that was the age of Passion and Desire *in excelsis* and the eclipse of spirituality, the result was mainly in favor of the lower principles for a long time. But not for ever, for, although the majority of the Atlanteans were not the descendants of the higher group of the Third Race, the "one third that remained faithful" fought such a good fight that they were enabled to escape before the

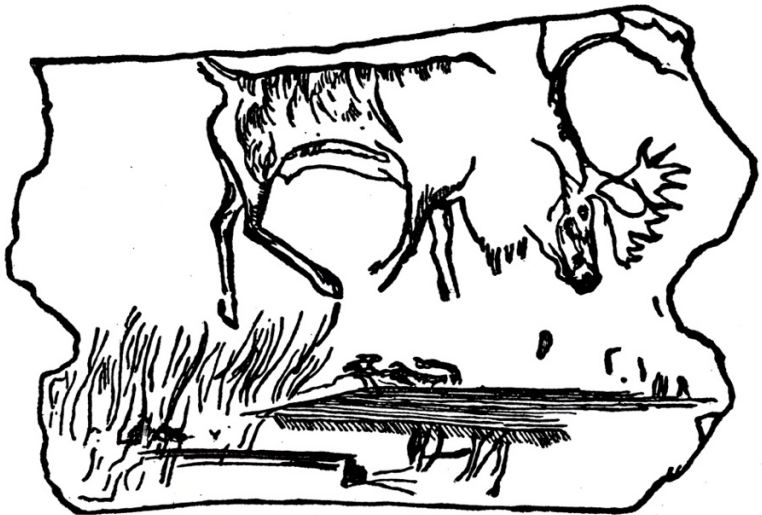
Deluge from the lands that had been cursed by the evil-doers, and to become the progenitors of the majority of our present, Âryan, humanity. The story of Noah's Deluge is, in one of its aspects, a fanciful account of the great Atlantean submersion; but it also has deeper meanings, one of which allegorizes the primeval building of the world.

Full *personal* responsibility came to the man of the Atlantean period, and although the last or final choice between spiritual advancement on the one side, and materialism or personal aggrandizement on the other, "good and evil," has not yet come for the mass of humanity, and will not until the next Round, a long step in that direction was taken by the Atlanteans. But Nature is merciful, and the world is not destined to perish ingloriously; so before the mischief had become irreparable, "the law that moves to righteousness" again arrested further degradation by giving a shock which allowed the Egos to start anew with a fresh opportunity, upon new lands not soaked through with the evil memories of past sins. The majority of the Atlantean evil-doers perished finally amid indescribable terrors, and the ocean soon obliterated all remains of that proud civilization which had misapplied greater powers than any with which we have since been entrusted. The last large destruction took place towards the close of the Miocene age, when the Alps were upraised. Most of those then destroyed were of the giant race; but humanity was already diminishing in size, and when the final destruction of the few remaining islands upon which Atlanteans still existed took place, only about 11,000 years ago, men had long before assumed their present proportions. It was the latter destruction to which Plato refers when he handed on the tradition that the gods had caused the wicked Atlanteans to perish 9,000 years before his time. In *The Secret Doctrine* [Vol. II, p. 427.] H. P. Blavatsky quotes, from an ancient esoteric commentary, a most thrilling description of the escape of the "faithful" and of the struggle which took place between the Sons of Darkness and the Sons of Light just before the final breakup of one of the largest island regions of Atlantis. Airships of great perfection were used by the "White Adepts," and the measures taken and the weapons spoken of illustrate a much deeper knowledge of natural forces — magic — than science has yet suspected, fortunately for us in this age of selfishness!

As may be seen by a reference to the diagram on page 497 the fifth or Âryan race had started some time before the last destruction of Atlantis. Descended from the more spiritualized and better class of Atlanteans, a few had preserved the knowledge of their ancestors and were ready to revive it when the race demanded it. The institution of the Mysteries in all countries at a later period was an effort, and fortunately a successful one, to preserve the Ancient Wisdom from the profanation it had suffered in Atlantis. An example of the profound knowledge of the Atlanteans is shown in the astronomical computations of Indian astronomy, which are

based upon a little that was permitted to escape from the guardianship of the Mysteries.

It was in Atlantis, too, that language took its inflectional form, after having passed from the stage of musical Nature-sounds in the Second Race, to monosyllabic speech in the later Third, and then to the agglutinative form in the Fourth. Of course writing was well known to the Fourth Race, for during its long career it possessed civilizations higher than were those of Greece or Rome in their palmiest days, and even far higher than our own civilization today, though it may have been lost to the world at large during the period of confusion when the first sub-races of the Fifth were forming. The traces of writing in the "Stone Age" (which belongs to our epoch) are not conclusive; and yet it is strange and entirely unexplained by modern science, that Palaeolithic man could draw animals upon antlers and cavern walls, etc., in a style that would not disgrace a good draughtsman of today, and which is certainly superior in accuracy to that of some of the Egyptian conventional representations of animals, or to the crude drawings of the famous Bayeux tapestry which was woven perhaps five hundred thousand years after the time of the supposed brutal "primitive" man — a savage that we are told was nearly on a level with his hypothetical ape-grandfather! Paleolithic (ancient Stone Age) man was in reality carrying on some memories of the perished civilizations, as his artistic talent shows; the Neolithic (new Stone Age) man who followed him had lost this power, although he was improving in some other respects. The Paleolithic drawings show no resemblance to the scrawls of children, but display concentrated observation and high technical skill — in other words, qualities of advanced civilization!



REINDEER ENGRAVED ON ANTLER BY PALAEOGRAPHIC MAN. (*After Geikie*)

With this gradual break-up of the Fourth Race civilizations, which were varied and numerous, the dawn of what is known *to science* as the human period, begins. In actual years the distance is enormous from the first sub-race of the Fifth Race to the present day, and what is generally supposed to be the whole history of man “does not go back,” as H. P. Blavatsky says, “further than the fantastic origins of our fifth sub-race, a ‘few thousands’ of years.” In the brief space at our disposal, only the most cursory reference can be made to the progress of humanity during the Fifth Race.

The destruction of the spiritually degraded Atlanteans gave a shock to the survivors which resulted in the sinking of material civilization for a long time over the *main portion* of the globe; we are not yet told exactly what proportion of the world kept some vestiges of the past greatness, but it cannot have been large. Anyway, the effect of the fresh start was good, for it provided conditions under which the later comparatively unsophisticated tribes could be helped by advanced souls who incarnated among them and taught them the elements of the arts and sciences. In every tradition that has come down to us from antiquity a Golden Age is spoken of — the “Garden of Eden” in the Bible — and, although in some cases this unmistakably refers to the First, Second, and the early Third Races, when rudimentary humanity had not fallen into materiality, it may generally be taken to mean the Dawn of the Fifth when humanity was again comparatively pure and happy, and was guided by semi-divine kings, Adepts of wisdom and compassion. In Egypt the traditions of many dynasties of gods and heroes were recorded by Manetho, and have actually come down to us, though the lists of names have been mutilated. While no doubt the details of the Greek, Hindû, Egyptian, Central American and Scandinavian cosmogonies and primitive histories of humanity are largely allegorical, their *general* agreement is not due to chance. Those who have given Theo-sophy to the world possess definite information that there was a time of spiritual brightness before ordinary history begins, and that it could truly be called a Golden Age. By degrees the same old process of materializing came into action; and as the “family” races, or smaller divisions of the sub-races, differentiated into the nations of the later ages, we arrive at “historic” and present times, with the numerous red, yellow, brown, black, and white representatives of the complex developments of the great evolutionary process of human expansion. Although we have descended into an age of moral and spiritual darkness (not intellectual), as compared with the Golden Ages it must not be forgotten that in the great journey of the soul from spiritual conditions through the material and back to a higher point, it is subject to a continual series of smaller cyclic ups and downs, and that even in the darkest time necessary experience is being gained. As we have long since passed the densest materiality of the Fourth Race, every step onwards is leading to higher conditions, and although the

Road seems to cross many a hill and descend into dark valleys, its general tendency is upwards all the time.

ORIGIN OF RELIGIONS

One of the most interesting points in the development of man as a soul is the growth of religions. The early Races, the First and Second, not being deeply immersed in matter nor endowed with mind and responsibility, had no need for the help of any form of religion such as we understand; they lived in harmony with Nature, and of the later period H. P. Blavatsky says:

At the dawn of his consciousness, the man of the Third Root Race had thus no beliefs that could be called *religion*. That is to say, he was equally as ignorant of “gay religions, full of pomp and gold” as of any system of faith or outward worship. But if the term is to be defined as the binding together of the masses in one form of reverence paid to those we feel higher than ourselves, of piety — as a feeling expressed by a child toward a loved parent — then even the earliest Lemurians had a religion — and a most beautiful one — from the very beginning of their intellectual life.... It was the “Golden Age” in those days of old, the age when the “gods walked the earth, and mixed freely with the mortals.”... It was the Atlanteans, the first progeny of *semi-divine* man after his separation into sexes — hence the first-begotten and humanly-born mortals — who became the first “Sacrificers” to the *god of matter*. They stand in the far-away dim past, in ages more than prehistoric, as the... first anthropomorphists who worshiped form and matter. That worship degenerated very soon into *self-worship*, thence led to phallicism, or that which reigns supreme to this day in the symbolisms of every exoteric religion of ritual, dogma, and form.

[*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, pp. 272-3.]

But, as the writer of *The Secret Doctrine* says elsewhere,

A phallic worship has developed only with the gradual loss of the keys to the inner meanings of religious symbols,

and there was a day when religions were pure. After the destruction of Atlantis, a few wise guides who carried on the knowledge of the past and reincarnated time after time for the helping of the new child-race, brought out the facts as to man’s real nature and his relationship to his (inner) God, in symbolic ceremony and definite illustration in the teaching of the Mysteries. The Âryan Hindûs, whose ancestors were among the early descendants of the first sub-race of the Fifth, have preserved in their Scriptures the clearest records of the primitive wisdom; but after all, even these are so bewilderingly confused and full of “blinds,” for which the key has been lost (for the public) that they are all but a sealed book to modern readers, *not excepting* the learned Sanskritists of the Western Universities. But the last quarter of the Nineteenth century, the period when Materialism was attempting to crush the belief in anything spiritual, was chosen by

Those who are watching every movement of human thought and action and who are the Guardians of the primeval Wisdom-Religion, Theosophy, in its purity, to give out a few facts showing that there was a primitive KNOWLEDGE, and that all modern systems of religion are modifications, perversions, or merely fractions of it. Although that which has been given out is only a glimpse, it has placed students in such a position that when the time ripens they will be prepared to receive fuller light.

This idea of there being truth and real *knowledge* in the earliest forms of religion is new to the scientific investigator. The favorite hypothesis of the day (putting aside the crude literal interpretation of the biblical Genesis, which has been abandoned by nearly everyone capable of understanding the value of evidence) is that every religious concept can be traced back to absurd myths of primitive savages living a few thousand years ago; and that modern savages provide perfect illustrations of the state of primitive man in religious views as well as in their intellectual development, and that — given sufficient time — the savage races would develop civilizations of a high order, and religions as good as those of today.

Theosophists have always contended that this hypothesis is not in accord with the facts. The lowest savages are mostly decaying relics of the lost Lemuro-Atlantean or Atlantean sub-races. This does not mean that all the *individuals* composing them are going downhill — quite the contrary. The Reincarnating Egos in such miserable vestiges as the Veddahs of Ceylon, the lower African tribes, etc., have only come into Fourth Round terrestrial incarnation comparatively lately, and have not got to face the heaped-up bad Karma that the superior races have still to face owing to their mistakes in the past. The door of incarnation into humanity closed at the midway point of the Rounds, and the last Monad incarnated in human form before the beginning of the Fifth Race, with only one exception — the *anthropoid ape*, which is really a de graded man-animal, and which will have its opportunity of gaining complete manhood in the next Round.

HUMANS AND THE ANTHROPOID APES

Turning for a moment to the question of the origin of the anthropoid apes — the gorilla, chimpanzee, orangutang, and gibbon — the fundamental distinction between the attitude of Theosophy and that of Materialism is well marked. Instead of being a mere animal with a highly developed brain “secreting mind or thought,” [“No phosphorus, no thought,” Moleschott.] — the soul thus being a simple function of matter, a by-product, perishing at death like music when the harp is broken — Theosophy teaches that the real man is a “fallen god,” a self-conscious being who has been immortal in the past as he will be in the future. The Monads of many of the animal races which strongly resemble man in bodily structure,

possess *the potentialities* of the highest development, but these are still latent, for they have not been awakened by the incarnation of the spark of godlike Mind. *The possession of the higher Self-consciousness*, though as yet in truth in a very incomplete degree, *is what makes man a man*. To derive human conscience and human intellect from the brain-faculties or instinctual mind of animals by Natural Selection, Survival of the Fittest, etc., as the only causes thereof, would be as hopeless a problem as to make a perpetual motion machine, for something cannot be produced from nothing. The animal Monads are getting necessary experience in physical life, and in some future age the divine Mind-Egos now incarnated in our human forms will *project the spark to arouse the latent fires in the lower lives*; then those animal-Monads will have become human-Monads. H. P. Blavatsky spoke in severe condemnation of the belittling of human nature with its essentially divine attributes (however degraded and obscured) by modern speculation, which tries to reduce the activity of the mighty and awe-inspiring divine Ego overshadowing each human being, the wonderful and mysterious reincarnating Self, to a mere function of the brain of a creature supposed to be but the advanced product of a hairy quadrumanous ancestor.

What, then, is the origin of the anthropoid apes? H. P. Blavatsky calls them a “bastard branch grafted on the original stock” of humanity. The “common ancestor” of man and the anthropoids was — *man himself*, in a far distant age. In the *Third Round* (not *Race*), the human Monad, in building around itself changeful and varying forms of an ethereal and ephemeral nature, at one period adopted that of an ape-like form (but it was not an ape, but *man* — *there were no apes then*), a form which was copied and humanized for man’s habitation again in the denser conditions of the earlier part of the *Third Race* of the *Fourth Round*; for each Round in the *descending* order repeats the previous experience, but in more material substance. This was before the full descent of the Mânasaputras, the Higher Egos; and this early race of the Third Round as it “fell into generation” and separated into sexes, threw off many imperfect offshoots, some of which, mating with certain animals, produced forms which ultimately modified (in the Tertiary geological period) into the ancestors of the anthropoids of our day. This act was repeated by some of the later degraded Atlanteans in full consciousness of the wrong. Resulting from this bestiality of early man, there were so many degrees of half-human animals at that dim and distant period, that we may fully expect to find fossilized remains of their descendants as “missing-links” even more anthropoid in character than the thigh-bone and skull-fragment found in Java a few years ago, about which so much has been said. Java happens to be a portion of Lemuria, and a probable place to find such remains; but H. P. Blavatsky says that

In order to prove the Huxley-Haeckelian theories of the descent of man, it is not *one*, but a great number of “*missing links*” — a true ladder of progressive evolutionary steps — that would have to be first found and then presented by Science to thinking and reasoning humanity before it would abandon belief in gods and the immortal Soul for the worship of Quadrumanic ancestors. [*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 661.]

A remarkable corroboration of the early connection between humanity and the four species of anthropoids mentioned above, which are said in the Esoteric Philosophy to owe their origin *to man*, has been discovered recently in certain tests of their blood. The injection of a serum proved that the blood of the four anthropoids reacted in the same manner as human blood, while that of other monkeys behaved differently under the same tests.

Another significant observation supporting the Theosophical teaching that man is not derived from an animal ancestry, is that an *inverse order* exists in the brain of the anthropoid apes when compared with man. In the apes the middle convolutions of the brain appear before those of the frontal lobe (the latter supposed to be the instrument of the higher mental activities), but in man the frontal convolutions are formed first. As the anthropoids are the descendants of man and some extinct species of mammals which lived in the Miocene age, and as the animal side is still predominant in them, the development of the brain in the above order is what might be expected from the Theosophical standpoint. Two or three years ago a fossil jaw of an extinct kind of chimpanzee was discovered in North-Western India, having characteristics far more human than the present representatives possess, showing that there has been no advance towards the human type.

Then again, the writer of *The Secret Doctrine* says, speaking of man:

His intellect develops and increases with age, while his facial bones and jaws diminish and straighten, thus being more and more spiritualized: whereas with the ape it is the reverse. In its youth the anthropoid is far more intelligent and good-natured, while with age it becomes duller; and, as its skull recedes and seems to diminish as it grows, its facial bones and jaws develop, the brain being finally crushed, and thrown entirely back, to make with every day more room for the animal type. The organ of thought — the brain — recedes and diminishes, entirely conquered and replaced by that of the wild beast — the jaw apparatus.... Owing to the very type of his development man *cannot descend* from either an ape or an ancestor common to both, but shows his origin from a type far superior to himself.... On the other hand, the pithecoids, the orang-outang, the gorilla, and the chimpanzee *can*, and, as the Occult Sciences teach, *do*, descend from the animalized Fourth human Root-Race, being the product of man and an extinct species of mammal — whose *remote* ancestors were themselves the product of Lemurian bestiality — which lived in the Miocene age. [*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, pp. 682-3.]

Much more might be said upon this crucial subject but for exigencies of space. The student will find the subject very fully treated in *The Secret Doctrine*.

THE FUTURE OF HUMANITY

Returning to the question of the origin of religions, evidences for the statement that the principal religions of our times were derived from one common source at the beginning of the Fifth Race, when the separation of the Âryan (using the term *Âryan* in the technical Theosophical sense) families began, are found in the wonderful resemblances between them. For instance it is well known that the accounts of the Creation and the Flood, the cycle of the story of Jesus and many an event of his career, can be more or less closely paralleled in a dozen other faiths; the doctrine of Trinity in Unity is as old as the hills; and the ethical teachings of the Sermon on the Mount are found as the moral basis of religions “from China to Peru.” The allegorical stories upon which the forms of religion are based can be traced back into the night of Time, and, according to the records of the Custodians of the Ancient Wisdom (Theosophy) they were first of all produced by Initiates to contain the truth in a form capable of being understood to some extent by the ordinary mind. Those properly qualified were taught *the deeper meanings*.

These forms of faith were gradually corrupted, until it became necessary to restate the same truths in slightly modified fashion for the better comprehension of the newly-rising nations. It would be preposterous to suppose primitive savages capable of inventing myths containing the profound wisdom which is hidden just beneath the surface of the sacred beliefs. As if to prove the knowledge of their framers, most of the world-scriptures contain distinct allusions to the Rounds and Races with their destructions and regenerations, and in some cases so clearly that they can easily be traced by anyone who holds the clue given by Theosophy.

The positive teachings of Theosophy concerning the origins of humanity and of religion show that the “primitive savage” and “animistic” hypotheses are erroneous and incomplete, quite apart from their materializing tendency. These theories recognize nothing but the lower mind, the egotistic brain-personality, and the animal instincts. In trying to trace the development of man and the origins of the higher attributes of the soul, scientific Anthropology is blocked by its disregard of the Reincarnating Ego, the Higher Mind or *Manas*, of which the lower is but the shadow or emanation, hardly to be separated from the animal nature. Scientific writers — apparently laboring under the hypnotic weight of the famous date of 4004 B.C., the theological date of the “creation” — have also erred in limiting the duration of the human period to a few thousands

of years, and in not recognizing the existence of the prehistoric civilizations. The presence of advanced Egos from previous manvantaras guiding the race at all times is unknown to them even as a theory. The only “primitive man” deserving the title was the rudimentary or incomplete “man” of the earlier Rounds and also of the pre-Lemurian age. He was very different from the “Stone-Age” type, who was a true man, even if degraded. That religion is a simple brain-mind production derived from observation of the natural phenomena of the Seasons, the Weather, etc., and that belief in the existence of the soul came from the childish imagination of savage men that dreams are real experiences, are suggestions which materialistic bias has rendered plausible to the scientific spirit of the age, which still suffers unconsciously to itself from the strong reaction against the irrational dogmas of scholastic theology. Scientific research has done excellent service in freeing millions from degrading servitude to the tyranny of bigoted ecclesiasticism and superstition, but when it tries to prove that there is no spiritual foundation for religion, and that man, in seeing a divine consciousness at work in himself and in Nature has been the dupe of his imagination, it is time to call a halt. The materialistic theory of the origin of the religious faiths cannot permanently satisfy the bulk of humanity, whether cultivated or otherwise, for there is a deep-seated conviction that there must be something more in them than mere convenient illusions founded on ignorance and folly and built up by fraud.

The strength of the materialistic position, such as it is, has lain principally in the absence of any reasonable explanation of such extraordinary allegories as those of Genesis, Ezekiel, or the Apocalypse, in the Bible; of the Chaldean legends; of the Hindû *Vedas* and *Purânas*; of the Egyptian *Book of the Dead*; of the poems of Hesiod in Greece; of the Central American *Popol Vuh*; of the Scandinavian epics, and the rest. The keys have at last been furnished by Theosophy. The Sacred books of the different races and religions were inspired by the *initiated Teachers* of former days, “Sons” of one common Mother-System, so it is not wonderful that these writings and traditions even today can reveal their meaning to him who has the key.

It is a long lane that has no turning, and it is worthy of note that an uneasiness is growing in high intellectual quarters as to the accuracy of the orthodox scientific theory of religious evolution, and that an interpretation more in harmony with Theosophical teaching has been forced upon at least one scientific man of the first rank by the stern logic of facts. Professor Sir W. M. Ramsay [*Contemporary Review*, 1907, London.] expresses the popular theory as follows:

The modern method is based on the assumption that there takes place normally a continuous development in religion, in thought, and in

civilization, since primitive times; that such a development has been practically universal among the more civilized races; that as to certain less civilized races either they have remained stationary, or progress among them has been abnormally slow; that the primitive religion is barbarous, savage, bloodthirsty, and low in the scale of civilization, and that the line of growth normally is toward the milder, the more gracious and the nobler forms of religion; that the primitive types of religion can be recovered by studying the savage of the present day, and that the lowest savage is the most primitive.

Instead of finding that a dispassionate examination of the facts supports this position, the Professor says the reverse is the case:

Wherever evidence exists, with the rarest exceptions, the history of religion among men is a history of degeneration; and the development of a few Western nations in inventions and in civilization during recent centuries should not blind us to the fact that among the vast majority of nations the history of manners and civilization is a story of degeneration. Wherever you find a religion that grows purer and loftier, you find the prophet, the thinker, the teacher, who is in sympathy with the Divine, and he tells you he is speaking the message of God, not his own message. Are these prophets all impostors and deceivers? or do they speak the truth, and need only to have their words rightly, *i.e.* sympathetically understood?... The primitive savage, who develops naturally out of the stage of Totemism into the wisdom of Sophocles and Socrates... is unknown to me. I find nothing even remotely resembling him in the savages of modern times.... I was forced by the evidence to the view that degeneration is the outstanding fact in religious history and that the modern theory often takes the last products of degeneration as the facts of primitive religion.

Space will not permit further quotation of similar passages which express more or less closely what Theosophists have been teaching for more than a quarter of a century past, in face of the strongest opposition from materialism and conventional orthodoxy. The “prophet, the thinker, the teacher,” referred to above, “who is in sympathy with the Divine,” reminds us of the Theosophical teaching that there have always been such advanced souls in the van of progress, giving humanity the exact kind of spiritual food it could assimilate at the time, and also protecting it from the evils that constantly threaten it. These advanced souls have never been absent; they are not wanting today, although not known to the world. The modern savage is the flotsam and jetsam of past greatness; and our civilized races that now pride themselves upon their high culture, will, when their race is run, vegetate, degrade, and die out in future ages, like the natives of Tasmania have in our time, for this is the law. The Egos now inhabiting the bodies of the most advanced races will not, of course, remain in the lower human forms except in cases of persistent evil-living

lasting from incarnation to incarnation, but will pass into the new and more perfect races which are beginning already to show faint signs of appearing. Less advanced Egos will take up the forms of the present humanity. *The Secret Doctrine* says:

The Americans have become in only three centuries a “primary race” *pro tem.*, before becoming a race apart.... They are, in short, the germs of the *Sixth* sub-race, and in some few hundred years more will become most decidedly the pioneers of that race which must succeed to the present European or fifth sub-race, in all its new characteristics. After this, in about 25,000 years, they will launch into preparations for the seventh sub-race; until... the Sixth Root-Race will have appeared on the stage of our Round.... The Fifth will overlap the Sixth Race for many hundreds of millenniums, changing with it slower than its new successor, still changing in stature, general physique, and mentality, just as the Fourth overlapped our Aryan Race, and the Third had overlapped the Atlanteans.

This process of preparation for the Sixth great Race must last throughout the whole sixth and seventh sub-races. But the *last* remnants of the Fifth Continent will not disappear until some time after the birth of the *new* Race.... Mankind will not grow again into giant bodies as in the case of the Lemurians and the Atlanteans; because while the evolution of the Fourth race led the latter down to the very bottom of materiality in its physical development, the present Race is on its ascending arc; and the Sixth will be rapidly growing out of its bonds of matter, and even of flesh.

[*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 444.]

As in the earlier Rounds the Monad was assimilating the various principles in very shadowy and ethereal vehicles; and as in this Round the Desire-principle is dominant; so in the next (Fifth) Round, fully developed Reason, the Higher Mânasic principle in each man, must fully conquer the passional nature or the great pilgrimage will have been in vain, and it will have to return to the crucible of existence to start afresh at some future time. The *Mahâtma* is one who has pushed so far ahead of the obstacles that impede the average man that he may justly be called a “Sixth-Round” being, one who has safely passed beyond that supreme danger point which will meet humanity as a whole during the Fifth Round, called the final “moment of choice.” This critical period has to be faced, but it will only prove fatal to that portion of humanity which persists in the egotism of personal selfishness. An individual may lose the bliss of one or more Devachanic interludes, the heavenly states between one life on Earth and another, by a misspent life, for the reason that there is nothing in that life to provide material for the Devachanic experiences; but the Law is just beyond human understanding, and as there are many lives in which to remedy past errors, the great majority of the race will pass on in safety to a transcendently glorious future. “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard,

neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.”

But the preparation for this great end must be ceaseless struggle against the passional nature now so strongly entrenched within us, and Those who really belong to the Fifth and Sixth Rounds, who are Wisdom and Compassion embodied, are working with the Divine Law and giving continual though unseen help to their brothers, the other struggling fragments of humanity making their way up the weary hill of life. Humanity is not left to wander too far from the road to safety. The “sense of separateness,” of personal selfish isolation and indifference to the welfare of the rest of humanity, our “other selves,” is the only heresy recognized in Theo-sophy, but it is a deadly one and indeed prevalent; the spread of true knowledge and practice of oneness is the only remedy. To do this effectually, which is the object that all the Great Teachers of Humanity have lived for, was the aim in starting the Theosophical Society to meet and guide the conditions of the New Order of the Ages. This Movement, established on unsectarian lines, and supported by Those who have real *knowledge* — not mere inference — of the history of the past and of man’s real nature, is a unique phenomenon in modern times. The opportunity offered to men by THE UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD AND THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY for serving humanity with the greatest efficiency and conservation of energy, and through this personal service to obtain the high impersonal reward of realizing the existence of an inner communion with the real Self, the Higher, Immortal Ego, the only reward the true Theosophist desires, is the greatest that humanity has had for many ages.

THE SOUL

The stars shall fade away, the Sun himself
Grow dim with age, and Nature sink in years,
But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth,
Unhurt amid the war of elements,
The wreck of matter, and the crash of worlds.

ADDISON