

Theosophical Articles  
of  
Katherine Hillard



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Compiled and Edited by  
Scott J. Osterhage

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## PREFACE

Katherine Hillard was a significant background force in the second and third decades of The Theosophical Society (founded in 1875). She became a member in 1888, though she was a theosophist long before that. This, therefore, is a collection of her (mainly) theosophical articles. The articles are in chronological order, with the exception that series' of articles were kept together for ease of continuing reading. They are placed in chronological order using the first article of the series.

I did make many editorial updates to the articles. Generally, here is what I did: Errata items were incorporated; some jumbled portions of text were corrected; offensive language changed; titles and subtitles were made consistent; book and article titles were corrected and spelled out to the greatest extent possible; references were standardized; most names were spelled out in the first instance, since they are mostly not as familiar today as they were when written; most Sanskrit and other foreign word spellings were updated and made consistent; added in missing punctuation marks, and updated punctuation order; Oxford commas were added; footnotes moved to the end of articles (some were incorporated into text); city names were amended to show current city names; parentheses ( ) and brackets [ ] were in the original, and I added braces { } for those items which I clarified or amended to include more information, but not those whose words were already in the text; and finally, though I have probably committed some mortal sin, I changed the spelling of many words within quotes to be consistent with outside the quotes for readability, which helps greatly with over a dozen different sources and twice as many years elapsed. I did not check all the quotes or citations, so always check the original source for any and all quotations from the text, and use that for quoting specific passages. There are doubtless errors remaining, and that is always the case.

There are two words which, today, require a brief explanation: *Aryan* and *Svastika*. When the original book was written, these terms had not yet been appropriated by destructive forces in the modern world.

*Aryan* derives from the Sanskrit *Ārya* and was originally applicable to the initiates or adepts of the ancient Aryan peoples. *Ārya* was also an early name for India. In Theosophy today, Aryan designates a race of the human family in its various branches — primarily Indian, but also including European peoples.

*Svastika*, likewise a Sanskrit word, is a symbol used far back in the reaches of archaic humanity. It has carried many meanings, among them auspiciousness, the whirling motion of the cosmos and the solar system, and what has been called “a symbolic summary of the whole work of evolution in cosmos

and man, from Brahman down to the smallest biological unit.” (*Encyclopedic Theosophical Glossary*)

I must mention that Katharine Hillard and Julia Wharton Lewis Campbell Ver Planck Keightley were close friends and worked together for theosophy until the end. In their common obituary “Two Loyal Friends,” included after Katharine’s Biography, it indicates they died within a month of each other. Though Katharine was 76 and Julia was 65, the difference in years did not matter as they had obviously been working for theosophy together for ages, as anyone who reads this understands.

My hope is that these articles shine in the light of day again, as they contain much that is helpful for selfless pilgrims along the stony path.

Scott J. Osterhage  
January 28, 2026  
Tucson, Arizona

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**ARTICLE WRITTEN BY KATHARINE HILLARD (NOT FOUND):**

**Soul and Spirit** (Mentioned in *The Path*, July 1890, p. 130.)

**BOOKS WRITTEN BY KATHARINE HILLARD (NOT INCLUDED HEREIN):**

*An Abridgement by Katharine Hillard of The Secret Doctrine: A Synthesis of Science, Religion and Philosophy* by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1907). (Edited and rearranged.)

*The Banquet (Il Convito) of Dante Alighieri*. London. Kegan Paul, Trench & Co. (1889). (Translated.)

*My Mother's Journal* (1900). (Edited.)



## BIOGRAPHY

### **Katherine Hillard** (10 March 1839 – 3 November 1915)

#### **FAMILY BACKGROUND AND EARLY LIFE**

Katharine Hillard was born on 10 March 1839 in London, England, to American parents belonging to a liberal Unitarian background. Her upbringing was shaped by what she later described as an atmosphere of “breadth and freedom,” which encouraged intellectual inquiry and comparative approaches to religion rather than doctrinal conformity. This background proved formative for her later engagement with both literature and theosophy.

Her father, John Babcock Hillard (c. 1812, Richmond (City), Virginia – 14 July 1859, Brooklyn Heights, New York), and her mother, Harriet Low Hillard (18 May 1809, Salem, Massachusetts – 27 December 1877, Brooklyn Heights, New York), were married on 3 November 1836. Shortly after their marriage, the family relocated to England for business reasons, where Katharine and several of her siblings were born.

When Katharine was about seven years old (1846) she left London with her family, spending many years in Italy. Over the ensuing years she lived and travelled between London, Italy, and New York. Her family settled in New York after 1884. The Hillards were connected to prominent Anglo-American intellectual and civic circles. Among Katharine’s extended family was her cousin Seth Low, was President of Colombia University (1890 – 1901). He also served as Mayor of Brooklyn (1882 – 1885) and New York City (1901 – 1903).

Katharine was one of several siblings. Those who survived infancy included Frances Hillard (b. 1842); William Henry Low Hillard (1843 – 1843); Mary Hillard Loines (4 May 1844 London, England – 1 April 1944 Winter Park, Orange, Florida), (married October 1893 to Stephen Loines), a leading suffragist and civic reformer; Sarah Hillard (1846 – 1852); and Harriet Hillard White (1848 – 1930) (married to William Augustus White). The family as a whole was marked by strong commitments to education, reform, and public service.

Katharine was a Brooklyn resident, and friend of Abigail (Abby) Price, American feminist, writer, and reform advocate; in fact, according to Louisa van Velsor Whitman’s letter to Helen Price on 26 November 1872, the Prices expected that Arthur Price (Abby’s brother) and Katharine Hillard would marry. Walt Whitman had known Hillard’s writings since 1871 and mentioned

her in his 23 June 1873 letter to Charles Eldridge. Hillard and Whitman first met in person on 28 February 1876, and Whitman sent her a copy of *Leaves of Grass* on 27 July 1876.

Katharine Hillard was an American writer, literary translator, and Theosophical worker whose public activity straddled late Victorian intellectual culture and the formative decades of the modern Theosophical movement.

Her approach to scholarship emphasized direct engagement with original languages and texts, rather than reliance on secondary authorities. This principle guided her later work as a translator and commentator and shaped her conviction that Dante could only be fully understood through sustained familiarity with the Italian language and cultural context.

### **LITERARY WORK: DANTE AND TRANSLATION**

Katharine Hillard is best known outside Theosophical circles for her English translation of Dante Alighieri's *Il Convito (The Banquet)*, published in London in 1889 by Kegan Paul, Trench & Co. This translation represented a substantial scholarly undertaking and was widely reviewed. Her translation of *Il Convito* into English is considered one of the best.

Fluent in Italian, she closely studied Dante Alighieri's works. "Four winters spent in Italy, studying Dante and the mysticism of the middle ages helped me very much, as at the same time I was studying all the theosophical books that were then published."

Reviewers acknowledged the translation as accurate, graceful, and literarily accomplished, even when disagreeing with aspects of her interpretation. Later translators, including Philip Wicksteed and W. W. Jackson, expressed admiration for the literary quality and spirit of her work, and Wicksteed in particular praised its sustained brilliance.

Her edition demonstrated familiarity with contemporary Dante scholarship and addressed contentious issues such as the title (*Convito* versus *Convivio*), the status of Beatrice, and questions of dating and interpretation. Hillard regarded her translation not merely as a linguistic exercise but as a contribution toward understanding what she called "the great scheme of Dante." Edward Moore acknowledged Hillard's translation as "accurate, scholarly, and graceful in style."

Hillard also contributed essays on Dante and Beatrice to reference works and periodicals, interpreting Dante's writings as records of moral and inner development rather than purely historical or philological artifacts.

Her Dante work was not separate from her spiritual interests: she also wrote about Dante through a philosophic and moral lens, treating the poet's works as records of inner development and ethical discipline.

## EDITORIAL AND EDUCATIONAL WORK

In addition to translation, Hillard was skilled as an editor and abridger. In 1900, she edited *My Mother's Journal*, an abridged edition of the travel diary of her mother, Harriet Low Hillard, covering the years 1829 – 1834 in Manila, Macao, and the Cape of Good Hope. Hillard explained that she reduced repetition while preserving the integrity of the original narrative, bringing a private historical document into public circulation. As editor, she justified the substantial cut in the introduction to the diary with the following words: "As there must necessarily be much repetition in a journal covering so long a space of time, a great deal has been cut out; but, with the exception of a few slips of the pen, nothing has been corrected or altered."

Her most significant editorial labor was her book *An Abridgement by Katharine Hillard of The Secret Doctrine by H. P. Blavatsky*, which was published in 1907. This condensation was intended to make Blavatsky's dense and encyclopedic work accessible to students. Hillard's abridgement was widely recognized as one of the earliest serious attempts to present the core themes of *The Secret Doctrine* in a navigable and informatively useful form.

Like Julia Keightley, Katharine also wrote poetry and articles before becoming a Theosophist. Some items of her poetry is included herein.

## PUBLIC LIFE AND WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

Hillard was active in Brooklyn's cultural and reform life. In 1869, she was one of the three founding members of the Brooklyn Women's Club, alongside Anna C. Field and Celia Burleigh. The club was established on 19 March 1869 and incorporated in 1871. It was non-sectarian and apolitical, devoted to intellectual development through lectures, study, and discussion across fields such as literature, science, sociology, and education.

As of 1903, the Club had eight standing committees that reflected the Club's focus on intellectual development: Literature, Music, Art, Science, Sociology, Home and Social Relations, Hospitality, and Education. The committees hosted lectures, programs, and events designed for the enlightenment or enjoyment of its members. Subjects ranged from "Factory Conditions as they Affect Women and Children" to "Russian Music and Musicians." Committees were subject to change throughout the Club's history.

The Brooklyn Woman's Club was located at 114 Pierrepont Street in the neighborhood of Brooklyn Heights. It was a member The New York State Federation of Women's Clubs, The New York City Federation of Women's Clubs, The Civic Council of Brooklyn, and The Brooklyn Heights Association, among others. Further, it was affiliated with the American Women's Club, both in London and Paris. Hillard's involvement reflects her long-standing commitment to education and ethical culture. The Club still exists today.

## ASSOCIATION WITH WALT WHITMAN

It seems that Katharine was friends with many literary giants, as evidenced by these letters to and from Walt Whitman. The letters are as follows:

Moncure Daniel Conway, an American Unitarian minister, abolitionist, freethinker, and writer, wrote to Walt Whitman, 13 September 1871. He wrote in part: "About the same time that I received your volumes I got a letter from Kate Hillard (a brilliant girl and writer of Brooklyn who was here last year) written from the Adirondacks. She says:— 'I have made a discovery since I have been here, and that is, that I never half appreciated Walt Whitman's poetry till now, much as I fancied I enjoyed it. To me he is the only poet fit to be read in the mountains, the only one who can reach and level their lift, to use his own words, to pass and continue beyond. The others seem more or less paltry and insufficient, except Shakespeare, and he seems almost too courtly. But Walt Whitman exactly accords with the ruggedness and tenderness of the mountains, and seems in some way more their fellow. At any rate he so affects me, and what other thing can we know?' I copy this for you as it is in a way what the mountains said about you to the girl."

Walt Whitman wrote to Charles W. Eldridge, an American publisher, bookseller, and close associate of Walt Whitman, 23 June 1873. He wrote in part: "Charley, I rec'd your letter Saturday, with the one enclosed. (It was a very kind sympathetic note from Kate Hillard.)..."

Walt Whitman wrote to Abby Price, an American social reformer, abolitionist, women's-rights advocate, and spiritualist, 9 September 1873(?) He wrote in part: "if you see Miss Hillard tell her I rec'd her letter & thank her for it — I have not felt to write to her, or any one but my sisters, about mother's death — the great dark cloud of my life..."

Walt Whitman wrote to Ellen M. O'Connor, who became his housekeeper, companion, and close associate for the last decade of his life (early 1880s until 1892), on 29 February 1876. He wrote in part: "I went over to Phil Phil: yesterday, & had a nice, good, I may almost say happy afternoon, with dear Mrs. Lesley, Kate Hillard, & the two Miss Lesleys, daughters — us four, only, no men-critters but me — I was there some four hours, filled with animated talk — we had dinner, very nice, a nice glass of wine — Mrs. L. a fine gentle, sweet-voiced, handsome black-eyed New England woman, (of the Lyman family, daughter of Judge Lyman. With Miss H[illard], though the first meeting, I got along capitally — found her a jolly, hearty girl — evidently seen life & folks, & read lots — she talked much about the London *literati*, & the (I suppose I may say) personal friends of mine there, both men & women, nearly all of whom she knew well, giving me, among the rest, descriptions of Personnel that

were new & very interesting to me. She goes to Wash[ington] to-morrow, to stay there (1734 1st.) a month — reads a series of twelve papers on English poets.”

#### NOTE

“The first meeting of the poet Katharine Hillard with Whitman took place on February 28, 1876, referenced in Whitman’s February 29, 1876 letter to Ellen M. O’Connor. A Brooklyn resident, Hillard was a friend of Abby Price (see Whitman’s September 9, 1873 letter to Price); in fact, according to Louisa Van Velsor Whitman’s letter to Helen Price on November 26, 1872, the Prices expected that Arthur Price and Katharine Hillard would marry (Pierpont Morgan Library).”

### ENTRY INTO THEOSOPHY

Katharine visited H. P. Blavatsky in London in May 1888 *en route* to New York. She spent two or three evenings with Mme. Blavatsky. “She advised me to settle neither in Rome nor London, but to return to New York. ‘You could not do better,’ she said in her emphatic way, ‘than to go back to New York, and study with W. Q. Judge. He is a good man.’ Never shall I forget the stress she laid upon those words, as if to answer the attacks she doubtless foresaw.” Later that spring she met Mr. Judge, who came to see her in Brooklyn.

She applied for fellowship in the Society and was admitted on 18 December 1888 through the Aryan Theosophical Society (the name of the T. S. New York Lodge). From that point onward, Theosophy became a central focus of her intellectual and ethical life. “As a successful writer, she had won a reputation for careful research, for sound judgment, for trustworthy craftsmanship.” She worked with Mr. Judge and read many valuable papers before the Aryan T. S. She contributed articles to many theosophical magazines, generally signing in full, sometimes with initials only.

Along with Julia Keightley, Katharine Hillard was an indispensable worker and strong supporter of Mr. Judge and theosophy, sometimes at the cost of her reputation as a respected intellectual scholar.

### THEOSOPHICAL WRITINGS AND ACTIVITY

Throughout the 1890s, Hillard was an active contributor to *The Path*, Judge’s principal magazine. Her writings emphasized clarity, moral instruction, and the educability of the human mind rather than sensational occultism. She wrote not as a polemicist but as an educator — someone concerned with explaining difficult ideas in clear, humane language.

Hillard published in the magazines: *Theosophy*, *Lucifer*, *The Path*, *Theosophical Siftings*, *The Theosophical Quarterly*, and *Universal Brotherhood*, among others, contributing essays on Dante, evolution, death, and spiritual development among others. In 1909, she published a brief autobiographical reflection, “Why I Became a Theosophist,” in which she emphasized continuity

between her Unitarian upbringing and her later Theosophical commitments. She noted that her early religious environment made the later encounter with Theosophy feel like an expansion of understanding rather than a break with the past.

She also read papers before Theosophical lodges, including a presentation on “The Beatrice of Dante: From a Theosophical Point of View” at the Fifth Convention of the American Section of the Theosophical Society in 1891. (See article in *Lucifer* included herein.)

Among her most frequently cited Theosophical writings is the series “Three Letters to a Child,” published in *The Path* from December 1892 into early 1893. The “letters” addresses young “Margaret” in a warm, instructive tone, using the language of everyday learning to introduce large cosmological ideas. Hillard frames the origins of the world not as a sensational mystery but as a subject for patient thought, orderly reasoning, and moral imagination. This approach aligns with a recurrent Theosophical aim: to present a spiritual cosmology that could converse with science while still pointing beyond materialism.

## REPUTATION AMONG CONTEMPORARIES

Hillard was remembered by fellow Theosophists as a loyal and indispensable worker, particularly in association with William Q. Judge and Julia Keightley. A memorial article (included next) published in January 1916 described Hillard and Keightley as “two loyal friends,” underscoring the personal and ethical bonds that characterized her Theosophical life.

Observers noted that Hillard’s association with Theosophy came at a cost to her standing in conventional literary circles, but also that her intellectual credibility lent cultural legitimacy to a movement often caricatured by the mainstream press.

Katharine Hillard’s importance for Theosophical history lies less in organizational leadership than in literary facilitation. She helped translate complex bodies of thought — whether medieval philosophy in Dante or the encyclopedic esotericism of *The Secret Doctrine* — into forms that ordinary readers could approach. Her Theosophical writings in *The Path* demonstrate how late Victorian esotericism could be communicated through ethical instruction, intellectual curiosity, and a steady insistence on the educability of the soul.

Dying in 1915, she belongs chronologically to the “first generation” of Anglo American Theosophy: the cohort that encountered the movement while it was still forming its institutions and vocabulary, and that carried its ideas into the first decades of the twentieth century.

## DEATH

Katharine Hillard died at her residence in Brooklyn Heights of pneumonia on 3 November 1915, in New York City, at the age of 76. Her death was followed shortly by a private funeral and then memorial tributes within Theosophical periodicals, situating her among the first generation of Theosophists who helped shape the movement through teaching, writing, and literary mediation.



Harriet Low Hillard (Mother)



Mary Hillard  
1872

## TWO LOYAL FRIENDS

{JULIA KEIGHTLEY AND KATHARINE HILLARD OBITUARY.}

In the last few weeks The Theosophical Society has lost through death two of its most faithful, loyal and effective workers: Mrs. Archibald Keightley ("Jasper Niemand"), on October 9th, and Miss Katharine Hillard, on November 3rd. Or, to speak more truly, since that which has genuine spiritual life can never be lost, these two splendid Theosophical workers have joined that large and increasing assemblage of our friends and brothers who, with the serene eyes of immortals, watch us and wait to welcome us in the quiet temple of everlasting day.

The Theosophical Society was founded in America, in New York. And here, in America, in New York, all its greatest trials have been faced, all its most signal and enduring victories have been won. In its stormy and momentous life, two of the earlier epochs are of especial significance; the first years of the initiation of our work, when Mme. H. P. Blavatsky, toiling with superb energy and devotion, helped by the love and understanding sympathy of W. Q. Judge, and reinforced by the then vigorous cooperation of Colonel H. S. Olcott, was laying the foundation for the whole future life of the Theosophical Society; then, after an interval of stillness, came the period opened by the magnificent work of W. Q. Judge, a loyal understanding of whose mission was destined to prove the touchstone of genuine Theosophical life in later years.

It is to the epoch of Mr. Judge's work that both Mrs. Keightley and Miss Hillard especially belonged; not that they ever ceased, or ever will cease their devoted labor; but that, by force of circumstances, their work at the beginning had a peculiar and incomparable value. The story has more than once been told, how Mr. Judge guarded the spark of spiritual fire committed to his charge, and, with the breath of his matchless devotion, fanned it into a flame that was to warm many hearts to spiritual life.

It is to these days when, after the first complete loneliness and isolation, Mr. Judge found friends and coworkers gradually gathering round him, that Miss Hillard and Mrs. Keightley belong, as to their most distinctive work. Miss Hillard, a very distinguished Dante scholar, had been working in her author's own Italy. Returning through London, she visited Mme. Blavatsky at 17 Lansdowne Road, not many months after Mme. Blavatsky's coming to England, in the spring of 1887. Then, on coming back to the United States, Miss Hillard volunteered for regular service with Mr. Judge. Today, after years that have been almost silent in comparison with the loud notoriety of our earlier years, it is difficult for newcomers to realize what a difficult and serious sacrifice that

kind of work then meant. It is not too much to say that, especially in the days immediately following the attacks on Mme. Blavatsky, made first in India, and afterwards repeated in London, when so many of the former friends of that indomitable martyr to our Cause fell away from her, a cloud of obloquy rested on the Theosophical Society and on every one actively connected with it. They incurred the charge almost of lunacy; it was not "respectable" to be a Theosophist; it was especially perilous for anyone depending on intellectual work, and on the reputation that is needed for successful intellectual work. This was Miss Hillard's position. As a successful writer, she had won a reputation for careful research, for sound judgment, for trustworthy craftsmanship. Also, and this was, in a way, even more delicate ground, she had a singularly warm and close and highly valued circle of relationships and family ties. All this, reputation and intimacies, she knowingly and most willingly risked — and to some degree lost — by her determination to work openly and methodically with Mr. Judge, a resolution which she courageously carried out, reading valuable papers before the Aryan Theosophical Society, of which Mr. Judge was President; and contributing to his magazine *The Path*, articles generally signed in full; sometimes initialed only. Work of this kind gradually developed, and, with changing needs, took changing forms; but, so long as she was able, under the burden of gathering years, Miss Hillard continued to work. And, when external work became impossible for her, she gave of the treasures of her heart.

To the same period, the most distinctive part of Mrs. Keightley's work also belongs; most distinctive for the same reason: because in those days loyal and effective workers were so few. Coming of a family distinguished on both sides by gifts of a high order, herself very successful as an essayist, dramatist, and translator of verse; the brilliant center of a very brilliant social life, Mrs. Keightley practically gave up all these valuable privileges and prizes and devoted herself wholly to the work which Mr. Judge then had in hand, and especially to *The Path*. Under the pen name of Jasper Niemand, and in response to the instruction she had received from Mr. Judge — much of which was published later in the form of *Letters That Have Helped Me* — Mrs. Keightley wrote a series of wonderful articles, of which it may fairly be said that, for the first time in the history of the Theosophical Society, they sounded some of the depths of the inner, spiritual life. For many, her articles were the first impulse in the present life awakening dormant intuitions of the soul's august mysteries.

But Mrs. Keightley's work was greatly varied. She wrote in *The Path* not under one pen-name, but under many, editing departments, completing articles, and, what was less known but equally vital, giving invaluable help in proof-reading and the technical part of getting out the little magazine, a task for which her own wide literary experience well fitted her. From the collaboration of these early days came a magazine which, for inspiration, for immediate response to the thought of the celestials, has not been surpassed in the history of our movement.

As Mr. Judge's work and his personal mission became more clear, Mrs. Keightley became more and more closely identified with that work and mission. By her life, she kept up the living tradition of the miraculous soul; by her knowledge and understanding of Mr. Judge, she imparted understanding and sympathy to others; and, in the critical days when the Theosophical Society was on trial, both in this country and in England her wise influence steadied many who otherwise might have gone astray. Of this side of her work it is more difficult to speak, but there are many who know and understand how effective that work has been — a work only suspended by her death a few weeks ago.

So, while we lose two of our most valued and beloved workers, we add to our honorable roll of those who have died fighting in our ranks, who have been faithful unto death.

Theosophical Articles  
of  
Katherine Hillard



## THE BROOK'S MESSAGE

Little brook, that glideth through the meadows,  
    Rustling past the clumps of tufted reeds;  
Deep and quiet 'neath the alder shadows,  
    Swirling round the tangled water-weeds;  
Little brook, to me a happy presage  
    In thy steadfast pressing toward the sea,  
On thy constant waves a little message,  
    Bear my love from me.

Seek him where those waves, grown slow and weary,  
    Languish through the dull streets of the town;  
Where, instead of flowers, faces dreary,  
    Peer into thy mirror stained and brown.  
Tell him that beside thy crystal fountains,  
    Where the shy bird dips, and flies away,  
In the purple shadows of the mountains,  
    Waiting him, I stay.

Tell him, little brook — but whisper lowly,  
    Lest the gossip breezes hear thee tell —  
That amid this mountain silence holy,  
    Quiet hearts may learn love's lesson well.  
Tell him I am patient, though so lonely,  
    For the heavens reflect hope's sunny hue;  
Tell him, brook, how some one loves him — only  
    Do not tell him who!

*KATE HILLARD.*

## MY SPARROWS

“To catch sparrows, sprinkle salt on their tails.” — *Nursery Lore*.

### I

From a dingy garden-bower —  
    Child, pent up in smoky town —  
Watched I many a patient hour  
    For the sparrows gray and brown.  
Sprinkling salt on a tail-feather  
    Was to be my charm of might;  
But the salt and I together  
    Failed to stay their sudden flight.

Had I caught that wished-for sparrow  
    (Now, I say in wisdom’s words),  
Still my triumph had been narrow —  
    Sparrows are but homely birds,  
Dull of plumage, with no glitter  
    On their breasts of dingy gray;  
And their voice a restless twitter:  
    I am glad they flew away!

For my fancy now beholds them  
    With the plumes of Paradise,  
And my eager clutch enfolds them  
    Glitt’ring with a thousand dyes.  
Love himself might gem his arrows  
    With a feather from their breast;  
Philomel learn from those sparrows  
    Songs she never has possessed.

## II

Now grown old, for other sparrows  
    Still I lay my futile snares;  
And though Fancy's kingdom narrows,  
    Hope, unchanged, my visions shares.  
Love, Ambition, Wealth, and Learning  
    Hop about my garden rails;  
And I feel the same old yearning,  
    And creep up to salt their tails.

Off they fly! but all unheeding,  
    I console myself with this:  
'Tis the thing we don't succeed in  
    Seems to us the truest bliss.  
When we've caught our bright ideal,  
    We have spoiled its painted wings,  
And the broad glare of the real  
    Shows the shabbiness of things.

Still, while restless Fancy lingers,  
    Puffing at my idle sails,  
Hope and I will find our fingers  
    Sprinkling salt for sparrows' tails.  
Sorry work 't would make of living,  
    Did the future promise naught;  
And — I say it with thanksgiving —  
    All my sparrows are not caught!

*KATE HILLARD.*

## FANCY'S MASQUERADE

Wandering sunny meadows o'er,  
Came a pretty child to me,  
And a golden bow he bore,  
While as blithe as any bee  
Rang his voice across the lea,  
“Follow, follow, follow me!”

“Who then art thou, dear my child?  
Sure I've seen that shining bow;  
But that laughter, sweet and wild,  
Sounds not like the voice I know:  
That is ever sweet and low.”  
“Follow, follow, where I go!

“I am Love, thy lord and king;  
See you not my arrows here?  
Hark! their barbèd pointlets ring  
In my quiver crystal-clear.  
Come, if Love to thee be dear,  
Follow, follow, all that hear!”

“Sweet my child, I know thee now;  
Thou art Fancy, fair and free!  
Thou mayst mask that sunny brow,  
But thy rainbow wings I see.  
Vain thy masking, dear, for me;  
Well I know true Love from thee!

“He hath eyes as bright as thine,  
But they wear a softer sheen,  
And a sadness half divine  
Veils the sweetness of his mien;  
Yes, whoe'er his face hath seen  
Knoweth it from thine, I ween.

“All the voices of the earth  
Call him excellent and great,  
But grief, hand in hand with mirth,  
Still doth on his footsteps wait,  
And the shadowy wings of fate  
Darken o'er his royal state!

“On his left hand and his right  
Pain and pleasure ever go;  
And before his eyes the sight  
Of the anguish and the woe  
That his dearest ones must know  
Maketh still his laughter low!

“Vain thy pretty masquerade,  
Fancy fleet! on Love alone  
Can those constant hearts be stayed  
That have once his secrets known;  
When thy facile wings have flown,  
His sway hath but stronger grown!”

*KATE HILLARD.*

## POETICAL OCCULTISM

Dear Editor: The following Poetical Occultism may be of interest.

### FROM THE FIRST CHAPTER OF THE “BANQUET” OF DANTE

“As the Philosopher (Aristotle) has said at the beginning of *Metaphysics*, all men naturally desire to know. The reason of this may be, that everything by an impulse of its own nature, tends towards perfection; therefore, since knowledge is the ultimate perfecting of our soul, in the which consists our ultimate felicity, we are all by nature filled with this desire. None the less are many deprived of this most noble perfection, by diverse causes, which, acting upon man from within and from without, remove him from the estate of knowledge . . . Manifest is it, therefore, to him who considereth well, that there are but few who can attain to that estate desired of all, and that almost innumerable are they who are forever famishing for this food. Oh! blessed are those few that are seated at the table where the bread of the angels is eaten, and miserable are they who feed in common with the sheep! But because every man is by nature a friend to every other man, and because every friend is grieved by the necessities of him he loves; so they who are fed at so lofty a table, are not without compassion toward them whom they see wandering in the pastures of the brutes, and feeding upon acorns. And because compassion is the mother of benevolence, therefore always liberally do they who know, share of their great riches with the truly poor, and are like a living fountain, whose waters slack the thirst of nature before named, (for knowledge). And I, therefore, who do not sit at the blessed table, but have fled from the pasture of the herd, and at the feet of those who are seated there, gather up what they let fall, and who know the miserable life of those whom I have left behind me, moved to mercy by the sweetness of that which I have gained little by little, and not forgetting myself, have reserved something for these wretched ones, which I have already, and for some time, held before their eyes, making them thereby all the more desirous of it.”

Yours,  
K. H.

ROME, ITALY, Nov., 1886.

## SOME POETRY OF THE SUFIS

Dear Path: I send you a little fragment from the Sufi poetry, and hope you will find it acceptable.

*Rome, Italy.*

K. H.

### A PARABLE OF JELLALEDDIN

At the Belovèd's door a timid knock was heard;  
And a voice came from within, sweeter than morning bird,  
Softer than silver drops that from plashing fountains fall,  
“Who is there?” — And the stillness stirred  
For a moment and that was all.

And the lover who stood without, eager and full of fear,  
Answered the silver Voice — “It is I, who am waiting here;  
Open then, my Belovèd, open thy door to me!”

But he heard the response ring clear  
“This house will not hold Me and Thee!”

And the door remained fast shut, and the lover went away  
Far into the desert's depths, to wait and fast and pray:  
To dwell in the tents of Sorrow and drink of the cup of Grief:  
And Solitude taught him each day,  
And Silence brought him relief.

And after a year he returned, and knocked at the close-shut door,  
And he heard the Belovèd's Voice as it answered him once more,  
“Who is there?” And soft as the dew, or the velvety roseleaf's fall,  
And low as when angels adore,  
He said — “ 'Tis Thyself that doth call!”

And his heart stood still with fear, and his eager eyes were dim;—  
Then through the silent night rang the sound of a marriage hymn;  
And the bolts and bars flew back, and the door was open wide,  
And fair on the threshold's rim  
Stood his Belovèd, his Bride!

## THE ETHICS OF THEOSOPHY<sup>1</sup>

In him who knows that all spiritual beings are the same in kind with the Supreme Spirit, what room can there be for delusion of mind, and what room for sorrow, when he reflects on the identity of spirit? — *Yajur Veda*.

The soul is the assemblage of the Gods. The universe rests in the Supreme Soul. It is the soul that accomplishes the series of acts emanating from animate beings. So the man who recognizes the Supreme Soul as present in his own soul, understands that it is his duty to be kind and true to all. — *Manu* (5:12)

It has been rather the habit of those who have made ethics a special study, to speak of it as an exact science, and to put it on the same plane as physics, and in contradistinction to theology. It is impossible to know the things of God, if, indeed, there be a God, and reasoners say, therefore, let us confine ourself to the things of man. Let us study and conform to the laws of right action, and not waste precious time in idle speculation about what always must be, as it always has been — the Unknowable. We can have no proof of a future life, therefore let us not raise our eyes above the present one, content to do the best we can, without hope of any reward, even that of another existence with prolonged opportunities of growth. But, unfortunately, there seems to be an element in human nature that demands sustenance, that asks whence are we to derive the motive power of this virtue? to which the Positivists answer, in the worship of humanity, and the students of ethics, in devotion to the Ideal Good. But the question itself seems to give us the clue to the weak point in their system. While denying the necessity of something outside of ethics, they tacitly acknowledge its existence. No matter how strong our desire to confine ourselves to the realm of realities, to argue only about things that can be proved, to deal only with the facts of life, there seems to be one stubborn factor in the case that we cannot get rid of — the demand of human nature for something above human nature — the cry of the soul for something to satisfy that hunger within it which cannot be fed by the things that fulfil the demands of the intellect and the senses. We may call the Ideal Good if we choose, but, after all, what is the Ideal Good but another name for the Divine?

Light intellectual replete with love,  
Love of true good replete with ecstasy.<sup>2</sup>

The final basis of action, to give us even intellectual satisfaction, must surely be an immovable one. We must have for our starting point something that cannot change with the point of view of the observer; something that we

can call the Absolute. But can ethics alone furnish us with such a standpoint, being in themselves so very uncertain a quantity, and so dependent upon the general characteristics of the age and race to which they belong? The ethics of the Hebrews were not the ethics of the Greeks, nor are the ethics of the Corsican peasant of today, for instance, with his relentless *vendetta* — the unceasing obligation in a family to avenge by murder, through endless generations, the murder of an ancestor — our ethics. That vindictive Corsican would be as secure in his sense of right as we are in the conviction that he is wrong. Nor can we take refuge in an assurance that his intellectual inferiority is the sole cause of his perverted morals, for we cannot deny that great intellectual development may coexist with great wickedness, and the purest morality with a very low range of intellect. The Borgias were monsters of wickedness, but they were never accused of a lack of intelligence. The village priest, brought up in the bosom of superstition, half-nourished, half-educated, all-unconscious of any other world than the narrow circle of his own duties, and quite incapable of formulating a theory of ethics, may yet lead the most heroic and Christ-like of lives. Nor is the intellectual assent to a moral law sufficient; it must take a deeper hold upon our being than intellectual assent before it can pass into action. For, after all, every theory of ethics ever formulated must come back in the last analysis to that final court of appeal that we are in the habit of calling the moral consciousness, that Christians would speak of as the voice of God in the soul, that the Theosophists call the higher Self, that *something* within which we recognize as ourselves and yet higher than ourselves, and from whose dread decisions there is no escape. When, in the great crises of our inward life, we are brought face to face with this Power, I think we realize that it is no mere intellectual abstraction, and that to call it the Ideal Good is like describing the tempest-tossed ocean in all the majesty of its rage as “a body of water encompassing the principal divisions of the earth.”

If then we feel that even the science of ethics has its foundation in the spiritual consciousness of man, if we are forced to recognize the existence of another part of our being than the body and the mind, if we are driven by the study of self to conclude that within the depths of that self lies a greater power than the intellect, that can apprehend where the intellect can only grope, and *know* where the intellect can only reason, and which, by its very demand for satisfaction, proves that there is that by which it can be satisfied. Why not begin at the other end, and found our system of ethics upon a spiritual rather than an intellectual basis? To a certain class of minds, I am aware, this would not appeal; beyond the intellectual faculties they recognize nothing, but because there are also those who can get nothing from music beyond a more or less agreeable noise, are we therefore to conclude that Beethoven and Bach were the victims of delusion, as well as all those whom their harmonies have lifted to celestial heights? Certainly, as the history of the world’s religions will attest, to a large portion of mankind the spiritual nature is the most real thing they know, the inner self the one thing of whose existence they are certain, and

therefore it has occurred to me that it would be interesting to oppose to the ethics formulated upon a virtual denial of that spiritual nature a system of ethics which, on the contrary, takes the spiritual nature as its basis. But I would premise that the ethics of Theosophy make no pretensions to novelty, nor do they assert to themselves any superiority over Christianity or any other creed. Indeed, Theosophists maintain that the teachings of Christ, rightly interpreted, contain the purest system of morality possible. The Brahmin Mohini Mohun Chatterji, in his translation of the *Bhagavad Gîtâ*, continually points out the identity of its teachings with those of the Bible, and says, indeed, that it is not possible to doubt that the Brahmin and the Christian are fellow-voyagers. “The Brahminical sages have taught with great emphasis that the easiest road to perfect purity is love of God and love of His creatures. Does Christianity teach anything else?” he asks. Unfortunately the teachings of the New Testament have been misunderstood and corrupted by transcribers and translators, and hopelessly perverted by prejudiced commentators, while a third impediment to their comprehension arises from the constant iteration of their words in our childish or careless ears, so that here indeed, familiarity has bred contempt. As Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr. has so forcibly said, we need to have the words of sacred books *depolarised*. This is why new formulas have such a hold upon the popular mind, and why men so eagerly follow an old truth in a new dress. It is useless to say “there is nothing new in that statement, the same idea has been expressed hundreds of times,” — the jaded thought feels itself spurred by the fresh form into which that old truth has been cast, and answers to the touch of a novel stimulus.

The Theosophists then, disclaim all pretensions to novelty. In fact, they claim as their basis the eternal verities underlying all religions, and they necessarily begin their system from within instead of from without. In *The Life of Madame Guyon*, written by herself, she tells us that having found it impossible to derive any benefit from prayer, she applied to a very religious Franciscan, who instantly removed all her difficulties by saying to her: “It is, Madam, because you seek *without* what you have *within*. Accustom yourself to seek God in your heart, and you will there find Him.” It was the same thought that was expressed in *The Laws of Manu* so many centuries before, at the beginning of this paper: “The man who recognizes the Supreme Soul as present in his own soul understands that it is his duty to be kind and true to all.”

“To him who is conscious of the True Self (within himself),” says the *Mundaka Upaniṣad*, all desires vanish even here on earth. “That Self cannot be gained by the Veda, nor by understanding, nor by much learning. . . But if a wise man strives after it by strength, earnestness, and right meditation. . . his deeds and his self, with all his knowledge, become all one in the highest Imperishable.”

In an article in the *Dublin University Review* for May 1886, Mohini sums up “the teachings of Theosophy from the standpoint of commonsense” in these words:

1. That there is a principle of consciousness in man which is immortal.
2. That this principle is manifested in successive incarnations on earth.
3. That the experiences of the different incarnations are strictly governed by the law of causation.
4. That as each individual man is the result of a distinct causal necessity in nature, it is not wise for one man to dominate the life and action of another, no matter what their relative development may be. On the other hand, it is of paramount importance that each individual should ceaselessly work for the attainment of the highest ideal that he is capable of conceiving. . . .
5. That for the above reasons it is wise and just to practice the most ungrudging toleration towards all our fellow-creatures.
6. That as absolute unity of all nature exists for ever, all self-centered actions are bound to end in pain to the actor on account of their opposition to this fact. The foundation of morals must therefore lie in the feeling of the Universal Brotherhood of Man.
7. That the harmony of the unit with the whole is the only condition which can remove all pain, and as each individual represents a distinct causal operation of nature, this harmony is attainable only through the individual's own exertions.

Theosophy believes that truth is the result of real experience, and does not consist in the transfer of intellectual symbols from one person to another. To speak about truth is one thing, and to perceive it is quite a different process. As Ralph Waldo Emerson says: "We know truth *when we see it*, from opinion, as we know when we are awake that we are awake." "Hence, individual consciousness," says Mohini, "is consistently upheld as the only criterion of truth, but this consciousness derives material help in its development and expansion by the study of the experiences of others. Thus, Theosophy teaches that *personal exertion is the only means by which progress can be achieved*. But in the effort for growth, the ultimate unity of consciousness must not be ignored. Individuals are not distinct crystals, placed side by side, but the varied manifestations of one unchanging universal consciousness. As light from one single source produces the appearance of different lights by reflection from a number of surfaces, so this universal consciousness, remaining itself unchanged, produces endless individualities, which in the course of their evolution reach perfection by recognizing this essential unity. According to Theosophical thinkers, this doctrine forms the fundamental truth upon which all religions are based; it is the final consummation of all philosophical thought, and the crowning experience of all practical mysticism. The search for this truth, and the practical realization of it, are not considered as mere gratification of intellectual curiosity, but as the very *summum bonum* of evolutionary progress. It is the Nirvāṇa of the Buddhists, the Mokṣa of the Brahmins, and not very different from the Beatific Vision of the Christians. Nirvāṇa is by no means the annihilation of consciousness, but its rest in the infinite plenitude of being."

Theosophy recognizes, in the various systems of religion, the various attempts, modified by special causes, to embody spiritual truth, but it also

recognizes that the different symbolologies of words and emblems that are used to represent that truth, being “inwardly digested” and assimilated by different organisms, partake of the differences of the individual, and as no two individuals can be absolutely identical, neither can their beliefs be the same, therefore it is an uncompromising supporter of the freedom of the individual conscience. The fundamental ideas of Theosophy, as expounded by some of their principal writers, are briefly these: That the existence of matter without relation to a conscious Knower has never been experienced. Therefore matter and consciousness are both eternal, or neither. That there is in nature a principle of consciousness whose units are not atoms but individualities, and as the principle is eternal its units must be so also. For the ocean cannot be salt unless the quality of saltiness inhere in every one of its drops. Theosophy, for these, among other reasons, holds against Materialism that the individuality in man is immortal. And it must be conceded that a scheme of the universe which considers the existence of the individual as prepared and led up to for thousands of years, to endure only for the paltry span of human life and then be extinguished, is as revolting to common sense as one which holds that a man’s status for all eternity may be determined by his religious attitude during his last moments, or still worse, by that “Divine caprice” which is embodied in the doctrine of predestination.

From the indestructibility of individual consciousness, and its relations to matter, two important deductions follow. First, that this relation, which is perpetually changing, changes according to a definite law. . . . What is *now* is not wholly unrelated to what was before. By the application of this law of causation to our being, it follows that the experience of pleasure and pain in the present must be the necessary consequences of causes generated in the past. . . . Whatever you sow the same you reap, whether you are conscious of the sowing or not. The little child who strays unawares into an atmosphere of typhus, and breathes in its deadly germs, is not protected by its unconsciousness of evil from the fatal results of that contact, nor can the fact of forgetfulness of the cause interfere with the necessary effect. Because we have forgotten the sins against the laws of health that we committed in our youth, we do not, therefore, go scot-free of their results in after years, and what is true of one personality should be equally true of many. This law of causation thus applied to personal experience of suffering and enjoyment is called the Law of Karma.

If the individual consciousness is immortal, and its experiences are governed by the Law of Karma, then it follows that so long as all causes capable of producing effects on the present plane of life are not exhausted, and the generation of similar causes is not stopped, the individual consciousness will remain connected with the experience of earthly existence. “The will to live,” as Schopenhauer calls it (an idea identical with the Buddhist *tañhā* {thirst}, or unsatisfied desire for existence), continually brings back the ego to the shifting phantasmagoria of earthly life, the *individuality* or higher self, persisting, though the *personality* in which it is embodied, continually changes, until its

physical tendencies and inclinations being entirely purged away, it is no longer under the necessity of reincarnation. And, moreover, the idea of a future *spiritual* state, in which our good and evil deeds shall be rewarded and punished, is held by Theosophists to be founded on an injustice, for the sins done in the body can only be properly expiated in the body, and therefore absolute justice demands that the entity should return to physical life, in order that it may work out its salvation by climbing step by step the long ladder of existence.

But we must take note of the distinction between *individuality* and *personality*. The unit of consciousness, the individuality, persists, the personality changes. The larva of the dragonfly crawls, behind a hideous mask, at the bottom of the brook; its element is water; its dry husk hangs upon a twig motionless and inert as the earth to which it belongs, until, in the fulness of time, "an inner impulse rends the veil," and it emerges a winged creature of the air —

Through crofts and pastures wet with dew,  
A living flash of light he flew.

In one sense each personality is a new being, in another it is not. "During this life," says *The Buddhist Catechism* {by Henry Steel Olcott}, "the personality constantly changes, and while the man A. B. of forty is identical as regards individuality with the youth A. B. of eighteen, yet by the continual waste of his body, and change of mind and character, he is a different being. Nevertheless the man in his old age justly reaps the reward or suffering consequent upon his thoughts and actions at every previous stage of his life. So the new being of a rebirth, being the same individuality as before, but with a changed form or new personality, justly reaps the consequences of his actions and thoughts in the previous existence." And this doctrine of reincarnation has been taught by all the religions of the world, Christianity not excepted. In the 11th chapter of Matthew, Jesus, in speaking to his disciples of John the Baptist, says: "If ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." And in the 17th chapter he says: "Elias is come already, and they knew him not . . . Then his disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist." And in the 9th chapter of Mark, the disciples ask about a man born blind, "Did this man sin, or his parents, that he was born blind?" And in the Wisdom of Solomon (8:20), we read, "Being good, I came into a body undefiled."

From these leading ideas of the unity of spirit, the working of the law of Karma, and the gradual progress of the individual to complete reunion with the Divine, it is easy to see that the ethics of Theosophy demand not only moral but spiritual cultivation as our duty to ourselves, and the strictest altruism as regards our brother man.

And in the first place, as regards duty to ourselves, the utmost purity of motive is required. "Desire to sow no seed for your own harvesting," we are told, "desire only to sow that seed, the fruit of which shall feed the world."

Enough if something from our hand have power  
To live and move, and serve the future hour.

— WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

Not even the desire for personal purity is allowed as a motive for right action, as it has its root in self-regard, and tends to set one apart from his fellows. Hence asceticism in every form is most strenuously discouraged. The good must be done solely for its own sake, not that our own virtue may be increased, the result to ourselves must not be thought of, only the doing of the right thing; beyond that we are not to look. Ambition, the desire to rise above one's fellows, is the first sin to be rooted out of the soul. It is the simplest form of looking for reward.

"Grow as the flower grows," says *Light on the Path*, "unconsciously, but eagerly anxious to open its soul to the air. So must you press forward to open your soul to the eternal. But it must be the eternal that draws forth your strength and beauty, not desire of growth. For, in the one case, you develop in the luxuriance of purity; in the other, you harden by the forcible passion for personal stature."

As to the *process* of spiritual development, Theosophy teaches that in order to secure the supremacy of the spiritual element in our nature, it must be cultivated as our other faculties are cultivated, for though potentially existing in all, it may become atrophied for want of exercise, as a limb shrinks that is not used, or a faculty of the mind decays if not employed. It tells us that this process "is entirely *within* the individual himself, the motive, the effort, the result, being strictly personal. That, however personal and interior, this process is not unaided, being possible, in fact, only through close communion with the Supreme Source of all strength." That it consists "in the eradication of selfishness in all forms, and the cultivation of broad, generous sympathy in, and effort for, the good of others; in the cultivation of the inner spiritual man by meditation, and communion with the Divine; in the control and subordination of the physical nature and desires; and in the careful performance of every duty belonging to one's station in life, without desire for reward, leaving the results to Divine law. That while the above is incumbent on, and practicable by, all religiously-disposed men, a yet higher plane of spiritual attainment is conditioned upon a specific course of training, physical, intellectual, and spiritual, by which the internal faculties are first aroused and then developed."

It will be seen that Theosophy, like Christianity, does not consider prayer as "a waste of time," that is, of course, prayer not in the limited and concrete sense of a petition to a personal Deity for some personal advantage, but in the sense of abstraction from the things of sense in contemplation of the things that

are divine, the unfolding of those wings of the soul that enable it to soar into the heavens — those heavens, be it remembered, that are not above us, but within.

But we are also warned that spiritual development cannot be sought by any one path. “To each temperament there is one road which seems the most desirable. But the way is not found by devotion alone, by religious contemplation alone, by ardent progress, by self-sacrificing labour, by studious observation of life. . . . All steps are necessary to make up the ladder. The whole nature of man must be used wisely by the one who desires to enter the way.”

We are shown then that our duty to ourself consists in self-purification, and in the cultivation of our spiritual nature. And in the purification of our being from sin, it is not enough, as Jesus also taught, to repress the outward act, we must purge ourselves first from the inward desire. To refrain from striking a blow while the whole soul is seething with anger, is of no use, except to the object of our rage — we must learn not to *feel* anger. Nor does it profit us to deny ourselves the gratification of any passion, if we are all the while hungering and thirsting for that gratification — it is the *spirit* that must be made pure. So, too, a morbid sense of remorse for past sins is discouraged; true repentance lies in doing better, but the soul that dwells upon the thought of evil insensibly absorbs something of its atmosphere. Nor is it enough to deny ourselves indulgence in sorrow; we must learn that nothing in this illusory life is worthy of regret. We must strive for that attitude of mind described in the verse I have quoted from the *Yajur Veda*:— “In him who knows that all spiritual beings are the same in kind with the Supreme Spirit, what room can there be for delusion of mind, and what room for sorrow when he reflects upon the identity of spirit.”

To a system of ethics, founded upon the conception of all spirit as part of one great whole, of each individuality as one drop in the ocean of Infinite Being, the idea of the Universal Brotherhood of Man becomes a living truth, and with the duty of right *action* towards one’s neighbor, the duties of right speech and right thought are also strenuously insisted upon. Not only are we warned against ambition, or the desire to be better than our fellows, as a sin against ourselves, but we are next enjoined to “kill out all sense of separateness,” not to fancy that we can stand aside from the bad man or the foolish man, but to realize that the sin and shame of the world are our sin and shame, that the soiled garments we shrink from touching may have been ours yesterday, and may be ours tomorrow. It was an echo of the same thought that prompted John Bunyan to say, when he saw a notorious criminal led to execution, “But for the grace of God, there goes John Bunyan.” The same authority just quoted, the *Light on the Path*, says:— “Let the darkness within you help you to understand the helplessness of those who have seen no light — whose souls are in profound gloom. Blame them not. Shrink not from them, but try to lift a little of the heavy Karma of the world; give your aid to the few strong hands that hold back the powers of darkness from obtaining complete victory. Then do you enter into a partnership of joy, which brings, indeed, terrible toil and profound sadness, but also a great

and ever-increasing delight. . . . Underneath all life is the strong current that cannot be checked: the great waters are there in reality. Find them, and you will perceive that none, not the most wretched of creatures but is a part of that life, however he blinds himself to the fact, and build up for himself a phantasmal outer form of horror. In that sense it is that I say to you: All those beings among whom you struggle on are fragments of the Divine."

"He who does not feel irresistibly impelled to serve the race," says another authority, "whether he himself fail or not (in his own aim) is bound fast by his own personality, and cannot progress until he has learned that *the race is himself*, and not that body that he now occupies. . . ." And again, "in our view, the highest aspirations for the welfare of humanity become tainted with selfishness, if in the mind of the philanthropist there lurk the shadow of a desire for self-benefit or a tendency to do injustice, even when these exist unconsciously to himself." And once more, "He who does not practice altruism; he who is not prepared to share his last morsel with a weaker or poorer than himself; he who neglects to help his brother man, of whatever race, nation or creed, whenever and wherever he meets suffering, and who turns a deaf ear to the cry of human misery; he who hears an innocent person slandered, whether a brother Theosophist or not, and does not undertake his defense as he would undertake his own — is no Theosophist."

Of course, in this brief sketch of the ethics of Theosophy, I have tried to confine myself to the broadest general statements, and to present as far as possible those ideas most closely connected with morality. The metaphysical basis upon which we found our right action is of comparatively little consequence to that right action itself, but when a system of ethics is based upon a portion of our nature that is utterly ignored by many students of the subject, it becomes worth while to examine the grounds upon which such a system is founded. To the race, as far as the practical workings of the two systems are concerned, the result in material improvement might be the same, but it is to the individual that Theosophy presents, it seems to me, an advantage over ethical culture. "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" It satisfied a demand of many natures that mere morality can never satisfy, for, while denying the existence of a personal God, by recognizing the spiritual element that makes man one with the Unknown Source of all life, it satisfies the religious instinct, and opens wide the windows of the soul to admit the Light of the World. By making the individual reason the test of truth, and refusing to recognize as such anything that does not appeal to the individual's own consciousness, no matter by whom the dogma may be formulated, it leaves the soul free as any absolute negation can make it, and by taking for its standard a rigorous self-denial, in the widest sense of the word, it enforces the purest morality as regards others. In a paper dealing professedly with the ethics of the Theosophists, there is no need to touch upon their more metaphysical, religious, and scientific ideas, but I would simply say that it is upon the ethics of the system that the great stress is laid by all the leading members of their body, and

that such a book as Mr. Alfred Percy Sinnett's *Esoteric Buddhism*, for instance, is considered to be a sort of symbolic treatment of subjects too abstract for the ordinary mind to grasp, and devised for the express purpose (which it has admirably served) of awaking a general interest in the Oriental wisdom. Few of us are equal, without a good deal of preliminary training in philosophy, to the keen subtleties, the *Upaniṣads*, that "fine flower" of Oriental thought, nor has our less metaphysical race ever evolved a language capable of expressing those delicate shades of meaning for which the Hindus have such a very rich and precise vocabulary. But we can appreciate the value of a religion without other dogma than that taught by Jesus when he said, "The kingdom of heaven is within you," and certainly that one spiritual truth is the basis alike of Oriental wisdom, Christian mysticism, and Sufi poetry. The Divine is one with our own souls, and in him who knows and feels that, what room indeed can there be "for delusion of mind, and what room for sorrow?"

Farīd al-Dīn 'Attār, a Sufi poet, who described the seven stages in the road leading to union with the Divine Essence, concluded thus: "Last stage of all is the Valley of Annihilation of self, the seventh and supreme degree which no human words can describe. There is the great ocean of Divine Love. The world present and the world to come are but as figures reflected in it, and as it rises and falls, how can they remain? He who plunges in that sea and is lost in it, finds perfect peace."

This intimate union with the Divine is the constant theme of Oriental writers, and was beautifully suggested by Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Rūmī, another of the Sufi poets, in a parable that may be rendered into English verse thus:—<sup>3</sup>

At the Belovèd's door a timid knock was heard:  
And a voice came from within, sweeter than morning bird,  
Softer than silver drops that from plashing fountains fall,  
    "Who is there?" — and the stillness stirred  
    For a moment, and that was all.  
And the lover who stood without, eager and full of fear,  
Answered the Silver Voice — "It is I who am waiting here.  
Open then, my Belovèd, open the door to me!"  
    But he heard the response ring clear —  
    "This House will not hold Me and Thee!"  
And the door remained fast shut, and the lover went away  
Far into the desert's depths, to wait, and fast, and pray;  
To dwell in the tents of Sorrow, and drink of the cup of Grief:  
    And Solitude taught him each day,  
    And Silence brought him relief.  
And after a year he returned, and knocked at the close-shut door,  
And he heard the Belovèd's voice as it answered him once more;  
"Who is there?" — and softer than dew, or the velvety rose-leaf's fall,  
    And low as when angels adore,  
    He said — " 'Tis Thyself that doth call!"

And his heart stood still with fear, and his eager eyes were dim;  
Then thro' the silent night rang the sound of a marriage hymn;  
And the bolts and bars flew back, and the door was opened wide,  
    And fair on the threshold's rim  
        Stood his Belovèd, his Bride!

MISS KATHARINE HILLARD.

NOTES

1. Read before the Ethical Society of Keene Valley, N.Y., August 1888.
2. Dante.
3. Published in *The Path*, July 1887.

## AN EGYPTIAN ALLEGORY

(FROM *THE BOOK OF THE DEAD.*)

Over the dark fields, heavy as a pall,  
Lit by no gleam of sun, or moon, or star,  
Hangs the dark air, nor any sounds at all  
The somber silence jar.

Still as the weed below a frozen sea,  
The pale sheaves of the ghostly harvest stand,  
And through the serried rows unceasingly  
There moves a spectral band.

All that have lived are there, and from their eyes —  
Whether of king or beggar, maid or wife —  
Gleam terror, and dismay, and wild surprise  
At the result of life.

For this the harvest is of all their deeds,  
This “corn of Aanroo, seven cubits high”;  
Their good and evil actions sowed the seeds  
They reap when once they die.

Gleaning their sheaves they go, with restless feet,  
Each for himself plying the crescent knife;  
And if their deeds were good, the grain they eat  
Gives them eternal Life.

But if 'twas evil that their life did sow,  
The grain is poison, and the ghostly breath  
They drew in Aanroo ceases, and they go  
To everlasting Death.

KATHARINE HILLARD.

*New York.*

## THE YOGA PHILOSOPHY OF PATAÑJALI<sup>1</sup>

The word *Yoga* means *union*, or that merging of mind and soul in the Divine element within us which is otherwise called *concentration*. *Yoga* (or concentration) is therefore that realization of our oneness with the Supreme that has been the aim of mystics of all ages and all creeds. To reach this highest possible point of spiritual development, it is obvious that the whole of the threefold nature of man must be developed upon its various lines; that is, the physical, the mental, and the spiritual elements must receive an appropriate and simultaneous training, or we have a want of that harmony which is a necessary concomitant of perfection. A chain can be no stronger than its weakest link, and if any link in the triple chain of our being be imperfect, the whole must suffer the consequences.

*Concentration* is used in two senses, as *Yoga*, or union with the Divine and as the employment of the means to that union. The one is the result, the other is the method leading towards that result. I say “towards that result” advisedly, the goal being so far beyond any present hope of attainment.

There are two systems of *Yoga*, the *Hatha* (or Physical) and the *Rāja* (or mental *Yoga*). The first is said to be derived from *Ha* the sun, and *Tha* the moon, used as symbols for the regulated breathing supposed to produce the desired condition. “In the *Hatha Yoga* practice,” says Mr. Judge, in his very interesting Introduction to *The Yoga Aphorisms of Patañjali*, “the result is psychic development, at the delay or expense of the spiritual nature.” *Rāja-Yoga* is said to be derived from the root *rāj* to *shine*, in allusion to the luminosity of the soul or *Ātman*, and therefore means union with the Supreme Soul. “The initiatory training of a true *Vedāntin Rāja Yogi*, must be the nourishing of a sleepless and ardent desire of doing all in his power for the good of mankind on the ordinary physical plane, his activity being transferred, however, to the higher astral and spiritual planes as his development proceeds.”<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Judge also tells us in his Introduction that there were two *Patañjalis*, the one known as a commentator upon the grammarian *Pāṇini*, who wrote, according to the authority of Professor Theodor Goldstücker and others, about the year 140 B.C.; the author of the *Aphorisms* being an older and altogether legendary character, of whom nothing remains but this book. But in a long and exhaustive article on the date of *Śrī Śaṅkarācārya* (*Five Years of Theosophy*, 278) *Patañjali* is mentioned as the *Guru* or spiritual teacher of *Śaṅkarā*, under the name of *Govinda Yogi* {*Govinda Bhagavatpāda*}, it being the custom of Initiates to assume a new name. This *Patañjali* is declared to be the great author of the *Mahābhārata*, the *Yoga Sūtras*, and a book on medicine and anatomy, and the *Sūtra* period probably ended about 500 B.C., “though it is uncertain how

far it extended into the depths of Indian antiquity. Patañjali was the author of the *Yoga Sūtras*, and this fact has not been doubted by any Hindu writer up to this time. Mr. Albrecht Weber *thinks*, however, that the author of the *Yoga Sūtras* might be a different man from the author of the *Mahābhārata*, though he does not venture to assign any reason for his supposition."

The *Yoga Aphorisms* are divided into four books. *Book First* explains what practical concentration is, the obstacles to its acquirement and the way to overcome them.

*Book Second* treats of the means of acquiring concentration through the purification of the body and the mind, and its results.

*Book Third* analyses concentration in its higher metaphysical form, as the synthesis of attention, contemplation, and meditation, and shows how this leads to direct cognition, and absolute independence of the influence of the body, and its obscurations of the intellect. The tools of the spirit having been made perfect, the mind becomes one with the soul, and *isolation, emancipation, or perfect concentration* follows.

The essential nature of *Isolation* forms the subject of the *Fourth* (and last) *Book*.

The soul is defined (in Aphorism 20, Book Second) as the Perceiver, and seems to be identified by Patañjali with the conscious Ego. We are to conceive of it as the holder or possessor of the mind, which may be compared to a mirror wherein all truth may be reflected, provided the conditions are suitable. If the *body* be impure or imperfect, the mirror of the mind is like a glass where the quicksilver is partly worn away, and the reflecting surface is impaired, or like one whose surface is dull and tarnished, or covered with dust. If the *mind* be not under control, the mirror is shaken by the winds or passion or impulse, or idle fancies, and the shadows of external things flit confusedly across its swaying surface, and we see nothing.

The first thing to be done, then, that we may secure the perfect reflection of the Higher Self, is to eliminate all these adverse conditions, and this is the object of the *Yoga Aphorisms*. "Concentration," says Patañjali, "is the hindering of the modifications of the thinking principle" (or mind). In the fine lecture by William Kingdon Clifford on "Some of the Conditions of Mental Development," (1868) he shows how constant such modifications are. "If you will carefully consider what you have done most often during the day," says that distinguished philosopher, "you will find that you have really done nothing else from morning to night but *change your mind*. . . . Did you perform any deliberate action? There was the change of mind from indecision to decision, from desire to volition, from volition to act. . . . In a word, whatever you have done, or felt, or thought, you will find upon reflection that you could not possibly be conscious of anything else than a change of mind."

These changes may be either sudden or gradual. In the latter case they are more properly called "modifications," perhaps, and Patañjali tells us that they are of five kinds, and are painful or not painful. They are *Correct Cognition*,

*Misconception, Fancy, Sleep, and Memory*; that is, the mind may be led away from its subject of thought by (1) ideas that are true in themselves, or (2) false in themselves, by (3) idle notions suggested by some verbal association, by (4) sleep, or by (5) recollections. These modifications of the thinking principle, or as we more often say, this wandering of the mind, may be hindered in two ways, which are called *Exercise* and *Dispersion*. The former, the first step towards the far-off goal, is that mechanical fastening of the mind upon one point for a given length of time without intermission, which is called *Attention*, and is intended to strengthen the controlling power of the thinking principle. This is the preliminary sharpening of the tools or, to keep to the original metaphor, practice in the effort to hold the mirror perfectly still. The second step, *Dispersion*, is the attainment of freedom from all passions, desires, and ambitions, which cloud and obscure the mirror. Carried to the utmost, it is indifference to all else than soul. This purification of the mind is to be accomplished through the practice of *Benevolence, Tenderness, Complacency* (which means, I suppose, cheerfulness), and a disregard of the virtue or vice, the happiness or pain, of our fellows. This does not mean that we are to be indifferent to the circumstances of others, but simply that we are not to allow our sympathies to upset our mental and moral equilibrium, and it is an exact corollary to the first maxim of the *Light on the Path*. — “Before the eyes can see, they must be incapable of tears.”

The obstacles to the attainment of this serene and unperturbed condition, are enumerated as *Sickness, Languor, Doubt, Carelessness, Laziness, Addiction to objects of sense, Erroneous perception, Failure to attain any stage* (of abstraction), and *Instability* (to remain therein if attained).

These obstacles are to be overcome, and the virtues before-named to be practiced, and then follows a description of various physical and mental aids that will help the student in his difficult task, such as certain exercises in breathing, or the banishment of an evil thought by dwelling upon its opposite, or by pondering upon anything that one approves.

In conclusion, we have a description of the highest form of purely intellectual concentration, culminating in what is called “Meditation without a seed,” where there is no longer any distinct mental recognition of the object, but *vision* has taken its place. This seems to be akin to the *Gnosis* of the Neoplatonists.

*Book Second* deals more particularly with the physical and moral aids to concentration, being directed to the establishment of meditation and the elimination of “afflictions.” These, as may be judged by the name, are of a more passive and involuntary character than the “obstacles” mentioned in *Book First*, and are *Ignorance, Egoism, Desire, Aversion, and Tenacity of Life*, or what Schopenhauer calls “the will to live.” These “afflictions” are inherent parts of our nature, whereas the “obstacles” are faults that lie more upon the surface, and can be more readily shaken off. They concern our mental attitude, the others lie at the very foundation of our being. Of these afflictions *Ignorance* is

the origin and synthesis, being equivalent to *Tamas* (or Darkness) one of the three qualities that comprehend all things. It is mental or moral blindness, or the confounding of good and evil, eternal and transitory, pure and impure.

*Egoism* consists in identifying the *ego*, or soul, the power that sees, with the power of seeing; that is, in confounding the soul with the mind that is its tool, as ignorant persons confound the mind with the organs of sense, and imagine it is the eye that sees. For as the mind uses the eye, so the soul uses the mind. We realize this when we say, "My mind is confused, I (that is, the soul or ego) cannot see the idea."

*Desire* and *Aversion* mean, respectively, such dwelling upon pleasure or pain as perturbs the mind, and renders it incapable of the serene peace (described in the *First Book*) which is essential to perfect concentration. Desire and Aversion necessarily include all inordinate affections, and all forms of cowardice, whether moral or physical, the latter coming under the head of aversion to pain.

The tenacious desire for earthly existence, or "the will to live," is the natural tendency of humanity, without which existence under ordinary conditions would be impossible. It is this tendency that produces reincarnation, and that must be conquered ultimately or the cycle of rebirths would never cease.

It is from these five elements that spring the roots of our merits and demerits, or, in other words, that *Karma*, whose fructification in each succeeding life on earth is either pleasure or pain. But to the man of perfect spiritual cultivation, all earthly things are grievous (since all the natural qualities are hindrances to the attainment of perfect concentration, or union with the Divine), and therefore in such an one, the desire for earthly life must gradually be lost.

From the fact that in our present form of life the soul is so closely wedded to the mind, and the mind to the body, her vision is impeded, and she is constantly misled. The past cannot be changed, the present cannot be shunned, but for the future we can prepare, by avoiding all acts likely to cause pain to ourselves or others, at the same time that we refrain from any fear or dread of what the morrow may bring forth.

For the Universe exists for the sake of the soul's experience and emancipation — why then should we be troubled? The means of quitting the state of bondage to matter (which is caused by ignorance of the true nature of the soul and its relations), is perfect discriminative knowledge. This is of seven kinds (not named by Patañjali)<sup>3</sup>, and until it is attained in perfection, a partial illumination only will be the result of the practices conducive to concentration. These are eight in number,<sup>4</sup> and comprise, like those mentioned in the *First Book*, physical, mental, and moral development, one of them alone, *Forbearance*, covering abstention from all the sins mentioned in the Decalogue.<sup>5</sup>

From this simultaneous development of man's threefold nature, there necessarily results both purity and strength, culminating in that perfection of power which produces superlative felicity. The *Second Book* concludes with a description of these eight practices, and their results. The *Third Book* begins

with an analysis of concentration in its higher intellectual form, as composed of *Attention*, *Contemplation*, and *Meditation*.

*Attention* is fixing the mind upon a place, object or subject.

*Contemplation* is the continuance of this attention.

*Meditation* is contemplation directed to a material substance or object of sense.

The concentration resulting from the union of all these is called *Samyama*, and is to be used in overcoming those more subtle modifications of the mind suffered by the advanced student, who has overcome those described in the preceding *books*, and we are told that this more purely intellectual form of concentration is especially efficacious for the attainment of “distinct cognition.” Although not immediately productive of it, it precedes that kind of meditation in which distinct cognition of the object is lost, called “meditation without a seed,” and described at the end of the *First Book*. The Victorine Mystics of the 12th century {a group of theologians and contemplatives associated with the Abbey of Saint-Victor in Paris} divided *Contemplation* into six stages, two belonging to Imagination, whose objects are *Sensibilia*, or sensible things; two belonging to Reason, *Intelligibilia* or truths concerning what is invisible, but accessible to reason, and two to Intuition, *Intellectibilia*, or unseen truth above reason. In fact, the resemblances are very numerous between the teachings of Richard of St. Victor and those of Patañjali.

But this is not the place to dwell upon this comparison, nor does it seem worth while here to enlarge upon the subtle definition of the properties of objects that follow the analysis of Concentration. The larger portion of the *Third Book* is taken up by a description of the wonderful powers, both physical and mental, resulting from perfect control of the mind, and of all its hitherto undeveloped, and to most of us, unsuspected faculties. The 50th maxim says: “In the ascetic who has acquired the accurate discriminative knowledge of the truth, and of the nature of the soul, there arises a knowledge of all existences in their essential natures, and a mastery over them.”

In this *Book* we see traced out the steps to the acquirement of perfect control of the physical through the mental, and the exemplification of the manner in which *all* knowledge may be reflected in the mirror of the mind, when made perfectly pure and held in perfect control. This is the highest stage of purely intellectual development, the ultimate point to which the *mind* of man can attain, but there is a further step, for in the last maxim of the *Third Book* we are told: “When the mind no longer conceives itself to be the knower or experiencer, and has become one with the soul, the real knower and experiencer, *Isolation* takes place, and the soul is emancipated.”

The *Fourth Book* proceeds to treat of this *Isolation* and its essential nature. It begins by defining the reasons for the variety of characters inherent in mankind, showing how each character is modified by the results of former lives, and how these characters may be still further modified by the proper use of the proper means. This modifying process is called “the removal of mental

deposits," or in other words, of the accumulated experiences through which the entity has passed, which have left their traces upon it, as the different geological periods have left their record in the various strata of the earth.

Maxim 23 tells us, that the mind, though assuming various forms by reason of these innumerable mental deposits, exists for the purpose of the soul's emancipation, and cooperates thereto. The mind, being the instrument of the soul, exists for the soul's sake; the soul cannot be said to exist for the sake of its instrument, any more than the sense of sight exists for the sake of the eye. Having arrived at this perfection of Knowledge, if the ascetic strenuously banishes all other thoughts, and is free from desire to exercise the powers that lie within his reach ("is not desirous of the fruits," says Patañjali), and yet is not inactive, he arrives at the state called *Dharma-Megha* "the cloud of virtue," so-called because it brings that spiritual rain that causes the soul to blossom into emancipation. Then from the infinite heaven of absolute knowledge, the knowable seems a little thing and easy to grasp, then the modifications of the qualities cease to be, having accomplished their purpose, and time likewise is no more, for to emancipated soul there is nothing left but eternity, wherein past, present, and future are but one. Such a soul, having ceased to mistake the qualities of objects for realities, "abides in its own nature," and is upon the threshold of absolute union with the Divine.

For the greater part of mankind the *First Book* alone contains more than can be mastered in an ordinary lifetime, and therefore I have only sketched, in the briefest and most superficial manner, the general subjects of the last three *Books*. Theosophists owe a debt of gratitude to Mr. Judge, for having put within the reach of all, a work of such far-reaching import, such subtle analysis, and such tremendous grasp, as *The Yoga Aphorisms of Patañjali*.

It is not a book to be hastily read, but to be pondered and inwardly digested, to be comprehended by the intellect, and apprehended by the soul, and then wrought into the tissue of our life!

KATHERINE HILLARD, F.T.S.

#### NOTES

1. *The Yoga Aphorisms of Patañjali. An interpretation* by W. Q. Judge, assisted by James Henderson Connelly, New York.

2. Mohini Chatterji on "Morality and Pantheism."

3. The Seven Progressive Illuminations (marking the exhaustion of ignorance):

1. What is to be known is fully known
  - The distinction between *Puruṣa* (pure consciousness) and *Prakṛti* (nature) is perfectly apprehended.
  - Nothing essential remains unknown.
2. What is to be abandoned is fully abandoned
  - The causes of bondage—ignorance, egoism, attachment, aversion, and fear of death—are uprooted.
  - The *kleśas* no longer arise.
3. What is to be realized is fully realized
  - The isolation (*kaivalya*) of consciousness is directly intuited.

- Liberation is no longer theoretical but experiential.

#### 4. What is to be destroyed is fully destroyed

- Karma (latent impressions and the seeds of future rebirth) is burned.
- No further becoming is possible.

These four are often called the “works of knowledge” (*jñāna-kṛtya*):

#### 5. The mind has fulfilled its purpose

- The intellect (buddhi) has served consciousness completely.
- It no longer projects identification or bondage.

#### 6. The gunas have withdrawn

- The qualities of nature (sattva, rajas, tamas) return to equilibrium.
- Objective experience ceases to compel consciousness.

#### 7. Abidance in absolute isolation (Kaivalya)

- Consciousness rests in itself alone.
- There is no return to ignorance or embodiment.

### 4. The Eight Practices (Aṣṭāṅga Yoga)

These are the eight limbs of Yoga, comprising moral, physical, and mental development:

- Moral: yama, niyama
- Physical: āsana, prāṇāyāma
- Mental: pratyāhāra through samādhi

#### 1. Yama — Forbearance / Moral restraint (That Forbearance covers all the sins of the Decalogue refers specifically to yama.)

Abstention from:

- violence (ahimsā)
- falsehood (satya)
- theft (asteya)
- sexual incontinence (brahmacharya)
- covetousness (aparigraha)

#### 2. Niyama — Religious observances

Personal discipline and inward purity, including:

- purity (śauca)
- contentment (santoṣa)
- austerity (tapas)
- study (svādhyāya)
- devotion to the divine (īśvara-praṇidhāna)

#### 3. Āsana — Posture

- Physical steadiness and ease
- Not gymnastics, but a stable posture for meditation

#### 4. Prāṇāyāma — Regulation of the breath

- Control and refinement of vital energy
- A bridge between body and mind

#### 5. Pratyāhāra — Withdrawal of the senses

- Detachment of the sense-organs from their objects
- Turning awareness inward

#### 6. Dhāraṇā — Concentration

- Fixing the mind upon a single point or idea

#### 7. Dhyāna — Meditation

- Continuous flow of attention toward the object
- Unbroken contemplation

#### 8. Samādhi — Absorption

- Complete union of knower, knowing, and known
- Culminates in discriminative knowledge (viveka-khyāti)

5. Decalogue = Ten Commandments: Idolatry, Images, Blasphemy, Profanations, Dishonor, Murder, Adultery, Theft, Falsehood, Coveting.

## INFLUENCE

[READ BEFORE THE ARYAN T. S. OF NEW YORK, APRIL 1889, BY MISS KATHARINE HILLARD.]

In reading an article in *Lucifer* the other day, I was struck by a quotation from Elihu Burritt {an American reformer, linguist, and peace advocate — celebrated in his own day as “the Learned Blacksmith”} which ran in part thus: “There is no sequestered spot in the universe, no dark *niche* along the disk of non-existence, from which man can retreat from his relations to others, where he can withdraw the influence of his existence upon the moral destiny of the world; everywhere his presence or absence will be felt, everywhere he will have companions who will be better or worse for his influence. . . . Thousands of my fellow-beings will yearly enter eternity, with characters differing from those they would have carried thither had I never lived.”

The thought ran parallel with the remarks of our {T. S.} President last Tuesday upon the multiplied force of concerted action, in showing that, side by side with what we are *doing*, runs the hidden current of our *being*, slow-moving, perhaps, but nevertheless sweeping on with a resistless force, none the less great for being unsuspected. It is one of the most difficult things in the world to realize — this force of passive existence, if I may use the expression. To speak, to act — we can all appreciate as bearing largely upon the character of others; we can all realize the inspiration of a great deed, a noble sentence, but simply to *be* — what can that do for the world? How far can the *nature* of a man, apart from words and actions, affect the great purpose of the Teachers, how much can *being* help to form the nucleus of Universal Brotherhood? It is the first impulse always to ask “What shall I *do* to be saved,” and yet what is right action but the fruit of right thought, as that is the blossom of the character from which it depends, as the flower hangs from the tree. The gardener does not try to improve his roses by pulling open the buds and trying to stretch the crumpled leaves to a broader growth, but he turns his attention to the bush on which they grow, grafts it, waters it, enriches the soil around it, exposes it to the light and air, and the more perfect flowers follow as a natural sequence. And as we cannot think of the perfect rose without its fragrance, so the perfect character cannot be thought of without its *influence*, that perfume of the soul which is as subtle and as powerful as thought itself.

For, after all, what is this influence of which we speak but the aggregate of the man’s thoughts and deeds, the real personality which all his tricks of speech and graces of action cannot hide? This is why we are constantly taught that thought is better than action; it is so (as one of the sages has told us) because a man becomes that on which he resolutely and persistently thinks. He puts himself into an attitude of receptivity to a particular influence, and, as the law

of force is the same on all planes, that force follows the line of the least resistance, and enters the channel he has prepared for it. We receive those influences that we consciously or unconsciously seek; we give out those influences which are the result of what we have sought. It is useless to forego indulgence in pleasure or in sin while the desire for that pleasure or that sin is still strong in our hearts, because in that case it is but the outside of the sepulcher that is whitened. Kill out the desire for the sin, purify the heart itself, and the body of that sin dies, and its sepulcher, like the fabled tomb of the Virgin, is found full of fragrant roses.

In Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's beautiful poem of "Santa Filomena" he says:

Whene'er a noble deed is wrought,  
Whene'er is spoken a noble thought,  
Our hearts, in glad surprise.  
To higher levels rise.

The tidal wave of deeper souls  
Into our inmost being rolls,  
And lifts us unawares  
Out of all meaner cares.

This is the *active* influence, the power we are all ready to recognize, all eager to work for. But there is also the *passive* influence, the "atmosphere" of a person, of which we are all more or less conscious, and which, being a continuous thing and ever abiding with that person, has an even more powerful though less apparent effect. To influence others by the voluntary force of speech or action is comparatively easy, for it is a momentary effort; we poise ourselves for an instant on the topmost heights of our being, and our fellows, kindled at the sight, strive, for another moment, to emulate our altitude. But how much harder the task so to inform our inmost souls that they can give out nothing but nobility, nothing but love! It was said of Lady Elizabeth Hastings that to love her was a liberal education, and we have all known men and women whose presence was a benediction, and made the brightest vision of Universal Brotherhood seem a thing to be realized tomorrow. So true it is that, as Edmund Burke once said, "Virtue as well as vice can be caught by contact."

For it is precisely by this influence, this tremendous power which we all possess and which we handle as carelessly as children do gunpowder, that that nucleus of Universal Brotherhood is to be formed which, in the language of Walt Whitman, is "to saturate time and eras." We are all occasionally startled by being confronted with some word or deed of our own that we had entirely forgotten, but that, like a chance-sown seed, has borne fruit in some other mind, and now we are told to gaze upon the harvest. It is these occasional glimpses of the far-reaching influences we wield that startle our reluctant souls out of their lethargy, and bring them face to face with the unalterable realities of their past,

the glorious possibilities of their future. This again is the *active* influence of the spoken word: but who confronts us with the results of that other influence that never ceases, that weight of character, that force of personality that is continually creating for the soul "the garment that we know it by"? "The words that a father speaks to his children in the privacy of home," says Emerson, "are not heard by the world, but, as in whispering galleries, they are clearly heard at the end, and by posterity."

But how much more power over the destinies of our fellows has the perpetual influence of our nature than the strongest of our spoken words! That which we *say* for good in the course of our lives is very little, that which we *do* still less, but that which we *are* affects every human being with whom we come in contact as we move about the world, and draws within our sphere all the highest forces of the universe to cooperate with us.

This is not a good to be gained by one effort, not a victory to be decided by one battle. It is a long, slow building-up of character, thought by thought, as the coral-insect builds the reef grain by grain. And the work must be done with the good of others as our steadfast aim, with the idea of Universal Brotherhood ever before us as we toil. There is no need that we should sigh for wider fields of action while we wield such possibilities for good or evil as this power breathing from us unawares; but he who works for such a purpose, for the purification of his own soul that others may be benefited, will see ever farther and farther into the heavens. And the task of self-purification will bring with it that beautiful transparency of spirit that enables all men to see and bless the light that shineth from within and enlighteneth all the world.

KATHARINE HILLARD.

## ONE TOUCH OF NATURE

[READ BEFORE THE ARYAN T. S., N.Y., APRIL 2, 1889.]

In the famous speech of Ulysses in the third act of William Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* occurs the often-quoted line, "One touch of nature makes the whole world kin." It is a curious fact, and one on the whole redounding to the credit of humanity, that the line is *never* quoted in the sense in which Ulysses uses it. He is speaking of the readiness of mankind to forget past benefits, and to prize the glitter of a specious present rather than the true gold of that which has gone by. "The present eye praises the present object," says the wise old Greek, and there is *one* touch of nature that makes the whole world kin, that is, men's fondness for praising that which is new, though it be gilded dust, rather than that which is ancient, though it be gold that is somewhat dusty. "Then marvel not," he says to Achilles, "that all the Greeks begin to worship Ajax."

Curiously enough, the line is always quoted as exemplifying the sympathy that, once awakened, makes men feel their close relationship to each other.<sup>1</sup> "Nature" is taken as meaning fellow-feeling, one touch of which makes us all brothers. This unconscious misinterpretation, or rather misapplication, of the great poet's words shows us how innate the conviction is of the fact of our universal brotherhood.

We recognize it as our *nature*, and one throb of fellow-feeling brings the truth home to our awakened consciousness. The touch of sympathy, like the spear of Ithuriel, instantly dispels the illusion of the senses; it lifts us from the purely terrestrial plane, the life of every day, with its apparent gulfs and abysses of worldly circumstance set between soul and soul, to that higher region where we see the non-reality of these separations; where we *feel*, in all those moments that call out the deeper nature of every human being, that the one great pulse of the universe throbs through all our veins. An intellectual conviction of the necessary identity of spirit will never go half so far towards convincing us of the reality of universal brotherhood, as the sudden flush of enthusiasm that follows the words of some great orator, the thrill with which we hear of some noble action, the grief with which we witness another's pain. We read in *Light on the Path* "Kill out all sense of separateness," because "Nothing that is embodied, nothing that is conscious of separation, nothing that is out of the eternal, can aid you." We may endeavor to realize this truth with all the mental power we can bring to bear upon it, meditate upon it for hours, and the sudden swaying of a crowd by some one mighty impulse, or the unexpected revelation of the depths of some human heart, will bring it home to us with a force that makes our intellectual conviction seem a pale and shadowy thing. There was a great

spiritual truth in the old myth of the giant Antaeus, who regained his strength whenever he touched his mother Earth. To sway the souls of men the poet must fall back upon our common humanity, must make men feel that he is one with them, must give voice to the inarticulate cry of the masses, must speak *from* the people and not *to* the people. It is this working from a common basis, this appeal from one man to his comrades, that makes the inspiration of Walt Whitman's poetry so great and so far-reaching, the intense conviction, in short, of universal brotherhood, that makes him say, in his *Leaves of Grass*:

Recorders, ages hence!

“ . . . I will tell you what to say of me;  
Publish my name and hang up my picture as that of the tenderest lover,  
. . . who was not proud of his songs, but of the measureless ocean of love  
within him — and freely poured it forth;” and who wrote to “Him who was  
crucified:”

We all labor together, transmitting the same charge and succession;  
We few, equals, indifferent of lands, indifferent of times;  
We, enclosers of all continents, all castes — allowers of all theologies;  
. . . We walk silent among disputes and assertions, but reject not the disputers  
nor anything that is asserted;

We hear the bawling and din — we are reached at by divisions, jealousies,  
recriminations on every side,

They close peremptorily upon us to surround us, my comrade,  
Yet we walk unheld, free, the whole earth over, journeying up and down, till  
we make our ineffaceable mark upon time and the diverse eras,

Till we saturate time and eras, that the men and women of races, ages to  
come, may prove brethren and lovers, as we are.

And here the great poet strikes the same note touched upon by our President the last time he spoke to us. Because the realization of this dream of universal brotherhood must needs be a thing of the *future*, because we see how far from this true concentration we are, and must be for many centuries to come, perhaps, therefore there is this need that we should “saturate time and eras,” as Walt Whitman puts it, that we should “make our ineffaceable mark” upon the age. For this we come together in societies, that each may have his modicum of power reinforced by contact with others; that the reviving breath of another's inspiration may quicken the flame in our own hearts; that the individual atoms, by their union and common intensity of purpose, shall make up the little mass of leaven that shall one day leaven the whole lump.

But, as was said in one of the papers he other evening, a society can only accomplish what its individual members *will* and *carry out*, and to inspire us to this individual effort I know of nothing more effective than the words of “the good gray poet,” among others, these —

Is reform needed? Is it through you?

The greater the reform needed, the greater the personality you need to accomplish it. . . .

Do you not see how it would serve to have such a Body and Soul that when you enter the crowd, an atmosphere of desire and command enters with you, and every one is impressed with your personality?

Whoever you are! claim your own at any hazard!

These shows of the east and west are tame compared to you;

These immense meadows, these interminable rivers — you are immense and interminable as they;

These furies, elements, storms, motions of Nature, throes of apparent dissolution — you are he or she who is master or mistress over them,

Master or mistress in your own right over Nature, elements, pain, passion, dissolution.

K. H.

NOTE

1. Shakespeare wrote: “*One touch of nature makes the whole world kin.*” We read instead: “*One touch of nature makes the whole world kin.*”

## THE BLACK MADONNA OF LORETO

Upon a hill near the shore of the Adriatic stands the little village of Loreto, {Italy,} the resort of half a million of pilgrims every year, who go there to visit the Casa Santa, the house of the Virgin at Nazareth. It is said to have been miraculously transported to Loreto by angels, where a church was built over it, adorned by various Popes, and the “holy house” itself was surrounded by a lofty marble screen, designed by Bramante, and executed by some of the greatest masters of his day. In a niche of the interior is a small representation of the Virgin and Child in cedar, painted black, and attributed to St. Luke. It is richly ornamented with jewels, which sparkle in the light of ever-burning silver lamps. On the 10th of February, 1797, it was carried off to Paris by the French, but was restored to its shrine on the 9th of December in 1802. In the gorgeous Borghese chapel of Sta. Maria Maggiore at Rome, there is a picture of a black Madonna, also said to have been painted by St. Luke, which was carried in many solemn processions through the city as early as the year 590. These are but two of many such pictures to be found all over Europe, and in the Netherlands there is even said to be a church dedicated to *la Vierge noire*. This peculiar representation of the Madonna occurred so often in ancient art that some of the early writers of the Church felt obliged to account for it by explaining that the Virgin was of a very dark complexion, as might be proved by the verse of Canticles which says, “I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem.” Others maintained that she became black during her sojourn in Egypt. Nevertheless, this blackness, though considered to enhance the sanctity of the ancient pictures, was never imitated by more modern painters, and the priests of today will tell you that extreme age and exposure to the smoke of countless altar-candles have caused that change in complexion which the more naive fathers of the Church attributed to the power of the Egyptian sun. This explanation is not a satisfactory one, however, because in nearly all these pictures it is the flesh alone that is entirely black, the crimson of the lips, the white of the eyes, and the draperies having preserved their original brilliancy of tint.

It is to the pagan mythologies that we must look for the true explanation, and even the conservative Mrs. Anna Brownell Jameson, {a highly regarded 19th century British writer, art historian, and cultural commentator} confesses that “the earliest effigies of the Virgin and Child may be traced to Alexandria, and to Egyptian influences, and it is as easily conceivable that the time-consecrated Egyptian myth of Isis and Horus may have suggested the original type, the outward form, and the arrangement of the maternal group as that the

classical Greek types of the Orpheus and Apollo should have furnished the early symbols of the Redeemer as the Good Shepherd — a fact which does not rest upon supposition, but of which the proofs remain to us in the antique Christian sculptures and the paintings in the Catacombs.” Mrs. Jameson accepts the theory that a pagan symbol was adopted for the expression of Christian thought, but many Romanists would go further than this, and maintain with the Marquis de Mirville in his *Archéologie de la Vierge* that “as the dogma, the liturgy, and the rites professed by the Roman Apostolical Church in 1862 are found engraved on monuments, inscribed on papyri and cylinders, hardly posterior to the Deluge, it seems impossible to deny the existence of a first, ante-historical (Roman) Catholicism, of which our own is the faithful continuation.”

This is a matter of opinion. As a matter of fact, we must remember that the worship of Mary as the mother of God by the Church generally did not begin till the fourth century. In 431, Nestorius and his sect were condemned as heretics by the first Council of Ephesus, for maintaining that in Christ the two natures of God and man remained separate, and that Mary, his human mother, was parent of the man, but not of the God; consequently, that the title which during the previous century had been popularly applied to her (*Theotokos*, mother of God) was improper and profane. Cyril and his party held that the two natures were made one, and that therefore Mary was truly the mother of God. The decision of the Council, condemning Nestorius, gave the first great impulse to the worship of Mary, and the subsequent multiplication of the pictures of the Madonna and Child.

The first historical mention of a direct worship of the Virgin occurs a passage in the works of Eusebius, in the fourth century. Having occasion to enumerate the eighty-four heresies which had already sprung up in the Church, he instances a sect of women who had come from Thrace into Arabia, and who offered cakes of meal and honey to the Virgin, *transferring to her the worship that had been paid to Ceres*. They were called Collyridians, from *collyris*, the name of the twisted cake used in their offerings. Here we have the first link between the new faith and the old; for every one knows that the policy of the Church from the beginning has always been to give to the old symbols a new meaning, to the old festivals a new significance, to the old places a new sanctity, and where dates were wanting to supply them from the chronology of the older religions. So that primitive Christianity, while founding its churches upon the ruins of Mithraic temples, filled up the missing dates in the Scriptural narratives from the pagan chronology which was based upon the history of the Sun.

If we take the chronology of the life of the Virgin, for instance, we find the 8th of September set down in the calendar as her birthday. Now the 8th of September in the Roman calendar was the birthday of the virgin Astraea, and signified the disengagement of the celestial Virgo from the solar rays. It is a well-known fact that the 25th of December was appointed by the Western Church to be celebrated as the birthday of Christ no earlier than the fourth century, while a century previous that day had been engrafted into the Roman

calendar as the Natalis Solis Invicti, being the feast of the Sun at Tyre, and the feast of Mithra in Persia. Albertus Magnus says that the sign of the celestial Virgo rises above the horizon at the time fixed as the birth of Christ. More than a hundred years before the Christian era, in the territory of Chartres, among the Gauls, honors were paid to the Virgini Pariturae, who was about to give birth to the God of Light.

The 2nd of February, the feast of the Purification of the Virgin, is called in the English Church Candlemas, and was originally celebrated at Sais in Egypt as the feast of Lights, in honor of Ceres (or Isis), the mother of the Sun. The celestial sign of the Virgin and Child was in existence many thousand years before Christ. Upon the front of the temple of Sais, under the well-known inscription to Isis, was another, which read, "The fruit which I have brought forth is the Sun." The mysteries of Ceres represented Proserpine, her daughter, as carried away by Pluto to the realms of the dead, where Ceres finds her installed as Queen of Darkness. Proserpine, Madonna, and the celestial Virgo are all often depicted as carrying ears of corn or wheat. Albumazar, the Arabian philosopher, says: "In the first decan of the Virgin rises a maid, called in Arabic Aderenosa, that is, the Immaculate Virgin, holding two ears of wheat, sitting on a throne, and nursing a boy called Jessus by certain nations, Christ in Greek." Now the Milky Way (so called by the Greeks, who, as usual, invented a story to account for the name) was originally called the Strawy Way; the celestial Virgin, pursued by Typhon, having let fall some of the wheat she carried.

Lady-Day, or the feast of the Annunciation, is celebrated on the 25th of March. In the Roman calendar that day was consecrated to Cybele, the mother of the gods, and was called Hilaria, to testify the joy of the people at the arrival of the vernal equinox. On the same day the Phrygians worshiped Atys (the feminine personification of Bacchus, whom they called the mother of God. The Pamylia (a Coptic word for *annunciation*) were on the 25th of the month Phameoth, and on the new moon of that month the ancient Egyptians celebrated the union of Isis and Osiris. Nine months afterwards (December 25th) they celebrated the birth of Harpocrates, and one meaning of Harpocrates was "the sun in winter."

The Assumption of the Virgin is set for the 15th of August. This day is marked in the Roman calendar of Columella as that of the death or disappearance of Virgo. "About the eighth month, when the sun is in his greatest strength, the celestial Virgin seems to be absorbed in his fires, and she disappears in the rays and glory of her son." The calendar above quoted says that the sun passes into Virgo the 13th before the kalends of September. The Christian festival of the Assumption, or the reunion of the Virgin with her Son, used to be called "the feast of the passage of the Virgin."

The mother of the Virgin Mary, we are told, was St. Anna. The Romans had a festival at the beginning of the year for Anna Perenna, and the Hindu goddess Anaitia, the wife of Siva, is also called Annapurna and Kanya the Virgin, while the Roman Catholic Church today teaches the immaculate

conception of the Virgin Mary herself. The name Anna is said to come from the Chaldean *ana*, heaven.

Isis Multimammia (identical with the Diana of Ephesus), Cybele, Ceres, and many others, being all forms of the same idea, were each in turn addressed as “Queen of Heaven” and “Mother of God.” From Rome to Greece, from Greece to Egypt, from Egypt to India, we may trace the figure of the Virgin and Child, and under every phase we find it, in its exoteric aspect, corresponding to the astronomical symbol of the celestial Virgo, the mother of the God of Light, the Sun.

So much for the form of the representation; now for the color. Were the black Madonna of Loreto and numerous others of the same hue so colored as the mere fantasy of some early painter, or can we trace that symbolism also to its source? We find in all the histories of mythology many instances where both gods and goddesses are represented as black. Pausanias, who mentions two statues of the black Venus, says that the oldest statue of Ceres among the Phigalenses was black. Now Ceres, like Juno and Minerva, like the Hindu Maia and the Egyptian Isis, stood for the maternal principle in the universe, and all these goddesses have been thus represented. Ceres is the same as *Here* (Juno), and *Here* became in German *Hertha*, or the mother Earth. In the different Greek dialects, *Here* took various forms, and changed into *Ere*, *Re*, *Ree*, *Rhea*, and *Res*, all names of the earth. In Latin *Res* was retained, to signify matter (or *mater*), the mother of all things, and, figuratively, every quality and modification thereof. Minerva Aglaurus, the daughter of Cecrops, another similar personification, was represented at Athens as black. Corinth had a black Venus, so had the Thespians. The oracles of Dodona and Delphi were founded by black doves, the emissaries of Venus. The Isis Multimammia in the Capitol at Rome is black.

Nor is it the goddesses alone who are shown to be of this sable hue. In all the myths connected with light, or with the sun and moon, the sex is ever changing, and the Moon becomes masculine or the Sun feminine, or the two sexes are blended into one, as the allegory varies. Bacchus, Hercules, and Apollo have all been worshiped under a feminine form, and their statues have all been carved from black marble. Several black figures of Cybele have their pedestals inscribed with “Mother of the Gods” or “Mother of the Sun.” Isis and Horus, the Egyptian form of the Mother and Child, are continually represented as black. Christna {Krishna or Kṛṣṇa} was worshiped as a black god in Egypt, under the name of Kneph or Knuphis. Eusebius speaks of the Demiurgos Kneph, who was represented as dark blue or black. It was formerly supposed that many of these old statues were made of a dark-blue stone because black could not be procured; but it is now said that in the mystic language of colors dark blue and black had the same significance, and were therefore used indifferently. Now dark blue melting into black is the color of the sky at midnight, especially in southern countries, where the velvety blueness of the heavens is very striking; and here, it seems to me, we may find the clue to the indiscriminate use of these

colors. The worshipers of the Sun, in the tropical climates where that worship began, observed that his destructive power was exerted most by day, when his fierce rays tortured men and animals, dried up rivers, and generated putrefaction and disease; while by night fell the vivifying dews, tempered by the warm air. They worshiped the nocturnal sun, therefore, as the productive power or maternal element, and the deity that symbolized it, whether Apollo Didymaeus, Bacchus, or Hercules, took on, for the time being, a feminine shape and attributes. Night itself was personified as the Universal Mother in the person of Hathor, or the Isis of the lower world, often represented as suckling Horus. On a monolith from Karnac, now in the British Museum, Hathor has inscribed on her throne "The Divine Mother and Lady, or Queen of Heaven;" also "The Morning Star" and "The Light of the Sea."

Black, then, we see to be the symbol of the productive power of night, and of that Darkness from whose bosom springs the Sun; and this color, as chosen for the old statues and paintings of the Divine Mother, simply intensified the idea of maternity that the artist desired to express. But underlying the astronomical symbol was always a deeper esoteric significance, known only to the priests and initiates; and the further back we go in the study of the ancient faiths and their symbols, the more complete become the resemblances between them, until we are forced to conclude that the primitive religions had but one fountain-head. No matter how complicated the systems of polytheism may be, we find that they resolve themselves, under the microscope of comparative mythology, into a few simple allegories that in the beginning expressed one and the same idea. In religion the same law of progression must obtain that holds good in every other department of human thought and science — the universal order of development from the simple to the complex. The conception of an ineffable mysterious Power behind every manifestation in nature, Unnamable, Absolute, and Unique, must have preceded, for the priests at least, the elaborate systems of Egypt and of Greece that appointed to every phase of physical being its appropriate deity. For as far back as we can trace any religious organization, there is always the symbolism for the people, the hidden meaning thereof for the priests; and this hidden meaning, so far as we are able to catch glimpses of it here and there, seems to be always the same.

Back of the black Madonna, then, the copy of the black goddesses of the earlier faiths; back of the blackness of night, symbol of the darkness from which is born the sun, we find a deeper symbolism still. In François Lenormant's *The Beginnings of History*, he tells us that upon one of the earliest Chaldean tablets deciphered by the famous scholar, George Smith, is the following inscription: "When above the heavens were not yet named, and below the earth was without a name, the limitless Abyss was their generator, and the chaotic Sea she who produced the whole." Among the teachings said to have been given to Pythagoras by the Chaldeans, we find the conception of the Absolute, the Eternal Cause, manifesting itself as Father and Mother in one — the father light, the mother darkness; to light belonging heat and dryness, to darkness cold and

moisture. "There are these two divinities of the universe: the *chthonian* (water), producing all that is born of earth, and the celestial (fire), sharing the nature of the air;" and it is from these two in one that proceeds the creative principle, the Logos, or Word.

So in Genesis we read: "Darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." And in the Gospel of St. John: "The Word was in the beginning with God" (as the second person of the mystic Trinity). "All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made."

The basic idea of the productive power of Nature, giving birth to all things without change in herself, underlies every conception of the Virgin Mother; and behind the earthly form of Mary, the mother of Jesus, we can trace the grand, mysterious outlines of the Universal Mother, that Darkness from whence cometh the Light, that chaotic Sea that produceth all things. Water, as referred to in such allegories, is, of course, something quite different from the element we know, and represents that primordial matter whose protean shape so constantly eludes the grasp of science.

Representing the productive power of Nature as darkness, therefore, the old gods and goddesses were made black, and the Virgin Mother of the early Christian Church was painted of the same color for the same reason. When water was the symbol, water (or moisture) in combination with fire (or heat), then the lotus, offspring of heat and moisture, floating upon the surface of the waves, became identified with the maternal element; and the celestial messenger who announced to Maia the coming birth of her divine son, Gautama Buddha, bore in his hand the sacred lotus, transformed by the Christian Church into the lily of the Annunciation. So the Hathor of the Egyptians, the goddess of the night, on account of this association with water, was called "the Light of the Sea," as the Madonna is worshiped as the "Stella del Mare," and Venus is said to have risen from the foam of the ocean.

In the mystic philosophies, darkness was also used as the symbol of the Infinite Unknown. Light, as we recognize it, being material, could be considered only as the shadow of the divine, the antithesis of spirit, and the Self-Existent, or Light Spiritual, was therefore worshiped as darkness. And water, considered as the source of all things, came to be also the type of wisdom or truth. All symbols depend upon their correlation, and must be interpreted according to the character of their surroundings. The black Madonna of Loreto means today a portraiture of Mary, the mother of Jesus, to the Protestant; to the Romanist, "the Daughter, Spouse, and Mother of God;" while to the ancients the figure of the black Mother and Child represented the mysterious forces of the universe. Truly, as the cynic philosopher Antisthenes said, nearly five hundred years before Christ, "the gods of the people are many, but the God of nature is one."

KATHARINE HILLARD.

## SOME NOTES ON THE MAHĀTMAS (1)

[READ BEFORE THE ARYAN T. S., N.Y., OCTOBER 8TH, 1889.]

In accordance with the suggestion of our {T. S.} President last Tuesday evening, I have tried to collect such evidence as to the nature of the Mahātmas as I could from the Theosophical books I had in my own library, not having had time to go elsewhere. If I rightly understood Mr. Judge on the occasion referred to, he defined *Mahātma*, or *the great souled*, as a purely spiritual existence, and therefore only to be properly spoken of in the singular, as pure spirit is necessarily undifferentiated and therefore one and the same. I have not yet succeeded in finding any definition of “the Mahātma” that implies quite so impersonal an entity. The nearest approach to this idea is in an anonymous article in *Five Years of Theosophy* (92), entitled “Mahātmas and Chelas,” which begins thus: “A Mahātma is an individual who, by special training and education, has evolved those higher faculties and has attained that spiritual knowledge which ordinary humanity will acquire after passing through numberless series of reincarnations during the process of cosmic evolution,” (provided, of course, that it moves in the right direction). Such a person having, by proper training in successive incarnations, gradually purged himself of the lower principles of his nature, there arrives a time when the entity consists solely of “that higher *Manas* which is inseparably linked to the Ātma and its vehicle” (the sixth principle). “When, therefore,” continues the writer, “people express a desire to ‘see a Mahātma,’ they really do not seem to understand what it is they ask for. How can they, with their physical eyes, hope to see that which transcends sight? . . . Higher things can be perceived only by a sense pertaining to those higher things; whoever therefore wants to see the real *Mahātma* must use his intellectual sight . . . The Mahātma has identified himself with that Universal Soul which runs through Humanity, and to draw his attention one must do so through that Soul.”

This definition makes of the Mahātma a purely spiritual existence, and therefore part and parcel of the Divine element of which we all to some extent partake.

But the *Glossary* of the book quoted (*Five Years of Theosophy*) defines “*Mahātma*, a great soul: an adept in occultism of the highest order,” and other papers in the book by Ramaswamier {Ramaswamy Iyer}, Damodar Keshav Mavalankar, and Mohini Mohun Chatterji speak of “the living physical body of the Mahātma” (452), of “the Himalayan Brothers as living men, and not dis-embodied spirits” (458), and of the Mahātma Koothoomi “as a living person like any of us” (458).

Mrs. Patience Sinnett's *The Purpose of Theosophy* (70) says that "the custodians of the secret Knowledge are variously called Mahātmas, Rṣis {Rishis}, Arhats, Adepts, Guru-devas, Brothers, etc. . . . The majority of them now live in Tibet. . . . They can defy matter, distance, even death itself, . . . and have in the routine of their training arrived at such perfection that the real spiritual man is independent of and altogether master of the material body. . . . Far above the best of the Yogis stand the Mahātmas. . . . Their existence as human beings has been questioned, but, on the other hand, hundreds of people have not only seen and spoken with them, but some have even lived under the same roof with their own Mahātmas for years together." Mrs. Sinnett also says that it is well-known that "in the formation of the T. S. the founders were acting under the direct wishes of certain of the Mahātmas," and that the Hindus had to be convinced "not of the actual existence of the Mahātmas as living men, *for of this they had ample proof*, but that the visible founders of the Society were really their agents."

According to Mr. Sinnett, Arhat, Mahātma, Rṣi, are interchangeable terms. (*Esoteric Buddhism*, 49 *et seq.*) "The Arhats and the Mahātmas are the same men. At that level of spiritual exaltation, supreme knowledge of the esoteric doctrine blends all original sectarian distinctions. By whatever name such *illuminati* may be called, they are the adepts of occult knowledge, sometimes spoken of in India now as the Brothers. . . . The Tibetan Brotherhood is incomparably the highest of such associations. . . . The Mahātmas themselves are subordinate by several degrees to the chief of all" (in the Tibetan organization).

In the book called *Man: Fragments of Forgotten History* {by Laura C. Holloway and Mohini Mohun Chatterji} we are told that "the Adept hierarchy was established by the Dhyān Chohan to watch over and protect the growing race. . . . That there are seven classes of Adepts, of which five alone are ordinarily spoken of; the last two are understood only by the higher initiates. The heads of the five classes are known in Tibet as the *Chutuktu* or jewels of wisdom."

On the next page the authors tell us that "there are nine grades of Adepts, each grade having seven subdivisions. In the Brahmanical system, the nine grades are referred to as the nine jewels (*nava-nidhi*)."

"Unlike the ordinary man, . . . the Mahātmas live wholly in the spirit. . . . The Mahātmas do not ignore the conditions of daily life; they fully sympathize with the struggling masses of humanity, but the higher cannot stoop to the lower; the lower must see the heights above, and scale them if it will. It must never be thought that the Mahātmas are creators; they are only inspirers and educators. . . . They have undoubtedly a human side to their characters, but it is so inseparably blended with their higher spiritual nature that no one who tries to dissociate the two parts of their being will ever understand either correctly."

In *The Path* (I:No. 9), there is an article on "The Theosophical Mahātmas" by Mme. Blavatsky, in which she says, "Our MASTERS are not a 'jealous god';

they are simply holy mortals, nevertheless, however, higher than any in this world, morally, intellectually, and spiritually. However holy and advanced in the science of the mysteries, they are still men, members of a Brotherhood, who are the first in it to show themselves subservient to its time-honored laws and rules.” In the same article H.P.B. speaks of “the *Paraguru*, my Master’s MASTER.” I have been unable to find any other article in the first volume of *The Path* on the subject, except one on “The Reticence of the Mahātmās,” which does not enter into any definition of their nature. In II:No. 3, a letter signed “Julius” says that “the beings spoken of by Edwin Arnold as Mahātmās are not considered ‘men’ in the East.”

In II:No. 4, in an article signed “S. B.” on the “Reincarnations of Mahātmās,” we read: “While the personality of the reincarnated Master is a human being, with all the attributes which make up any other human being, its constitution is naturally of a finer order, so as to make it an instrument adapted to the work for which it has been brought into the world.” This idea, that the finer soul naturally falls, in reincarnating, into a finer body, is expressed in the Wisdom of Solomon (8:20), “Being good, I came into a body undefiled.”

In *The Secret Doctrine* (I:46), Mme. Blavatsky defines *Dangma* as “a purified soul, one who has become a Jīvanmukta, the highest adept, or rather a Mahātmā so-called.” In II:173, she says that the Third Race “created the so-called Sons of Will and Yoga, or the ‘ancestors’ (the *spiritual* forefathers) of all the subsequent and present Arhats or Mahātmās.” And in II:423 she speaks of “the great Mahātmās or Buddhas, these *Buddhas* representing, as we are taught, once living men, great Adepts and Saints, in whom the ‘Sons of Wisdom’ had incarnated, and who were therefore, so to speak, minor Avatāras of the Celestial Beings.”

Patañjali tells us in his Third Book, Aphorism 46, that “the ascetic who has acquired complete control over the elements obtains certain perfections; to wit, the power to project his inner-self into the smallest atom, to expand his inner-self to the size of the largest body, to render his material body light or heavy at will, to give indefinite extension to his astral body or its separate members, to exercise an irresistible will upon the minds of others, to obtain the highest excellence of the material body, and the ability to preserve such excellence when attained.” And in Aphorism 39 we are told that “the inner-self of the ascetic may be transferred to any other body and there have complete control.” The ascetic who has acquired the perfection of discriminative power possesses the “Knowledge that saves from rebirth.” That Knowledge “has all things and the nature of all things for its objects, and perceives all that hath been and that is, without limitations of time, place, or circumstance, as if all were in the present and in the presence of the contemplator.” This can only mean the virtual annihilation of time and space, and such an ascetic, Mr. William Q. Judge informs us, “is a Jīvanmukta, and is not subject to reincarnation. He, however, may yet live upon earth, but is not in any way subject to his body, the soul being

perfectly free at every moment. And such is held to be the state of those beings called in theosophical literature Adepts, Mahātmās, Masters."

*Jīvanmukta* means literally a "liberated life"; Arhat, a "worthy one"; Rṣi, "a revealer"; Mahātmā, "a great soul." We see that all or any of these appellations may easily be applied to those Beings we also call "the Masters," although the terms themselves may have an individual and distinct meaning. That they *are* thus promiscuously used, the above extracts sufficiently show. They show also, it seems to me, that "the garment that we see him by" is *not* the Mahātmā, any more than the Othello we may see upon the stage this week is the real Tommaso Salvini {the great Italian Shakespearean actor}. To have obtained that lofty pinnacle of spiritual perfection known as "the great soul" is to have become independent of human conditions, and those who speak of the Masters as "men exactly like ourselves" can only refer to the special personality which for special needs they have chosen to assume for the moment. As well identify a man with his coats, as a being who can "transfer himself to any other body and there have complete control" with *any* form, however perfect in beauty, under which he may make himself visible to our purblind eyes. At the same time, if we are to believe Mme. Blavatsky, they are still individuals, and not pure spirit, for she says "they are simply holy mortals, nevertheless, however, higher than any in this world, morally, intellectually, and spiritually."

K. H.

## SOME NOTES ON THE MAHĀTMAS (2)

[READ BEFORE THE ARYAN T. S., N.Y.]

After collecting the notes printed in the paper referred to above, I came across some more extracts on the same subject which seemed to me to throw some additional light upon the matter. The first of these was taken from the “Seclusion of the Adept,” part of the commentary on the *Light on The Path*, published in *Lucifer* (I:380) and reads as follows:

“Here in London, as in Paris and St. Petersburgh, there are men high in development. But they are only known as mystics by those who have the power to recognize; the power given by the conquering of self. Otherwise, how could they exist, even for an hour, in such a mental and psychic atmosphere as is created by the confusion and disorder of a city? Unless protected and made safe, their own growth would be interfered with, their work injured. And the neophyte may meet an adept in the flesh, may live in the same house with him, and yet be unable to recognize him, and unable to make his own voice heard by him. For no nearness in space, no closeness of relations, no daily intimacy, can do away with the inexorable laws which give the adept his seclusion. No voice penetrates to his inner hearing till it has become a divine voice, a voice which gives no utterance to the cries of self. Any lesser appeal would be as useless, as much a waste of energy and power, as for mere children who are learning their alphabet to be taught it by a professor of philology. Until a man has become, in heart and spirit, a disciple, he has no existence for those who are teachers of disciples.”

Here the adept is referred to as still capable of growth, while in the same volume of *Lucifer* (257), we read: “The occult idea of *Mahātma-hood* is a soul of higher rank in the realms of life, conceived to drink in the wealth of spiritual power closer to the fountainhead, and to distil its essence into the interior of receptive souls.” In harmony with this idea, Ralph Waldo Emerson writes: “The will of the pure runs down from them into other natures, as water runs down from a higher into a lower vessel; this natural force is no more to be withheld than any other natural force. A healthy soul stands united with the Just and the True, as the magnet arranges itself with the pole, so that he stands to all beholders like a transparent object betwixt them and the sun, and whose journeys towards the sun, journeys towards that person.”

In *The Key to Theosophy*, lately published, Mme. Blavatsky again uses the terms *Adept*, *Initiate*, *Master*, and *Mahātma* in the same sense. She says (289) that “the word *Mahātma* means simply ‘a great soul,’ great through moral elevation and intellectual attainment. . . . We call them *Masters* because they are our teachers. . . . They are men of great learning, whom we call *Initiates*,

and still greater holiness of life.” And on 293 she continues: “They have no right, except by falling into Black Magic, to obtain full mastery over any one’s immortal Ego, and can therefore act only on the physical and psychical nature of the subject, leaving thereby the freewill of the latter wholly undisturbed. Hence, unless a person has been brought into psychic relationship with the Masters, and is assisted by virtue of his full faith in and devotion to his Teachers, the latter, whenever transmitting their thoughts to one with whom these conditions are not fulfilled, experience great difficulties in penetrating into the cloudy chaos of that person’s sphere.”

This extract suggests that all communication with the Masters must be upon higher planes than that of the purely physical, and explains why we cannot expect to make them hear till we too speak with “a divine voice.” Nevertheless, there is nothing in it to lead one to interpret the word *Mahātma* (at least as it is ordinarily used) as meaning only “*the* great soul,” and therefore rendering it impossible to speak of “*a* Mahātma.” There still remains the idea of individuality. While it is very possible to think of *Mahātma* as the great Soul with whom all spiritual existences are at one, in that sense it becomes a condition rather than an individuality, and all sense of human relations dependent upon that individuality is lost. Considered in the abstract, light is one and indivisible, but to our physical eye is individualized in every star of the firmament, every lamp of the earth. No matter how lofty our idea of “a Mahātma” may be, it must have limitations and qualifications, and cannot therefore be the same as the idea of *the* Great Soul, which is the Infinite and Unlimited. When the ascetic has arrived at the point spoken of by Patañjali in the *Aphorisms* quoted in the former paper, he stands even then upon the threshold only of that higher state called *Isolation* or *Emancipation*. Till then his individuality persists, as we may see by the 4th and 5th Aphorisms of Book Four, where the *mind* or *ego* of the ascetic is spoken of as controlling the various minds acting in the bodies which he voluntarily assumes.

In an article on “The Sevenfold Principle in Man,” by Mme. Blavatsky, (*Five Fears of Theosophy*, 153) she tells us that from the first appearance of life up to the state of *Nirvāṇa*, the progress is, as it were, continuous and by imperceptible gradations. But nevertheless four stages are recognized in this progress, where the change is of a peculiar kind:

1. Where life makes its appearance.
2. Where the existence of mind becomes perceptible in conjunction with life.
3. Where the highest state of mental abstraction ends, and *spiritual consciousness* begins.
4. Where spiritual consciousness disappears, leaving the 7th principle (*Ātma*) in a complete state of *Nirvāṇa* or nakedness; (defined further on as the condition of final negation, negation of individual, or separate, existence, or, in other words, complete identification with the Absolute.) *Ātma* is here used as

the emanation from the Absolute called “the seventh principle,” but, properly speaking, no principle, being identical with the Absolute.

It seems, then, that until spiritual consciousness disappears in Nirvāṇa, we have a right to consider that the individuality persists, and, while that continues, the highest adept is not yet lost in the Universal Soul. So that the phrase “a Mahātma,” used as an equivalent to the expression “a Master,” is the use of a word in a restricted sense, which might be kept, as the Aryan Theosophical Society of New York lodge has suggested, to its higher meaning as a condition rather than an entity, but which, *in its general acceptation*, has no such restricted signification. We might as well refuse to say “Bring me a light,” because light is an abstract and general term and cannot be individualized.

It certainly would be a good thing if the terminology of Theosophy were more accurate and well-defined, and especially that the many Sanskrit terms which have no exact English equivalents should be officially defined, once for all, and then accurately employed. Theosophy has the advantage over all other metaphysical systems, of the possession of a vocabulary drawn from the subtlest of languages; and it is a pity to lose this advantage through our own ignorance or carelessness. Any discussion, therefore, which tends to throw light upon the precise meaning of an important word, cannot be considered as lost time.

K. H.

## SYMPATHY

Somewhere among his words of deep wisdom Walt Whitman has written these:—

Whoever walks a furlong without sympathy  
Walks to his own funeral, dressed in his shroud.

It was a bold image, and yet was hardly too strong to express the state of him who shuts himself out from communion with his kind. For the man thus encased in his own egoism entrenches himself in a dreary isolation far worse than that of his coffin, since that can only confine his body, and has no hold upon his heart and soul. It was well said by Sir Thomas Noon Talfourd {a Victorian English judge, barrister, dramatist, and literary critic} that unless a man learns to feel for things in which he has no personal interest, he can achieve nothing generous or noble. To ordinary eyes the man without sympathy is an active member of society, he controls great affairs, his word is law to many of his fellow-men, his name stands high upon the list of those whom “the world” delights to honor, but to the spiritual insight, like that of the poet, “he walks to his own funeral, dressed in his shroud.”

And there is the isolation of sorrow, for among the men and women who people our streets, who are our daily companions and intimate friends, nay, perhaps walk side by side with us through life, there are many who carry a dead heart in their bosoms, who, in truth, are no longer alive, but from their vacant eyes looks forth only the ghost of what they once were, the shadow of their living past. Some terrible calamity, some slowly creeping treachery, some awful sense of loss has wrecked their lives for ever, and although their bodies still wander desolately about their accustomed haunts, still drearily pursue their accustomed occupations, they are like those unhappy ones described by Dante Aligheri, who have no longer any hope, even of death. Like dreary ghosts upon the shores of Styx, they wait in a land of shadows, for the grim ferryman to bear them whither they know not, nor do they care.

If there is the isolation of sorrow, there is also the isolation of joy, of the plenitude of well-being, the indifference of those with whom the world goes well, to everything outside their sphere of careless ease. If the others be dead, these are asleep, and lulled in the soft security of happy dreams, they walk through a world veiled in a soft and perfumed mist, that sheds a rosy light over all they seem to see. But such as these, the favored ones of life, should go about as light-bearers to their less fortunate brethren. Their happiness should radiate like sunshine upon all who come within their reach, their smile should be

reflected in every eye that meets theirs, and the world be better and brighter than it has such joy to look at. The happiness of children is contagious, they cheer the dreariest heart, because they insist upon you sharing in their delight and will take no denial.

There are other souls of quite a different texture, who live always in the lives of others, who seem to have almost lost their sense of individuality, and to identify themselves with humanity at large, to lose their own joys and sorrows in those of the race. To these generous natures come all the weary and heavy laden, and, in bearing the burdens of others, they find their own peace and rest. Every breath of passion or suffering from another's soul stirs their sympathies, and these flow forth as sweetly and unconsciously as the fragrance from a windswept rose.

We cannot all be like these gracious souls, and some of us have to learn to respond, have to cultivate the power of hearing the voice of humanity, the inarticulate appeal, and have to train the tongue to answer in a language that can be understood. The stronger individuality is less flexible, and responds less easily to another's touch; the oak resists the breeze that bends the reed. There are diversities of gifts, and while one person shall have the power of being always in harmony with those about him, of instantly catching the keynote of his fellows and responding in tune, another must painfully labour and blunder towards the same end.

All these are in a certain sense the active forms of sympathy. But there is another and a passive type, by which we receive that which belongs to us. Ralph Waldo Emerson hints at this in his poem of "Guy," who

In strange juncture felt with awe  
His own symmetry with law:  
That no mixture could withstand  
The virtue of his lucky hand.

It seemed his Genius discreet  
Worked on the Maker's own receipt.

So that the common waters fell  
As costly wine into his well.

For what is "symmetry with law" but a subtle sympathy with the ruling forces of the universe? Dante tells us in the *Banquet*, that when the purity of the receiving soul is absolutely free from any corporeal shadow, then the Divine Goodness multiplies in her as in a thing worthy to receive it, and, furthermore, *according to her capacity of reception*. If you sing to a piano with perfect purity of tone, the piano will give back a clear, sweet echo of your note, but if your voice fall short of the proper number of vibrations, there will be no response. We may learn from the laws of the natural, the laws of the spiritual world, and this will explain the truth of the saying in "The Seclusion of the Adept" {by

Mabel Collins, from *Lucifer*, January 1888, 379-383}: “No voice can penetrate to his inner hearing till it has become a divine voice.” When you have learned to strike the corresponding note, the string will vibrate, but not till then.

Not unrelated, unallied.  
But to each thought and thing allied.  
Is perfect Nature’s every part,  
Rooted in the mighty Heart.

Do we seek, then, to receive, we must fit ourselves to receive; the house that would entertain a royal guest must be swept and garnished. We must feel, like Emerson’s “Guy,” our own symmetry with law, if we expect the universe to bring its treasures to our feet. Only in the pure soul does the Divine Goodness multiply, says the great Italian seer {Dante Alighieri}, and, furthermore, only according to her capacity. No man can expect to carry home the ocean in a pint bowl.

And the only sure way to receive this goodness is to increase our sympathy with the good. The more closely we attune ourselves to the pitch of the Higher Self, the swifter and clearer will be the response, and the stronger and more far-reaching the harmonies evoked. To the pure in heart all things are pure, because in the presence of that purity evil cannot live. Darkness is cast out by light. In Nathaniel Hawthorne’s exquisite story of “Dr. Rappaccini’s Daughter,” the beautiful Beatrice, who had been fed on poisons, lived unharmed among venomous things, but her very breath was deadly to all things innocent. One of the fundamental laws of nature is that like seeks like, and to make ourselves into the likeness of the thing we desire is the surest way to attain it. What belongs to us by force of this law, sooner or later shall surely be ours, and we may say with Walt Whitman:

Whether I come to my own today, or in ten thousand or ten million years,  
I can cheerfully take it now, or, with equal cheerfulness, I can wait.  
My foothold is tenon’d and mortis’d in granite;  
I laugh at what you call dissolution;  
And I know the amplitude of time.

And what surer way can there be of enlarging our capacity to receive than by broadening our sympathy with our fellows? Each person that comes into intimate relation with us opens up to us some new vista of thought, some fresher glimpse of truth and love. There is not only the same note evoked by the appeal in perfect unison to an instrument, but accompanying its full vibration are the overtones, that complete the chord. The more we give the more we shall receive. We lose our own life to find it; we give up our own individuality to share the depths of another’s soul, and lo! from out of those depths our own image smiles back to us, and we learn to know ourselves from sympathy with others. To sympathize, to feel and suffer with our fellow-creatures, is to merge

our own existence into the life of the world, to feel the beating of the universal heart, and to realize, in Emerson's words again, "that within man is the soul of the whole; the wise silence; the universal beauty, to which every part and particle is equally related; the eternal One."

KATHARINE HILLARD.

## ON THE SCIENTIFIC IMPORTANCE OF DREAM

It is extremely interesting, at the present stage of thought, to trace the influence of what we may call “the occult wave” upon the minds of our scientists, and to see how many of them are reluctantly forced to come to conclusions that twenty years ago they would have repudiated with scorn, and how many of them go through long and severe processes of argument and experiment to convince themselves of what to us appear self-evident truths. In several quarters, just at present, the subject of the multiple nature of man has been taken up, and the main object of Baron Carl du Prel’s *Philosophy of Mysticism* is to prove that there is a Higher Consciousness in man, and that that Higher Consciousness is identical with Spirit, one and universal. As he approaches his subject from a purely scientific standpoint, and as his book is a long and elaborate one, I have endeavored to sum up, as briefly as possible, the main points of his argument as based upon the phenomena of our dream-life.

The problem of the work, as Baron du Prel states it in his preface, is the question whether our Ego is wholly embraced in self-consciousness, and his position is, that analysis of the dream-life leads to a negative answer; it shows that self-consciousness falls short of its object, that the Ego exceeds the self-consciousness.

The circuit of the knowledge and self-knowledge possible to an organized being is determined by the number of its senses, and by the strength of the stimuli on which its senses react; that is, by what is called the psycho-physical threshold of sensibility, or the boundary line between the conscious and the unconscious. As life rises into higher forms, so does that threshold rise; that is, the higher a race stands in the scale of being, the wider its limits of knowledge. But this mobility of the threshold in the race must also exist in the individual. This is susceptible of proof from the analysis of our dream-life, but is more strikingly apparent in somnambulism. The displacement of the threshold of sensibility is thus common to the biological process, and to somnambulism, and we may therefore infer from somnambulism not only the mode of existence of our higher consciousness, but also the possibility of a future and more highly developed form of life, where these extraordinary faculties will be normal and usual, instead of exceptional.

It is the rule that only when the activity of the senses is suppressed can the inner working of our higher Ego be perceived, as the stars are first visible with the going down of the sun. This is why the study of the sleep state is so important, particularly in that deepest phase which we call somnambulism. As soon as it is shown that our sleep-life possesses positive characteristics peculiar

to itself, it will become the duty of philosophy to make as thorough a study of this third of our existence as it has of our waking life.

The endeavor of the human intellect is to explain the significance of the world and of ourselves, and we find that the moral progress of humanity is thoroughly dependent on the evolutionary capacity of science. The first condition of intellectual progress is that we should realize that true progress is always in the depth, and not in extension on the same level. As Francis Bacon said: "No perfect discovery can be made upon a flat or a level; neither is it possible to discover the more remote and deeper parts of any science if you stand but upon the level of the same science and ascend not to a higher science."

It was formerly believed, for instance, that the world lay outside of us, and through our senses produced an image of itself upon our brain, and truth was to be captured by study of the object. But when Immanuel Kant exposed the fallacy of this assumption, and urged the prior examination of the subject and its cognitions, research was begun upon another and a higher plane of investigation.

From the standpoint of every animal organism we can divide external nature into two parts, the lower the grade the more unequal the division, the one including that part of nature with which the said organism is related through its senses, the other that which remains outside this limit, and is therefore transcendental to the organism in question. As development goes on, the boundary of consciousness continually rises. But as there are parts of nature which remain invisible to us, being out of relation to our sense of sight — like the microscopic world, for instance — so there are parts of nature not existing for us, owing to entire absence of relation to our organism.

Science has now herself acknowledged that when she shall have explained the world we see, it is only a represented world that will have been explained, a secondary phenomenon, a mere product of our sense and understanding. Not only are there more things than senses, but things are other than they seem. We are not truly cognizant of *things*, but only of the modes in which our senses react upon them. Whence it follows that differently constituted beings must have different worlds.

We may, therefore, conclude that consciousness does not exhaust its object, the world. The second great problem to be explained is man. As the world is the object of consciousness, so is the Ego the object of self-consciousness. Self-consciousness may be as inadequate to the Ego as consciousness to the world; or the Ego may as much exceed self-consciousness as the world exceeds consciousness. This is not only logically thinkable, but has also in its favor analogy, and the doctrine of evolution. If the existence of a transcendental world follow from the theory of knowledge accepted in this age, the theory of self-knowledge belonging to the next age should bring with it the recognition of a transcendental Ego. The question of the soul, which has been stationary for centuries, would be advanced to a wholly new stage if it could be shown that self-consciousness only partially comprehends its object. There are not only

boundaries of knowledge which are historically surmountable, but also limitations of consciousness and knowing which are only biologically surmountable.

We stand in the presence of an inexorable alternative: either there is a progress for the future, in which case we must always and *a priori* grant the existence of facts which contradict our theories, or there are no such facts; and then we must also deny future progress to which, at the highest, only a labour on the level could be ascribed. Owing to the capacity for development, we must expect to be perpetually confronted with fresh problems, for which solution must be sought on deeper lines.

The fact that much that was forgotten emerges again from the unconscious in dreams, proves that in dreaming there is activity in those folds of the brain which in waking are either functionless or whose functions do not result in consciousness. If the deepening of sleep implies the cessation of function in the whole cerebral nerve-system, and yet the inner waking continues and is even exalted, we are forced to suppose, as consciousness presupposes nerves, that in deep sleep the organ of dream is that nerve-system of ganglia, with the solar plexus for center, which is still so little understood by our physiology.<sup>1</sup> Physiology cannot demonstrate that the dream organ is incapable of significant dreaming. It has long proved that consciousness is not coextensive with the material senses; that there is more relation between us and nature than we can be conscious of; tones we cannot hear, colors we cannot see, etc. Sleep can only suspend the sensuous relation to nature, but not that which is unconsciously present in waking existence; therefore may set us free to arrive at the wider consciousness in our inner awakening. Are there, then, forces of Nature of which we become aware in sleep that have escaped the consciousness of sense? We must reply in the affirmative. Karl August Wienhold found that healthy sleeping children were disturbed by passes made with an iron key (or other metal object) at a distance of half an inch from the face, or merely approached to the ear. Sleep, therefore, is accompanied by a perception at a distance, and announces the presence of substances which do not excite feeling in the waking man.<sup>2</sup>

The dreams of deep sleep are lost to recollection, but should be the most significant since the displacement of the threshold of sensibility progresses with the deepening of sleep. Remembering dreams can usually contain only insignificant phantasms, as they are those which immediately follow the falling asleep, or immediately precede the wakening, and are thus connected with the slightest displacement of the threshold. As the failure of memory in the case of deep dream can only be ascribed to the want of a common organ with the waking consciousness, the survival of memory between the light dream and waking must result from at least partial community of organ. The withdrawal of the bridge of memory proves physiologically the change of organ and *vice versa*.

The dreams of light sleep are remembered because the organ is partly the same as in waking consciousness, and are senseless, because of this mixed

activity of the two organs. The dream-organ can only exhibit its unmixed activity in deep sleep. It is in somnambulism that the deep sleep exhibits itself in connection with ideas, and in sleepwalking in acts founded on ideas. It needs only to be proved that sleep, somnambulism, and sleepwalking are intimately related conditions, to dispel the last objection against the possibility of orderly and significant dreams.

In our waking state, a constant, even if slight and unconscious, effort of the will is necessary to keep our attention fixed on the point that immediately concerns us, and this strain is productive of fatigue. But a dream, though ever so long, does not tire, no aim being kept in view, and the inner consciousness being merely passive. Associations, memories, external stimuli, internal agitations of the brain, or of the nutritive processes, are all disturbers of the dream of light sleep, and, therefore, its confusion is very explicable, and the difficulty of retaining incoherent fragments, even in waking, shows how hardly these unconnected bits of dream can be recoverable by memory.

But as the bridge of memory fails between deep sleep (when the dream-organ is undisturbed) and waking, the existence of significant and orderly dreaming can only be proved when the dreamer translates his dream into acts, as in sleepwalking, or accompanies it with words, as in the somnambulic state, or when, contrary to the rule, it is recollected.

Somnambulism, which splits the consciousness into two persons — the "I" of daily life, and the "I" which emerges only in the somnambulic condition — thus shows us not only that deep sleep is not dreamless, but that our daily consciousness does not exhaust its object.

Arthur Schopenhauer says that in dream, somnambulism, and related conditions, we obtain the objectively represented institution by a different organ than in waking, and he speaks, therefore, of a special dream-organ. The teachings of both Gustav Theodor Fechner and Karl von Reichenbach also favor the view that in sleep an organ is active which in waking is either functionless, or whose functions remain below the threshold of sensibility. But even if every impression of consciousness could only be connected with the brain, it must yet be conceded that in deep sleep there must be other avenues of perception leading to the brain than in waking. But if we consider the fact of absence of memory on waking from deep sleep, that fact suggests an actual transposition of the stage of consciousness, and thus an interchange of functions between the brain and the ganglionic system.

If we have two consciousnesses, rising and sinking like the weights in a scale, then from the definition of both can we first attain to the definition of man.

If self-consciousness does not exhaust its object, then corresponding to the transcendental world must be a transcendental Ego, and our sense of personality, by which we know ourselves as mere willing beings, does not coincide with our whole Ego.

Should man be a double being in the sense indicated, with an earthly personality represented by a smaller circle included in the larger circle of the transcendental Ego, the boundary between them being the line between the conscious and the unconscious, these two positions of his being must be related to each other as the scales of a balance, or as the stars, which optically appear only when the sun disappears. And as the emergence of the transcendental Ego can only take place when the empirical Ego is in abeyance, which is the case in sleep, and as sleep forms one-third of our existence, it is evident that the dream-world affords most chance of proving a metaphysical individuality. (The weighty and primary fact is *that we dream*; the content of dream being of secondary consideration.)

Even the empirical Ego must encounter influences from the transcendental world, inasmuch as the two Egos are indeed identical, but for the empirical consciousness such influences are below the threshold of sensibility, and, though we have evidences of its capacity of evolution, it is still only in germ, and even in trance, ecstasy, and similar conditions, it may not be susceptible of a development which would correspond to a biological process of millions of years. This consideration alone should suffice to restrain us from an over-estimation of dreams. And dream-images of true transcendental content can be only symbolical, as they must necessarily clothe themselves in the form of our everyday consciousness.

Still more distinctly than by the alternation of waking and dream is the duplication of our nature revealed by that remarkable class of dreams wherein we are given information by other persons on subjects of which we are ignorant — an example that clearly shows the psychological possibility of the identity of the subject with the contemporaneous difference of persons.

If philosophy, starting from the empirical facts of dream, shall be able to establish the doctrine of the soul, then, and only then, will it be time for it to attack the further question, whether that which is proved in dream in relation to the Microcosm, repeats itself in a larger sphere in relation to the Macrocosm. The question then will be whether there is an all-embracing World-Subject dramatically sundering itself in millions of suns and milliards of beings in space and time, for it is a logical consequence of the dramatic division in dream that the science of the future, far from giving up the conception of soul, much more probably will find itself necessitated to set up, besides the physical aspect and the soul, Spirit as a third element, or a self-consciousness comprehending both body and soul.

In connection with these leading ideas in Du Prel's philosophy of dreams, it will be found interesting to make a brief analysis of an article contributed by him to *Le Lotus* for December 1888, upon "The Intuition of Time; or, the Cerebral Clock"; *i.e.*, the faculty of self-waking at a given hour.

In this article, Dr. du Prel undertakes to prove that this faculty, which is common to so many persons, is another proof of the existence of that transcen-

dental Ego that manifests itself in the phenomena of dreams and somnambulism. His argument may be summed up as follows:—

1. The cause of self-waking must be internal, not external; *something*, but not *some one*.

2. It depends upon three conditions: (a) Consciousness that the time for sleep has passed. (b) Capability of measuring the passing of time. (c) Capability of putting an end to that physiological condition of the brain of which sleep is the result, and introducing into the cerebral consciousness a transcendental idea, that is, an idea outside the limits of our ordinary consciousness.

Only a conscious, willing being can be capable of uniting these conditions. The normal will and consciousness are absent during sleep, therefore they cannot be the cause. If they were, we should need no clocks when awake. (This is another of Dr. du Prel's unwarranted assumptions, because many persons have the faculty of telling the time accurately in their waking hours, and *not*, as Dr. du Prel asserts, by a guess at the amount of time elapsed since some fixed period, but as intuitively as in sleep.) To resume:

1. The cause then must be part of our being, but not in the physiological sense.

2. It is not part of our conscious personality, yet it must be conscious, and especially of time.

3. It is part of our will, but not of our conscious will.

It is then self-conscious, but for us unconscious; it resides in our *being*, and not in our person.

These contradictions can only be reconciled by the assertion that the cause is found in the transcendental subject (or higher consciousness), to which all mystic phenomena must revert.

Like all transcendental faculties, the intuition of time is most exact in somnambulism, where the conscience and will are less active than in the waking state, which proves it to be a problem of the higher consciousness. It must be a continuous condition, for we cannot conceive the sudden and causeless perception of the right moment of waking. To prove this is difficult, because it must be done on the narrow frontier between sleeping and waking; the ordinary consciousness must be able to take cognizance of the *question*; the higher consciousness must be still clear enough to give the correct *answer*. (Dr. du Prel gives two instances of persons who could answer correctly in their sleep when questioned as to the hour.)

It must be proved also that this knowledge of time is not based on clairvoyance — which is only a modified vision (?), the intuitive knowledge of time being a purely internal phenomenon. This has been proved over and over again by many experiments with somnambulists and hypnotized persons, who invariably act upon a knowledge of the true time, and not that of the clocks around them, often purposely altered, as a further test. Furthermore, an order given to a hypnotized person is executed at any given hour after that person has passed out of the hypnotic state, or, as Dr. du Prel puts it: the posthypnotic order

is executed by means of the cerebral clock, or the transcendental perception of time. Dr. Henri Beaunis, of the Nancy School of Hypnotism (author of *Le somnambulisme provoqué*) says that such phenomena are among the best known, the most credible, and the most easily produced of the phenomena of hypnotism. He says that this perception of time "acts like an alarm clock, which goes off only at the moment for which it is set."

These facts evidently imply an unconscious faculty of measuring time far more precise than that of the ordinary condition. It is also a well-known fact that somnambulistic patients have not only the intuition of time as to the limitation of their sleep (whether voluntary or induced), but also as to the length of their nervous crises, and the frequency of their recurrence.

This shows that the organic modifications of our bodies, as well as certain maladies, such as intermittent fevers, for instance, must be subject to certain determinate laws of time, and that the transcendental subject (or Higher Self), to which we must attribute the faculty of measuring time, must be conscious of these laws also; in other words, it must be identical with our organizing principle, unless we establish a special principle for the organic activity, and thus transgress that scientific law that forbids the unnecessary multiplication of explanatory causes. The "organizing principle" is explained by Dr. du Prel (*Philosophy of Mysticism*, II:156) to be the life-principle lying behind all organic nature — "it is transcendental nature, and as in somnambulism it exhibits the faculty of critical self-inspection and cure, it must also be the organizing principle in us, thus a willing, not less than a cognitive being." In a word, the life-principle in us is the transcendental subject.

Our organism has its rhythmic movements, such as respiration and pulsation. It possesses the faculty of measuring time for its periodic functions,<sup>3</sup> such as hunger and thirst; and it oscillates between sleeping and waking, and is thus united to terrestrial life. On the other hand we could not distinguish between one sound and another, or one color and another, without the unconscious faculty of estimating the difference in the number of their vibratory waves, which would seem to prove, says Dr. du Prel, the identity of the organizing with the sensational principle. The rhythmic movements of the body are insufficient of themselves to solve the problem of the intuition of time; we need besides a special consciousness, which measures them, counts them, and remains unrecognized below the threshold of sensibility; which appertains, that is, to the Higher Self, for the content of our unconsciousness is comprised in our transcendental consciousness. Unconsciousness is such only in relation to our sense-consciousness, as is proved by most of the psychic faculties, and especially by this intuition of time.

We can see by the evidence of somnambulists, although they do not express their thought directly, but clothe it in the language of sensation, that their indications of time come from the transcendental region to take form in that of cerebral representations, but that they do not originate in the latter. Professor Christian Friedrich Wolfart (*Éclaircissements sur le mesmérisme*)

having questioned his somnambulists as to their intuition of time, found that some reported that they saw before them a brilliant dial upon which they read the hour, some heard a voice, or saw a human form that spoke to them, while others had a perception of the time which they were unable to explain.

We recognize in the reports of these patients of Dr. Wolfart, that ordinary dramatization of internal sensations which makes up a large part of our dream-life. We all know how in our dreams we sometimes seem to be quite other people than our waking selves, and how we more often still, invest the men and women of our dreams with either original and special characteristics, which make them new people to us, or with the bodily and mental characteristics belonging to them in real life; that is, the *dramatis persona* of our dreams are either entirely creations of our own brains, or characteristic presentations of people we really know. This Dr. du Prel calls "the dramatic separation of the Me in dreams," and maintains that the threshold of sensibility is the plane where this sundering of the Ego occurs, and that which leaves the state of unconsciousness is taken objectively, and ascribed to a foreign source or a foreign speaker. And as we find the explanations of Dr. Wolfart's somnambulists as to their knowledge of time taking this dramatic form, it follows that with them also the sentiment of time must emerge from the unconscious, that is to say, the transcendental consciousness.

That the rhythmic movements of the organism, such as the respiration, are insufficient to explain the problem of the intuition of time is very certain, because the relation between the internal and external rhythm is wanting, as well as the perception of such relation. The ancient Hindus busied themselves with this problem in very remote ages, and they endeavored to explain the intuition of time by the identification of the transcendental consciousness, or Higher Self, with the Divine, a solution that Dr. du Prel thinks overshoots the mark as far as physiological explanation (*minus* the relation between the internal and external rhythm) falls short of it. He cites a curious passage quoted by Friedrich Windischmann in his *Philosophie im Fortgang der Weltgeschichte* (III:1332): "According to the Hindu conception, the sleeper (*supta*) recognizes himself in sleep (*svapna*); that is, he becomes conscious of his Higher Self. In the body of the sleeper the five *prāṇas* are kindled and awakened. To the most secret *prāṇa*, which manifests itself principally by the breath, correspond in the external world, ether (*ākāśa*) and the luminous sun. *Ātma* is the essence, the real being in the sun as in the vital breath; he who becomes conscious of his *ātma* finds therein an internal perception of time by which he can measure the time marked by the external sun. In ordinary consciousness the motion of the sun and that of the internal *prāṇa* are separate. Both accomplish their course, the sun once in twenty-four hours, and the *prāṇa* 21,600 times. As the sun is the *Ātma* of the world, and the *prāṇa* is the *Ātma* of the body, the first enlightens the world, the second enlightens the body, and the two make up one, which is not realized by those who regard only appearances; they only know that 21,600 revolutions of *prāṇa*, or respirations, are produced during one revolution of the

sun, and may be counted thereby; but they who are masters of knowledge, who have complete control over their senses, and can explore their inner nature by their purified *manas*, these unite themselves by *Yoga* with *Ātma* (the real being of the sun and the vital breath), and by the movements of their *prāṇa* know the movements of the sun; respiration gives them the knowledge of the solar movement.” To this the Editor of *Le Lotus* {Gérard Encausse} adds, that the “respiration” spoken of here has little to do with the bodily function so-called: the fact being that there are two systems of *Yoga* practiced by the Hindus, the *Hatha Yoga*, or the material, dealing with the functions of the body, and the *Rāja Yoga*, or spiritual, dealing with the functions of the soul.

In ordinary language, and setting aside the technical phrases in the Hindu theory quoted, the idea seems to be that “the Masters of Knowledge,” they who have purified their whole being, physical, intellectual, and spiritual, can so unite themselves with the Divine Spirit that they partake of its omniscience. This is the “pantheistic explanation” of which Dr. du Prel disapproves, but between which and his own theory of a “transcendental consciousness” persisting during sleep there seems to be very little distinction. He identifies this transcendental consciousness with the Higher Self, which the Hindu philosophers identify with the Divine element in man.

However this may be, this intuitive perception of time during sleep seems to afford a conclusive proof of the truth of the Hindu definition of sleep as a phase of consciousness. In deep sleep the senses and the intellectual faculties are alike dormant, but that *something* of the individual consciousness persists seems to be proved by this power of self-waking, which certainly implies a continuous perception of the lapse of time, and a certain control over the physiological condition of the brain — that is, a certain amount of both will and consciousness. The senses and the intellectual faculties disposed of, there remains only the spiritual element to be accounted for, and as spirit must be identical, whatever and wherever its manifestations may be, is it too much to say that when the soul, by the baptism of its deep sleep, is freed from its earthly impurities, it is enabled to enter into communion with the Divine? This was evidently the idea of the Psalmist in that long-mistranslated passage — “He giveth to His beloved *in their sleep*.<sup>4</sup>”

“The true Self of man (the *homo noumenon*),” says Kant, “is dormant in dreams, and, therefore, the sense of morality is absent”; for in this state the intellectual faculties hover about the very threshold of consciousness, and are even affected in some degree by sense-impressions, while the spiritual element, the conscience, or Divine voice within, is absent. We can commit any crime in our dreams, or see it committed by others, without the slightest sense of wrong.

Dr. William Benjamin Carpenter, in his *Principles of Mental Physiology*, admits that though there is a complete suspension of sensorial consciousness during profound sleep, yet we have no right to affirm with certainty that consciousness is ever entirely suspended even during the profoundest sleep. He also considers that the experiments of Dr. David Ferrier on the functions of

different parts of the brain conclusively prove the doctrine of unconscious cerebration by showing that important cerebral modifications, of which only the results make themselves known, may take place below the threshold of consciousness (or, as he phrases it, “outside the sphere of consciousness”), and this he asserts to be only the physiological expression of the theory of Sir William Hamilton, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibnitz, and others, that “the mind may undergo modifications, sometimes of very considerable importance, without being itself conscious of the process, until its *results* present themselves to the consciousness in the new ideas, or new combinations of ideas, which the process has evolved.”

This is illustrated by the experience of Dr. Wolfart’s somnambulists whose intuition of time emerged from the unconscious plane (or, as Dr. du Prel would say, the transcendental consciousness), to impress itself upon their perceptions either as a sight, or sound, or simply an intellectual conviction.

Whatever deductions we may make from it, spiritualistic or otherwise, this cerebral clock, or intuition of time, is a curious and interesting phenomenon, and one deserving of more study than it has yet received, at least by Western scientists.

KATHARINE HILLARD.

#### NOTES

1. Here is certainly an unwarranted jump at a conclusion.
2. Another case where *is* should be *may be*.
3. Is not this an inversion of the right order? Do not hunger and thirst measure time for the organism?
4. Or, “while they sleep,” and see Job (4:13).

## APPARENT FAILURE

There is no sentiment more constantly reiterated in the poetry of Robert Browning than the deceptiveness of that illusion that we call success, or of that other illusion that we call failure; and I think one of the great causes of Browning's triumph as a poet of humanity has been his ability to inspire courage in other men, not only to teach them, but to make them realize that there are other elements in every struggle than those the world sees, and that what our short-sighted eyes call defeat is very often to the vision of the Gods a victory. To fail in the pursuit of an ideal is the common portion of humanity; why then should any one of us be exempt? So in "The Last Ride Together," the poet comforts himself with this thought:

Fail I alone, in words and deeds?  
Why, all men strive and who succeeds?  
We rode; it seemed my spirit flew,  
Saw other regions, cities new,  
As the world rushed by on either side.  
I thought, All labour, yet no less  
Bear up beneath their unsuccess.  
Look at the end of work, contrast  
The petty Done, the Undone vast,  
This present of theirs with the hopeful past!

And in the next verse he hints at one reason of this failure.

What hand and brain went ever paired?  
What heart alike conceived and dared?  
What act proved all its thought had been?  
What will but felt the fleshly screen?

Here he seems to realize how hard it is for the physical man to carry out the dictates of the spiritual man. It is the same lesson that Patañjali teaches when he says that the obstacles in the way of him who desires to attain concentration, or union with the Divine, are sickness, languor, doubt, carelessness, laziness, and so forth. It is easy to account for most of our failures in the little struggles of everyday life by one of the obstacles just mentioned without going on to the end of the list. The greatest obstacle of all is the one from which all our evils spring, Ignorance. The little things of life present themselves so often in a disguise that we fail to penetrate; we realize only when the opportunity is past that it was an opportunity, and then we say "If I had only known!" It is only

experience that can teach us, only repeated stumbles that can teach us how to walk, only losses from oversight that can teach us how to see. When the trumpets sound for battle we gird up our loins and are ready for the fight; but when the enemy steals upon us in friendly guise and we have but to shut the door upon him, how often we are betrayed!

The only way to treat failure is to make it a stepping-stone to success.

I hold it truth with one who sings  
To one clear harp in divers tones,  
That men may rise on stepping-stones  
Of their dead selves to higher things.

And what are “our dead selves” but our failures to be or to do what we ought to be or to do? Every time that we fail, whether from ignorance or from carelessness or from any other cause, we should have learned at least this lesson, never to do *that* again. And so we may painfully stumble through the alphabet of life, and though we never get beyond our letters, yet if our progress be always in the right direction, we shall yet hear, when the end comes, the Voice of the Silence saying “Well done, thou good and faithful servant.”

Nor can we always measure failure and success. The conditions are so complex that only omniscient eyes can read them aright. The very thing we are most proud of may prove to have a secret flaw; the task we had despised may turn out to be a glorious achievement. The soldier who fights and dies on the losing side is as brave as he who falls on that of the victors, and the losing side is sometimes the right side in the eyes of Truth. It was of such as these that Walt Whitman was thinking when he wrote his stirring hymn to the vanquished.

With music strong I come — with my cornets and my drums; I play not marches  
for accepted victors only — I play great marches for conquered and slain  
persons.

Have you heard that it was good to win the day?

I also say that it is good to fall — battles are lost in the same spirit in which they  
are won.

I beat and pound for the dead; I blow through my embouchures my loudest and  
gayest for them.

Vivas to those who have failed!

And to those whose war-vessels sank in the sea!

And to those themselves who sank in the sea!

And to all generals that lost engagements! and all overcome heroes!

And the numberless unknown heroes, equal to the greatest heroes known!

In an article on “Awakening” in the last number of *Lucifer* {January 1890, 376} the writer has italicized these words: “*Never is the aspirant in such danger of falling as the moment after he has successfully resisted temptation.*” And here we see the greatest danger of success, in that spiritual pride that blinds our

eyes and makes us lose our balance, that inspiring us with confidence causes us to relax our guard and renders us a easy prey to the thousand insidious evil influences that hover about us.

We must take courage, then, and learn that it is not for us to judge of the measure of our successes or our defeats; that must be left for wiser intelligences than ours. And if we cannot make a right estimate of our own victories, how much less can we do so in the case of our neighbor, of whose real nature and of whose real temptations we are so hopelessly ignorant! The man we think fallen among the slain may be really mounting to a higher sphere, whence he can survey our harsh judgment with the pitying eyes of a wider knowledge; the conqueror we see flushed with victory may have gained the whole world to lose his own soul. So, to quote Browning again:

Not on the vulgar mass  
Called “work” must sentence pass,  
Things done that took the eye and had the price;  
O'er which, from level stand,  
The low world laid its hand,  
Found straightway to its mind, could value in a trice;

But all the world's coarse thumb,  
And finger failed to plumb,  
So passed in making up the main account;  
All instincts immature,  
All purposes unsure,  
That weighed not as his work, yet swelled the man's amount:

Thoughts hardly to be packed  
Into a narrow act,  
Fancies that broke through language and escaped;  
All I could never be,  
All, men ignored in me,  
This I was worth to God, whose wheel the pitcher shaped.

• • • • •

We certainly cannot judge of the comparative success or failure of others; we can hardly judge of our own; but we can take courage when we seem to be beaten, and try to discover the flaw in our armor that we may be better prepared for another fight. And we can study that lesson which is set us every day, but which we so often fail to learn, that in the little things of every day life are our opportunities for conquest over ourselves. If we neglect these tasks, how can we expect to have harder lessons set us?

“Would but some fairy lend to me her charm!”

Lately I cried, in a despairing hour;  
“Some mighty spell to nerve my weary arm,  
    Some Open Sesame of magic power!

Or, better still, show but the time and place  
    Where a brave heart might win itself a name,  
And fall, perchance to benefit the race,  
    Winning the blossoms of deathless fame!”

Then as I mused a beldame crossed my way,  
    Tottering along, with shrouded, earth-bent brow;  
She stretched a lean hand from her mantle gray,  
    And said, in shaking whispers, “Here, and now!”

“O poor delusion!” then I cried in scorn;  
    “Not thus are godlike powers to mortals given;  
The Helpers come clad in the strength of morn,  
    Bright with the ling’ring radiance of heaven!

Nor this the place or hour for mighty deeds,  
    On this lone way, beneath this tranquil sky;  
No foe is here, no hapless victim bleeds;  
    We are the only passers, thou and I!”

Silent she tottered on, but having past,  
    A sudden glory seemed to light her way;  
White angel-wings sprang from her shoulders vast,  
    And fair she shone as shines the god of day.

A noble scorn shot lightnings from her eyes,  
    As fleeing still she turned her lovely head;  
“The gods sent me in answer to thy cries,  
    But once repulsed, I am forever fled!

Learn to know Fortune ere she pass thee by;  
    Seize on her coming, for she will not wait!  
And know by all thy ways divine things lie,  
    And every place and hour holds thy fate!”

KATHARINE HILLARD.

## THEOSOPHY IN RELATION TO OUR DAILY LIFE

### TRIFLES

[READ BEFORE THE ARYAN T. S., N.Y.]

When Mr. Judge spoke on this subject some weeks ago, I was forcibly impressed by the truth of what he said as to the minor opportunities of life to the most of us.

There are few to whom come chances for grave decisions, for great sacrifices, for evident heroism; most of us have to learn that difficult lesson, not to despise the day of small things. What we need is, to learn to apply theosophy to the *trifles* of our daily life, to find nothing too small to be done in the best possible way; and as the Christian would say, “do all things to the glory of God,” so we must do all things to the glory of that higher Self that represents to us the Deity. If old George Herbert felt it not beneath his clerical dignity to assert that

Who sweeps a room as by God's laws,  
Makes that and th' action fine,

certainly we need not be behind him in humility. And however humble our duties, however small our temptations, however narrow our sphere, there are at least three things which we can all ponder upon; things wherein we may perhaps find something to improve. Faithfulness in our work, helpfulness of others, and the preservation of a cheerful and gracious mood, are three things which concern everybody, women as well as men. There is a beautiful old story of a lady who said that she knew her servant had experienced religion, and when asked why, replied “Because she sweeps under the mats!” Now *that* is the sort of thing that George Herbert was thinking of when he spoke of “sweeping a room as by God's laws;” it is not only doing a thing and doing it at the proper time, but doing it with the thoroughness of divine law itself, not superficially and slightly, but with all the perfection that we are able to give it, for then alone can it be said to us, “*Well done, thou good and faithful servant.*” It is not too much to say that every task, no matter how trivial, wrought out conscientiously and with a sense of duty, with not a detail neglected or slurred over, reacts upon the character with a power that it is difficult to estimate. Aristotle defined virtue as a habit of doing the right thing; and every time that we not only do the right thing, but do it in the right way, we increase the strength of that habit, and make it so much the easier to do it again. The men who have succeeded (I do not mean in the eyes of the world, but in the attainment of some lofty ideal) have been men who did things *thoroughly*, who obeyed the

Scripture injunction, “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might,” not half-heartedly, nor passably, but “with *all* thy might.” Such conduct carries its reward with it, not only in the sense of satisfaction that follows when we have done our very best (and then alone), but also in the *unconscious* uplifting of our faculties to a higher plane. Let us never indulge ourselves with thinking “It does not matter *how* we do this, provided it is done”; it *does* matter, and most of all to ourselves; we are the ones upon whom the carelessness will fall most heavily, even though it seem to come upon others.

And most of all we need to feel that nothing done with the desire to help another is a trifle. It is impossible for us to estimate the far-reaching consequences of our lightest word, nor to tell how what seems to us a little thing, to another may be fraught with the gravest consequences. A child of twelve, whom I know, had her life saved by a little bunch of purple hyacinths. A long and severe illness had brought her to that point of apathy where she was slowly drifting out of life into death, when a friend brought her in these flowers. Their beauty and sweetness roused her fainting spirit and won her back to life, and she knew it herself, child as she was, for she said, “I think those hyacinths have cured me.” No one was more astonished than the friend who did the little kindness; “such a trifle,” she thought. There is no better rule, it seems to me, than Charles Reade’s favorite maxim, “Put yourself in his place,” to teach us how to treat our neighbor. There are so many little courtesies that we omit, so many little acts of kindness that we leave undone, because we *don’t* put ourselves in his place. In the hurry of our daily life, we neglect many little graces that, if practiced, would make the wheels move much more smoothly. The first thing that one notices after returning home from a residence in Italy, for instance, is the roughness of everybody, the want of courtesy in high and low. In Italy, if you enter a shop, you are greeted with a pleasant smile and a cheerful “good morning,” you are waited upon with attention, but without servility, and saluted as you go out with another “good morning,” and a hope that you will come again. Here, if you say “good morning” on entering, as perhaps you do from force of habit, the much be-frizzed and be-decorated shopgirls stare at you as if you had just escaped from a menagerie of curious animals, and hardly deign to give you what you ask for, they are so busy talking to each other of tonight’s ball or yesterday’s wedding. If you are travelling in Italy, the commonest man will beg your pardon, or ask your permission, if he has occasion to pass you in a railway carriage, and no one gets out without wishing “a pleasant journey” to those who remain. All these things are trifles, but then we know that trifles make up the sum of daily life. I noticed in an “Elevated Railway” car the other day, a young man rise to give a lady his seat, but instead of doing it as most gentlemen do, with a bow and a smile, and thus paying her a compliment in resigning his place, he rose with a sulky expression, turned his back on her, and strolled up the car. The lady looked uncomfortable;— she could not shout “thank you” to his back, and she was thus placed in a false position, and made unable to return a courtesy. Not far off was “a

gentleman of the old school" (as we somewhat scornfully say), who gave up his seat over and over again, but always with such a gracious and beaming courtesy that every lady felt personally complimented by the courtesy shown her.

There are few women, as there are few men, who do not have an opportunity every day of imitating the ideal of James Russell Lowell, of whom he wrote —

She doeth little kindnesses  
That most leave undone or despise;  
For naught that sets one heart at ease,  
Or giveth happiness and peace,  
Is low esteemèd in her eyes.

The trouble with American life is its *hurry*; we are so afraid that these minor courtesies will consume a little of the time that is so precious to us all;— but that is a mistake, if we could only bring ourselves to think so. Everything that saves friction expedites motion, and the engineer that had no time to oil his machine would soon find that he had to take time to have it mended.

And when we have exhausted the possibilities of putting ourselves in the place of another, and thereby seeing what we should do for him, when we have lubricated the wheels of life to the best of our ability, there still remains the power to cultivate in ourselves that serene and unperturbed cheerfulness of mood that "makes a sunshine in a shady place." Such a mood spreads itself like oil upon the troubled waters, and insensibly the ruffled waves sink to rest. If we keep our minds fixed upon the eternal verities, of what consequence to us are the little irritations and vexations of our daily, lives? They are mere straw's upon the stream, to be swept past us in a moment, not worthy to ruffle its placid surface, not capable of breaking its serenity if it move with any strength and volume upon its destined way. Remember the saying of the Eastern sage, which was of equal power to admonish in prosperity and counsel in adversity:—"All these things pass away!" When I was a little girl of seven, my old English nurse used to say to me, when I hurt myself and bemoaned the pain to her, "Never mind, it will be all well before you're twice married"; and I remember that a certain sense of the vastness of time struck my childish imagination so forcibly that I cheered up at once. And what a little child can do, we ought to be able to do too; to realize the smallness of our daily vexations compared with the great sweep of the years, and learn to smile serenely at our passing troubles. Cheerfulness is something we can all practice, even when we find no other chance to help others, and when all our duties have been well and faithfully done. A teacher once told me of a pupil of hers who wrote a composition on "Perseverance," which recounted the experiences of a little girl who "persevered and persevered, until she came to the end of that virtue," and it would be well if we could treat cheerfulness in the same way.

And now, to give this paper a little value, I should like to add some words of John Morley's, spoken at Manchester Town Hall. In speaking of the *average* individual, he says that the chances for the gifted few are highest where the *average* interest, curiosity, capacity, are highest. "The moral of this for you and for me," he adds, "is plain. We cannot, like Beethoven or Handel, lift the soul by the magic of divine melody into the seventh heaven of ineffable vision and hope incommensurable; we cannot, like Newton, weigh the far-off stars in a balance, and measure the heavings of the eternal flood; we cannot, like Voltaire, scorch up what is cruel and false by a word as a flame; nor, like Milton or Burke, awaken men's hearts with the note of an organ-trumpet; we cannot, like the great saints of the churches and the great sages of the schools, add to those acquisitions of spiritual beauty and intellectual mastery which have, one by one, and little by little, raised man from being no higher than the brute to be only a little lower than the angels. But what we can do — the humblest of us in this hall — is by diligently using our own minds and diligently seeking to extend our own opportunities to others, to help to swell that common tide, on the force and the set of whose currents depends the prosperous voyaging of humanity. When our names are blotted out, and our place knows us no more, the energy of each social service will remain, and so too, let us not forget, will each social disservice remain, like the unending stream of one of nature's forces."

KATHARINE HILLARD.

## THE EASTER HARE

For more seasons than one cares to count, the Easter egg has been the familiar symbol of the great spring festival; but of late years, owing probably to the immense increase of our foreign population, another emblem has begun to dispute its supremacy in the confectioners' shops, and for some time the hares at Easter have been almost as numerous as the eggs. The hares are quite as often rabbits, delicate distinctions in zoology not being the province of confectioners; but in this case they cannot go far out of the way in confounding the two, because in symbology the animals are identical, and, moreover, to the American eye the rabbit is the more familiar form.

But why either? What has the “innocent rodent,” as George Eliot {Mary Ann Evans} would say, “with its small nibbling pleasures,” to do with the great festival of the Resurrection?

To solve this enigma and trace out the meaning of the symbol, we must go like a crab backwards, through the history of Easter itself, even at the risk of repeating by the way many things that everybody knows already.

The egg-symbol, which naturally suggests the bursting into life of a buried germ, is easily understood, though it is a question whether many of the boys who amuse themselves by breaking each other's Easter eggs know that they do so to celebrate the opening of the year. The giving of eggs at the Easter season can be traced back to the remotest antiquity, and belongs to all the Eastern nations, who used the symbol both to signify the universe and to represent the revival of life at the vernal equinox.

Easter, though apparently a solar festival in its connection with the equinox, in reality, and even as ordered by the Christian Church, belongs of right to the moon. As early as the second century the Western churches began to object to the contemporaneous celebration of Easter with the Jewish Passover, and in 325 A.D., the Council of Nicaea decided that it should be held in future upon the first Sunday after the first full moon upon or after the vernal equinox; and if said full moon fell upon Sunday, then Easter should be the Sunday after. (This full moon, by the way, is the imaginary moon of the calendar, and neither the real moon nor the mean moon of astronomers.) In spite of the precautions of the Council of Nicaea, however, from the fact that the Jewish Passover depends upon the first full moon of spring, Easter and the Passover have occurred together twice in this century, and will do so three times in the next.

*Easter* is derived from the name of the Saxon goddess Eostre, whose festival was held in April, and who was undoubtedly identical with Astarte, the Phoenician goddess of the moon. Now the moon was the earliest measurer of

time, and we are told by Max Müller (in his first Lecture on the Science of Language) that her Sanskrit name, *māś*, is clearly derived from the root *mā*, to measure. The moon was masculine in Sanskrit, as she was in Anglo-Saxon, and indeed in all the Teutonic languages, and as she is in German still. This confusion of sex, as it seems to us who are accustomed to think of her as a “goddess excellently bright,” probably arose from the fact that the deities of the earliest mythologies were androgynous, and that sex was a question of relation, and depended upon their personification in an active or a passive form. Even in the Greek mythology we find frequent instances of this double aspect; Dionysus, or Bacchus, for instance, being worshiped both as male and as female. The moon, as the measurer or lord of time, was considered as an active element, and personified as masculine.

Why the moon should have been chosen as the measurer of our days rather than the sun is very clearly explained in *The Secret Doctrine* (I:389). In outline this explanation is as follows: When the earliest races of mankind wished to mark off periods of time, some cycle that belonged equally to the starry spheres and to humanity would naturally be that upon which their choice would fall. Such a cycle was found in the physiological phenomena connected with the life of the mother and her child. The lunar month of twenty-eight days (or four weeks of seven days each) gave thirteen periods in three hundred and sixty-four days; equivalent to the solar-week year of fifty-two weeks. The old Egyptians and Hebrews both calculated the calendar by the three hundred and sixty-four or three hundred and sixty-five days of the lunar year. Thus came the method of measures by lunar time, and through lunar, of solar time.

The moon, as we have already seen, varied in sex according to circumstances. As the new moon, with her brilliant horns and her increasing strength, or as the full moon, in the plenitude of her power, she represented the active element, and was personified as masculine; she was the Lord of Light, the sign of new life, the messenger of immortality. But the waning moon was passive, or feminine, and typified darkness, death, and, in the Egyptian mythology, Typhon, or the Evil Principle, who had the supremacy during his fourteen days' rule, when he tore Osiris (the sun) into fourteen pieces. But with the new moon Osiris came back to life, and at its full the Egyptians sacrificed a black pig (representing the now conquered Typhon) to Osiris. In the planisphere of Denderah, the god Khunsee is seen offering the pig by the leg in the disc of the full moon, and in some parts of England a leg of pig is still eaten on Easter Monday — a curious survival of this sacrifice.

In ancient symbolism, again, the light half of the moon was masculine; the dark, feminine. There was also another dualism connected with the moon, as the prototype of the Virgin Mother, which may explain a very singular old English Easter custom which has always been a mystery to antiquarians. The Virgin Mother was represented by the British Druids as *two*: the sisters Kreirwy and Llywy (the British Proserpine and Ceres), the Virgin *and* the Mother. Proclus speaks of “the vivific goddesses” as the elder and the younger. The

same idea runs through Polynesian mythology, and corresponds with Isis and Nephthys in Egyptian, and “the two wives of Jacob that builded the house of Israel” in Biblical, lore. Pausanias describes a temple of two stories (the only one he knew) dedicated to Aphrodite; the lower story consecrated to the armed goddess, the upper to Aphrodite Morpho, veiled and with bound feet — the fetters signifying gestation. One of the legends of the *Mahābhārata* describes the two wives of Kaçyapas, Kaden and Vinatā, the mother of breath, who bears the egg whence issues the serpent.

Now there is an endowment in the parish of Biddenden, Kent, of old but unknown date, which provides for the distribution of six hundred cakes among the poor upon the afternoon of Easter Sunday. These cakes bear a very curious “three-quarters” representation of two female figures joined at the shoulders and hips. The style is decidedly what in art parlance would be called “archaic,” and the origin of the design has never been satisfactorily explained. Max Müller long since wrote of that interesting process of human thought by which elaborate myths grow from the seed-germ of a wish to account for some accepted fact, as in the case of the famous barnacle geese, who were described and painted as issuing from the barnacles of ships, through a popular misunderstanding of the name, which really came from the markings like spectacles (or *barnacles*) round the eyes of the geese. So, in the case of the Biddenden cakes, a legend was invented that the endowment was made by two unfortunate women who lived joined together in this impossible fashion, *à la* conjoined twins. The hot cross buns of Good Friday are readily traced back to the pagan worship of the sun; and I am inclined to believe that these two conjoined female figures represent the Virgin and Mother of the British Druids, the double Aphrodite of Pausanias, or the dual aspect of the moon. For in the oldest myths the goddesses, like the gods, are but one; and Artemis and Aphrodite, Here and Pallas, but representations of the varying phases of the *ewige Weiblichkeit* {the Eternal Feminine}.

Having thus traced some of the connections of the moon with Easter, we have still to run down the mythical hare; and him we find directly as a type of the moon itself, across whose disc endless numbers of Hindu and Japanese artists have painted him, while their Chinese brethren represent the moon as a rabbit pounding rice in a mortar. The hare was identical with the moon in symbology, for reasons that shall presently be explained; but having been drawn “in the moon,” two different versions of one story arose to explain his presence there, as in the case of the barnacle geese.

One was that Buddha once took the shape of a hare that he might feed a hungry fellow-creature, and was translated in that form to the moon, where he evermore abides. But this is a very inferior version of the beautiful story of the starving tigress and her cubs, whom Buddha fed with his mortal body; and the second myth, as told by Angelo De Gubernatis in his *Zoological Mythology; or, The Legends of Animals*, seems more likely to be the genuine one. This legend says that when Indra, disguised as a famishing pilgrim, was praying for

food, the hare, having nothing else to give him, threw itself into the fire, that it might be roasted for his benefit, and the grateful Indra translated the animal to the moon.

In Sanskrit, the *śāśas*, literally *the leaping one*, means not only the hare and the rabbit, but the spots on the moon supposed to depict the hare of the above myth. There are several other Hindu myths connecting the hare and the moon, notably one in the first story of the *Pañcatantram*, where the hares dwell upon the shores of the lake of the moon, and their king, *Vijayadattah* (the funereal god), has for his palace the lunar disc. The hare is often represented in popular sayings as the enemy of the lion (or the sun), as in the Latin proverb, *Mortuō leōnī leporēs insultant*, {Hares insult a dead lion.} the equivalent of another saying, “The moon leaps up when the sun dies.” Mary Stuart {Mary, Queen of Scots}, in the days of her captivity, adopted for her device a netted lion with hares leaping over him, with the motto, *Et leporēs devictō leōnī insultant*. {Even hares insult (mock) a defeated lion.} (See also *King John*, Act II. Scene 1.)

There were several reasons why the hare was chosen to symbolize the moon. One was that it is a nocturnal animal, and comes out at night to feed; another, that the female carries her young for a month, thus representing the lunar cycle; another, that the hare was thought by the ancients to be able to change its sex, like the moon. Sir Thomas Browne says that this was affirmed by Archelāus, Plutarch, Philostratus, and many others. Pliny, who is not mentioned by Sir Thomas, gives it the weight of his authority in his *Natural History*. The historian of *Vulgar Errors* {*Pseudodoxia Epidemica*} devotes a chapter to the subject, but is extremely cautious in his dealing with it, considering it quite possible that such a change might take place, but in exceptional instances only, and certainly not annually, as the ancients asserted.

Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher allude to the notion several times, especially in *The Faithful Shepherdess*, Act III. Scene 1, in the incantation of the Sullen Shepherd:—

Hares that yearly sexes change,  
Proteus altering oft and strange,  
*Hecaté* with shapés three,  
Let this maiden changéd be.

Here we have the hare in close connection with Hecate, or the moon. And the same idea may be found in *Hudibras*, II. 2, verse 705.

But a more important reason for the identification of the hare with the moon lay in the fact that its young are born with their eyes open, unlike rabbits, which are born blind. The name of the hare in Egyptian was *un*, which means *open, to open, the opener*. Now the moon was the open-eyed watcher of the skies at night, and the hare, born with open eyes, was fabled never to close them: hence the old Latin expression, *somnus leporinus* {hare-sleep = sleeping with one eye open}, and the identification of the open-eyed hare with the full

moon. The old principle of cure by “sympathies” led to the prescription, in the early English folklore, of the brain and eyes of the hare as a cure for somnolence.

The Egyptian word *un* not only meant *hare* and *open*, but also *period*, and for this reason (as well as for the one already given as to its time of gestation) the hare became the type of periodicity, both human and lunar, and in its character of “opener” was associated with the opening of the new year at Easter, as well as with the beginning of a new life in the youth and maiden. Hence the hare became connected in the popular mind with the paschal eggs, broken to signify the opening of the year. So close has this association become with some peoples, that in Swabia {southwestern Germany} for instance, the little children are sent out to look for *hares’ eggs* at Easter. In Saxony, {Germany,} they say that the Easter hare brings the Easter egg, and even in America we may see in the confectioners’ windows the hare wheeling his barrowful of eggs, or drawing one large one as a sort of triumphal chariot. In some parts of Europe, the Easter eggs are made up into cakes in the shape of hares, and the little children are told that babies are found in the hare’s “form.” The moon, in her character of the goddess Lucina, presided over childbirth, and the hare is constantly identified with her in this connection in the folklore of many peoples, both ancient and modern. Pausanias describes the moon-goddess as instructing the exiles who would found a new nation to build their city in that myrtle-grove wherein they should see a hare take refuge. In Russia, if a hare meets the bridal car (as an omen thus *opposing* it), it bodes evil to the wedding, and to the bride and groom. If the hare is run over by the car, it is a bad presage, not only for the bridal couple, but for all mankind; being held as equivalent to an eclipse, always a sinister omen in popular superstition. In Swabia, the children are forbidden to indulge in the favorite childish amusement of making shadow-pictures of rabbits on the wall, because it is considered *a sin against the moon*.

Among English popular customs celebrating Easter, the only trace of the hare seems to be found in Warwickshire, where at Coleshill, if the young men of the parish can catch a hare and bring it to the parson before ten o’clock in the morning of Easter Monday (the *moon-day*), he is bound to give them a calf’s head, one hundred eggs, and a groat {a silver coin}; the calf’s head being probably a survival of the worship of Baal, or the sun, as the golden calf.

The hare-myth has come over to America not only in the shape of the confectioners’ Easter hares, but also in the very curious superstition among Black people as to the efficacy as a talisman of *the left hind-foot of a graveyard rabbit killed in the dark of the moon*. In an article by Mr. Gerald Massey<sup>1</sup> (to whom I gratefully acknowledge my obligations) on the subject of such a talisman, said to have been presented by an old Black person to President Cleveland during his electioneering tour of 1888, Mr. Massey very plainly shows that the two myths have the same origin. The rabbit, identical with the hare in symbolism, is here equivalent to the Lord of Light and Conqueror of Darkness, in, or as, the new moon. In the hieroglyphics, the *khepsh*, leg or hind-

quarter, is the ideographic also of Typhon, or personified evil; the *left* side intensifying the idea. Therefore the left hind-foot of the graveyard rabbit stood for the last quarter or end of the moon, a symbol of the conquered Typhon, or Principle of Evil, to be worn in triumph, like a fox's brush, as a token of resurrection, or renewal, or general good fortune. The killing in the dark of the moon is simply a duplication of the victory over evil and death, a sort of symbolical tautology, as it were. As a type of renewal, it was especially suitable as a gift to a President seeking reelection, but in this case, as in the proverbial "dry time," all signs appeared to fail. It is a singular coincidence, and shows the universality of ancient symbols, that in England the luckiest of all lucky horseshoes, says Mr. Massey, is the shoe from *the left hind-foot of a mare*.

So we have hunted our Easter hare (or rabbit, as you choose) through America and England and Germany, all the way back through ancient Egypt and India, till we have run him into his original "form," the moon. That silent, silver-shining planet is the fountainhead of many a myth and the origin of many a mystery, and not half of "the fairytales of science" of which she is the heroine have yet been told.

Whether the proverbially "mad" March hare has anything to do with the moon and Easter I do not know. It has been suggested that this "madness" in March is probably only the access of liveliness that pervades the animal creation in the spring; but the fact that the hare was a proverbially melancholy beast indicates a different kind of madness, perhaps dependent on the "lunacy" of the moon. Prince Henry suggests the hare to Falstaff as a type of melancholy rather superior to the "gibcat" or the "lugged bear." The eating of its flesh was said by Galen to produce melancholy (perhaps as a sequence of indigestion!), and Nares thinks the long sitting of the hare in its form may have caused it to be considered a melancholy animal. If this condition be equivalent to madness, as the gentle optimist would have it, then we have the madness of the March hare sufficiently accounted for; otherwise we may hunt him through whole libraries of proverbs and popular sayings, and Archaic Dictionaries, and Glossaries, etc., only to find him mentioned as "well known" as far back as 1542. Only this and nothing more. Indeed, he is said to have made his first appearance in the pages of John Skelton's *Repycation to the Scoler*, in 1520. A hare crossing a person's path was supposed to disorder his wits, as the moon's beams falling upon the face were supposed to do; and, upon the whole, the weight of evidence is in favor of the hare's madness being a species of "lunacy" rather than the jollity of spring.

Perhaps the reader, weary of the subject, may feel inclined to agree with the profound genius who dismissed the question of the similarly proverbial madness of hatters in these simple words:—

Why hatters as a race are mad  
I do not know, nor does it matter!

KATHARINE HILLARD.

NOTE

1. *Lucifer* (I:6), London. See also his *The Natural Genesis*.

## THE SEVENFOLD CONSTITUTION OF MAN

In *The Secret Doctrine* (II:81), Mme. Blavatsky bids us remember that to some extent even the esoteric teaching is allegorical, and that to make the latter comprehensible to the average intelligence, symbols cast in an intelligible form must be used. And in *Esoteric Buddhism* Mr. Alfred Percy Sinnett warns us against thinking of the higher principles as of a bundle of sticks tied together, or, in another view, of considering the different principles as being like the skins of an onion, to be peeled off one by one till we get to the innermost and best. It is said that one of the favorite topics of discussion in the medieval Church was as to the number of angels that could find standing room on the point of a cambric needle. Human nature is the same always, and in every age of the world we have found it difficult to dispossess our minds of concrete conceptions and come down to abstract thought. We instinctively cling to some form of expression which materializes our idea, so to speak, and enables us to make a picture of it in our mind's eye; and then, almost before we know it, we have accepted that picture as the thing it tried to symbolize. Men are always making to themselves graven images, and then bowing down and worshiping the images instead of the gods they endeavored to represent.

So it seems to me that our difficulty in getting at a clear idea of the sevenfold constitution of man lies mostly in the way we go to work; that we fail to recognize, in the first place, that we are dealing with spiritual things, and that those things cannot be seen with the physical, nor even the intellectual eye, and that the more we divide and subdivide, the more we define and consequently materialize our subject. This is most certainly a case where we need to generalize, and not to particularize, until we have arrived at the point where we are quite sure we are conscious that we are dealing with symbols and not with entities.

If we wish to get a general idea of Man, we may think first of the body, as a thing which upon this material plane whereon we live we may call a tangible reality. Now a “tangible reality,” though it can easily be proved to be the greatest of all illusions, is also the most material thing about us and the most widely removed from spirit; therefore we can set it aside, as do the Vedāntin schools spoken of in *The Key to Theosophy* (117), as not part of the spiritual man, or we can call it the lowest “principle” of our being. The material at one end of the scale involves the spiritual at the other, and we find in *The Key to Theosophy* (101, 119), *Ātma* described as the Divine essence, which “is no individual property of any man,” but “only overshadows the mortal; that which enters into him and pervades the whole body being only its omnipresent rays or light.” “This ought not to be called a human principle at all” (119).

We have, then, the body and the Spirit accounted for — what remains is Consciousness, in its different phases. In *The Key to Theosophy* (100) we read: “The ‘principles’ (save the body, life, and the astral eidolon, all of which disperse at death) are simply *aspects and states of consciousness*.”

We realize a mood of intense desire or passion as something apart from our spiritual nature, and more akin to the physical; and we sometimes speak even of our “physical consciousness” as a thing that we do not therefore perceive with our senses. This is the lowest aspect of our consciousness, and is called in Sanskrit *Kāma-rūpa*, or “the body of desire.” This is, of course, a highly figurative expression.

Then comes our intelligent consciousness, the Mind itself, the thinking part of us, which differentiates us from the brute; and we all realize that this aspect of our consciousness has a dual nature, and may drag us down to the level of the animal or raise us to the height of the god. Therefore we speak of the higher and lower *Manas*, or mind.

The physical body, its passions, and that lower aspect of mind which tends to gravitate downward and which belongs to the physical brain, are dependent upon *life*, or the vital principle, a form of the Divine Energy within us. So also is that phantom body, the shadow of the real one, which disperses after death like the light of a distant star, that to us appears to be still shining, although in reality long ago fallen from its sphere.

If we can imagine the lower aspect of our intelligence or mind tending downward, we can also realize its higher phase aspiring to unite itself to our spiritual consciousness or *Buddhi*, the vehicle of the Divine, of that Universal Spirit which makes us one. Our highest intelligence and our spiritual consciousness, overshadowed by the radiation of the Absolute, form the *Monad* or reincarnating Ego.

Of this Madame Blavatsky says in *The Key to Theosophy* (92), that it alone can be thought of as the highest “principle in man.” Because, as she explains it is always the predominating element in man that counts, and in one man passion is the ruling and foremost phase; in another, intellect; in another, spirituality.

But however we choose to arrange these phases in our minds, let us remember always that they are not entities, and that, as Mme. Blavatsky says, “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.” (*The Key to Theosophy*, 100.)

## RECOGNITION AFTER DEATH

[READ BEFORE THE ARYAN T. S., OCTOBER 7, 1890, BY MISS KATHARINE HILLARD.]

Does Theosophy provide for the recognition and reunion of friends after death? is a question frequently asked by those who find it hard to free themselves from the conceptions of a material philosophy. Unconsciously they still cling to the present, and to the illusions of this world, and while imagining that they are thinking of a spiritual life, are, in reality, formulating only a sort of etherealized physical existence. To gain anything like a true view upon the subject, we must consider *what* it is that persists, and *how* it persists, and the question will answer itself.

In the first place, let us take for granted the sevenfold constitution of man, as divided in *The Key to Theosophy* into a fourfold nature. This gives us *1st*, *The Higher Self*, *i.e.*, “Ātma, the inseparable ray of the Universal and ONE SELF, the God *above*, more than within us.” This we instantly recognize as necessarily apart from any idea of mortality or personality.

Then we have as *2nd*, *The Spiritual Divine Ego*, *i.e.*, “The Spiritual Soul or *Buddhi* in close connection with *Manas*, or the mind principle.” Without *Manas*, *Buddhi* is no Ego, but only the Ātmic vehicle; that is, we must have the self-consciousness of the intellect before we can formulate the idea of “I” at all. Here we have, therefore, simply the union of spirit and intelligence, an abstract consciousness, again impersonal.

*No. 3* is the *Inner* or *Higher Ego*, *i.e.*, *Manas* or the intellect, independent of *Buddhi*, or the Spiritual soul. This is the permanent *Individuality*, or the reincarnating Ego. Here, then, we have individuality, a *separation* from other egos, but not yet the *personality*, or that “which weaves for *man* the garment that we know him by.”

*No. 4* of this division is the *Lower* or *Personal Ego*, *i.e.*, the physical man in conjunction with his animal instincts, desires, passions, etc., and the *lower Manas*, or baser half of the mind. These operate through the physical body and its astral double, and constitute altogether that which we call John Smith, but which clearer-sighted eyes know as the “false personality” of John Smith.

This fourfold division includes all the seven so-called “principles,” except *Prāṇa*, or the vital principle, which is, strictly speaking, the radiating force or energy of Ātma, and permeates the whole of the objective Universe.

We have, then, two divisions only of which we can predicate *individuality*, and of these the first one has merely the individuality of the drops that compose the ocean, to our eyes without distinction, though we can think of them as separate drops. But if we had several bottles of sea water, each tinged with a different color, we could recognize one drop of each tint as it fell, and say to

which bottle it belonged. Nevertheless it would not be the *water* that was different, but only the color, which enabled us to recognize the contents of the various vials. The bottles may stand for the physical body, the color for the Lower Ego, that is, the *personality* made up of the animal instincts and passions, and the lower half of the mind, those faculties that the higher animals share with us. If we once gain a clear idea of these distinctions, we must recognize that the change which we call Death can have nothing to do with the *Higher Self*, or God within us, nor with that abstract consciousness we call the *Spiritual Ego*, but that it severs the chain binding the *Higher Ego*, or the Intellectual Consciousness, the highest faculties of the mind, to the *Lower Ego*, or the lower faculties and passions belonging to and operating through the physical body.

What survives this change, then, can only be the highest and most spiritual part of our being, not those qualities which are inherent in the physical nature and must perish with it. There can be nothing left of that entity we knew as John Smith, for instance, but the inmost and highest side of his nature, a side, indeed, that perhaps he had never shown to us. His physical body *must* return to the elements which composed it, and with it all those passions and emotions, those, idiosyncrasies of taste and manner which were its offspring, and which together composed the visible being of our friend. This being dwelt with us upon our physical plane, and the trammels of matter, indeed, often prevented our realizing that he was other than the character we loved and thought we knew. Perhaps some touch of deeper thought, some flash of insight, may have come to us at some time, and for one brief instant we may have realized that the true individual belonged to a higher plane, and that only there we met his actual self, a self quite independent of all that bundle of physical characteristics that passed for the real man in the ordinary walks of life.

How possible it is even here to lose the sense of individuality, we can easily prove to ourselves by recalling some moment of deep emotion in a crowd — the one great burst of feeling that made the multitude shout “like one man,” as the popular phrase is. They *were* one man, for the limitations of personality were swept away for those who, for the moment, had soared above the physical. There was no question of you or me, only the throb of one heart, the response of one mind.

So when John Smith leaves this world, he lays down forever the limitations of that personality he had worn for awhile, just as the actor leaving the theatre drops the “inky cloak” and somber philosophizing of Hamlet, and becomes his real self. He leaves the mimic stage to take up his true part in the great drama of life. John Smith, like the actor, goes into another world, and we, for the present, stay in ours.

And we long to know whether, when our turn comes to pass through the dark portal, we shall recognize our friend upon the other side, forgetting all the time that then we too shall have left our temporary selves behind. As well might Horatio wonder if he shall know and love Hamlet tomorrow. Tomorrow he shall not be Horatio, but the man who played Horatio, and tomorrow night he shall

be Cassio, and his friend Othello, and yet the *men* shall be the same. The difficulty is, that we think of ourselves after death as we are *now*, not as we shall be then. We forget that it is not Jones in the body who is to meet Smith in the spirit, but that both will be on the same plane. We project our physical selves into the spiritual world, and expect to remain unchanged in the presence of "a new heaven and a new earth." The friend who knew and loved John Smith passes, like him, beyond the bounds of personality and the limits of time and space. It is two freed intelligences that encounter, not two mortal men. When the Sadducees asked Christ whose wife after death should be that woman who had married seven husbands, they were told that in heaven is neither marrying nor giving in marriage, but there we are as the angels. That is, not only far above any question of sex, but existing as spiritual beings, whose intercourse depends upon no formulated speech, nor even flash of eye, but is that direct communion of mind with mind and soul with soul which marks the highest moments of the highest friendship here, when for a brief instant we dwell with realities and not with illusions.

The John Smith who has finished his brief day of life lies down to the sweet sleep of death, the night of pleasant dreams. The laborer shall be worthy of his hire, and, having earned his rest, there shall come to him a season of repose interrupted only by happy visions, in which, unconscious of having died, he sees himself surrounded by all his dearest ones, and carries out his brightest dreams for the advancement of himself and his fellows. And as the actor who has played his part earnestly and with all his might finds some trace of it lingering about him as he leaves the theatre, and perhaps plays it over again in his dreams, so the being we call John Smith finds something of his last personality clinging to him during the rest of Devachan and coloring all his visions. Meanwhile, as we read in the *The Key to Theosophy* (150), love beyond the grave has a *Divine* potency which reacts on the living. The love of the man for his wife, of the mother for her children, will continue to be felt by them, because "pure divine love has its roots in eternity." It will show itself in their dreams, and often as a protection in times of danger, "for love is a strong shield, and is not limited by space or time."

And having in the rest of that quiet night beyond the grave enjoyed the reward of all the good deeds done in that brief day we call life, the inner or Higher Ego of the being we knew here as John Smith takes up the burden of his Karma again in some new part, a part assigned to him by no arbitrary selection, but the inevitable consequence of the way he has played the former ones entrusted to him.

Meantime we must remember what Mr. Sinnett has so well said in his paper on "The Higher Self," see *The Key to Theosophy* (173). "The process of incarnation is not fully described when we speak of an *alternate* existence on the physical and spiritual planes, and thus picture the soul as a complete entity slipping entirely from the one state of existence to the other. The more correct definitions of the process would probably represent incarnation as taking place

on this physical plane of nature by reason of an efflux emanating from the soul.” The Spiritual realm would all the while be the proper habitat of the Soul, which would never entirely quit it; and that non-materializable portion of the Soul which abides permanently on the Spiritual plane may fitly, perhaps, be spoken of as the “HIGHER SELF.” (Or *Ātma*, not to be confused with the *Spiritual Divine Ego*, which is *Buddhi* — *Manas*, or the *Higher Ego*, which is *Manas*.)

So, behind the different parts he plays, abides the actor’s real self, watching what he does as Hamlet or Othello, and as unaffected thereby as a man upon a mountain top bathed in sunshine is by a thunderstorm rumbling below.

This is the broad outline merely of the theosophic teaching on the subject of reunion after death. That the common idea of a recognition of a physical being by a physical being cannot stand a moment before the test of logical analysis, can easily be proved. An *embodied* spirit it must be to be recognized, and an embodied spirit, however ethereal that body may be, is still linked to matter, is not yet free from the bondage of this death. And a body, moreover, involves the conceptions of space and time, both incompatible with the idea of pure intelligence.

Then again we are inevitably confronted with this dilemma. Either the personality is arrested at the moment of death, or it is not, and in either case a great gulf ever widens between the dead and their beloved ones. A young mother passes away leaving behind her a newborn infant, and that child, who has never known his mother, grows up to enter the spirit-world, perhaps as an old decrepit man, far older than the mother who bore him.

Or if we hold with the majority of our spiritualistic friends that the spirits of the departed continue to grow in the next life, and to keep pace with us here, the proposition is even more unthinkable. To grow implies accretion and disintegration, and accretion and disintegration imply matter, subject to decay and death. They imply more; some process of assimilation akin to that of earth, as far as regards the body; as regards the mind, some process of accumulated experience, registered facts, mental attrition. Again the concrete enters; conceptions of space, of time, of motion are involved. Nor, granting these, would the results of such a theory be really satisfactory. The mother who loses her baby wants that baby back again; she does not want, after *long years of waiting*, to be confronted by that child grown to manhood. And then where is that growth to stop? And by what strange process of reversion are the decrepit to become young again? And why should our conceptions of time, founded on the revolutions of our sun and moon, hold good in a spiritual world, “where there is no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God doth lighten it.” Those conceptions of time are proved to us here and now to be absolutely false, a mere illusion of our senses, as we know by the experiences of our dreams and of all strong feelings and earnest thought: why, then, should we predicate them of a higher sphere than ours?

And, moreover, with time our desires change; because born of the physical nature, they alter with its alterations. The friends that left us when we were children and they were children, could not be our friends today. Should they return to us, we should realize that our memory of them is the child's memory of a child, and not the image we hold dear. It is only the immortal that changeth not, in whom is no变ableness neither shadow of turning.

There is a deeper meaning in the story of Rip Van Winkle than we ordinarily see therein. When the old man wakes from seeming death to return to his home, he can recognize nothing; all the old landmarks are swept away, all the familiar faces gone, and the only thing that has survived the years is the love in the heart of his child. "For love never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. Then shall I know even as also I am known."

And if even now, in rare and noble moments, we catch glimpses of those higher spheres in which our spiritual selves perpetually abide and hold communion with each other,

— meet

Above the clouds, and greet as angels greet,

if even now we know that all of good, all of true, all of beautiful in those gone before is with us still and ever shall be, can we not learn to realize that, once set free from these physical limitations, this consciousness shall but deepen and intensify? This is the true recognition, this is the union not to be broken by distance or by death, of which Christ said: "At that day (when the Spirit of Truth cometh) ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you."

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## EVOLUTION AND THE MONAD

I have chosen the phrase “Evolution *and* the Monad” rather than “the Evolution *of* the Monad” because the Secret Doctrine teaches us that the Monad is independent of evolution, that it is, as it were, the stationary center around which our being revolves and develops. To understand this idea in all its bearings, we must first realize, at least to some extent, the idea of the Unity of Spirit, of “the fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Over-soul,” itself but one presentation of that Absolute which is quite beyond the range of our thought, but is symbolised in *The Secret Doctrine* (I:14) under two aspects: absolute abstract Space, and absolute abstract Motion, representing Unconditioned Consciousness, for it is impossible to conceive of consciousness apart from change, and motion best symbolizes change. This aspect of the one Reality is also symbolized by the term “the Great Breath,” wherein we pass from absolute negation to that conception of duality embodied in the contrast of Spirit and Matter, or the two aspects of the Absolute which complete the metaphysical trinity and form the basis of conditioned Being. This, as being the root from which all manifestation proceeds, is, on the one hand pre-cosmic Ideation (or Abstract Intelligence before the conception of the Universe), the origin of all force, all intelligence, and all individual consciousness, while, on the other hand, it is pre-cosmic Substance, the substratum of all the varying grades of matter. It is easily seen that upon these two aspects of the Absolute depends the existence of the manifested Universe, for, apart from Cosmic Substance, Cosmic Ideation could not manifest as individual consciousness, since a physical basis is necessary to self-consciousness, while, apart from Cosmic Ideation, Cosmic Substance would remain an empty abstraction. The one would be like soul without body, the other like body without soul. The manifested Universe, therefore, must be pervaded by duality, that idea which the Hindus constantly symbolize as “the pairs of opposites,” and this idea necessitates the conception of the link uniting Spirit and Matter, that mysterious Divine Energy by which the “ideas” of Universal Mind are impressed on Universal Matter as “the laws of Nature,” the life-principle of the world.

Given this duality, this consciousness implying change, that law of periodicity, of ebb and flow, which exists throughout all departments of physical nature, must necessarily pervade the Universe, eternal as a whole, forever changing in its parts.

Now if we have an abstract Consciousness which only a union with a physical basis can individualize into a *self*-consciousness, the consciousness that “I am I,” we see the reason for what is called the “Cycle of Necessity,”

or Incarnation, the pilgrimage of every soul, every spark of the Universal Over-Soul, through the process of evolution back to its Divine Origin. No such soul, we are told, can acquire conscious — that is, independent — existence until it has passed through every elemental form of such a cycle, and has acquired individuality first by natural impulse, and then by self-induced and self-devised efforts, as a vine would raise itself from the ground, first by the life-impulse imparted to the germ, and then by the constant up-reaching and clinging of its tendrils to higher and higher points. So must the individual ascend through all degrees of being, from the potential consciousness of the mineral to the highest form of the archangel, but with no privileges or special gifts save those won by his own effort.

So much for the general law: now to examine a little into the process. We have first, according to *The Secret Doctrine* (I:614), to realize the difference between THE MONAD, the Universal Unit, and the *Monads*, or the manifested Unity, the Greek *Monas* signifying “Unity” in its primary sense. The Monads are not discrete principles, limited or conditioned, but rays from that one universal *absolute* Principle, the “Universal Unit” referred to above. They are, in other words, part of the Universal Consciousness, individualized by combination with a physical form, just as a portion of the water of the ocean can only be individualized, or separated from the rest, by being enclosed with certain limits. That ray, then, of the Divine Intellect which is to become a human soul, and complete its pilgrimage by returning to the source from whence it sprang, follows of necessity the same cycle of evolution as the rest of the manifested Universe. But at the same time we are warned not to think that it is this Monad itself which becomes man, for it stands to reason that a ray from the Divine cannot either progress or develop, or even be affected by the changes of state through which it passes. “It is not of this world or plane,” says *The Secret Doctrine* (I:164), “and may be compared only to an indestructible star of divine light and fire, thrown down to our earth as a plank of salvation for the personalities in which it indwells. It is for them to cling to it, and thus partaking of its divine nature obtain immortality.” Furthermore we are cautioned not to think of a Monad as a separate entity, passing through all the Kingdoms of nature to blossom into man at last, an atom of horn-blende, for instance, finally becoming a Humboldt {used rhetorically to mean a *fully developed human genius*, not literally the historical person, Alexander von Humboldt}. Instead of speaking of “a mineral monad,” we should speak of *the* Monad, or the Universal Energy, manifesting in that form of cosmic matter called the mineral kingdom. It is Intelligent Consciousness, in fact, passing through seven planes; first, three elemental planes, or nascent centers of forces; then the mineral kingdom, forming the turning-point in the evolution of consciousness, where it becomes wholly latent, its envelope being at its densest, most material stage; then the three stages of organic life, the vegetable kingdom (the second degree of awakening sensation), the animal, the human. “The total obscuration of spirit is the complete perfection of its polar antithesis, matter.”

Therefore we see that “it is the spiritual essence which properly constitutes the Monad, not the atomic aggregation, which is only the vehicle and the substance through which thrill the lower and the higher degrees of intelligence.” (*The Secret Doctrine*, I:179). From all this it becomes plain (as we are told upon I:189) that “there exists in Nature a triple evolutionary scheme, or rather three separate schemes of evolution, which in our system are inextricably interwoven and interblended at every point. These are the spiritual (or Monadic), the intellectual, and the physical evolutions.”

The spiritual evolution is concerned with the growth and development of our spiritual faculties in conjunction with the intellectual, represented by “the solar ancestors,” or “givers of intelligence and consciousness”; and the physical (concerned with the transformations of the body) represented by the “lunar ancestors,” the givers of our physical form.

This physical form has changed its external shape and density with every sub-race; as the form and physical structure of the fauna of the globe has changed with the ever-varying conditions of its different geological periods. In the *Commentary* (*The Secret Doctrine*, I:184) we are told that in the beginning the internal or astral man was then the external man, and his form evolved from within outward, like the lotus, whose external shape assumes gradually the form of the model within itself. But in the present age, the human embryo follows in its transformations all the forms that the physical frame of man had assumed during the three cycles of unconscious material development {*embryonic recapitulation*}, and it is a plant, a reptile, an animal before it finally becomes man, evolving in his turn, within himself, his own ethereal counterpart.

This is the physical evolution, following the universal law of progress from the spiritual through the material back to the spiritual again.

Now the intellectual evolution depends upon the development of our higher mental faculties and their union with the spiritual nature, by which alone they become immortal. The “spirit” in the sense of St. Paul, I Thessalonians 5:23, (who divides man into “spirit, soul, and body”), being one with the Universal Spirit, as before said, can have no individuality until united with the soul, or Mind. But, as Mr. (Dr.) Archibald Keightley said in his address upon the evolution of the Soul, “this is but a breath of the Universal Mind, individualized through its aggregation about the Monad as a spiritual, and the body as a physical, center.” And he goes on to say that from each soul, or, as we might put it, each individual consciousness, “produced by the overshadowing of a physical organism by the Monad, those of its energies, powers, faculties that are in its nature allied to the spiritual, or the Monad, unite with it and form the Reincarnating Ego; while those allied to the animal nature cling to it, and are dispersed at its disintegration.” This idea must have been in the mind of the great adept Paul when he said “Work out your own salvation” (*Philippians*, 2:12).

The history of the individual is the history of the race; the history of the race is the history of the Cosmos. If the scientist and the poet teach us that —

This world was once a fluid haze of light,  
Till toward the center set the starry tides,  
And eddied into suns, that wheeling cast  
The planets; then the monster, then the man;

— “In Memoriam A.H.H.,” Canto 118, by Alfred, Lord Tennyson.

*The Secret Doctrine* supplements the nebular hypothesis by showing that the same laws that ruled the destiny of the worlds shaped the development of man, once also, like the earth, “a fluid haze.” So in the *Commentary (The Secret Doctrine, I:188)* we read: “Man, in the First Round and First Race of the Earth, was an ethereal being, non-intelligent, but super-spiritual; in each of the subsequent races he grows more and more into an encased or incarnate being, but still preponderatingly ethereal.” He continued to grow firmer and more condensed in body, a more physical man, but not “the physical man” we know. Yet still “he is less intelligent than spiritual, for mind is slower and more difficult evolution than is the physical frame.” With the development of the physical and intellectual, the spiritual declines, until the middle point of the arc is reached with the Fourth Race, and the spiritual once more begins to climb slowly upward, till, with the Seventh Race, its domination shall be again established. “The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly” (I Corinthians, 15:45-49). The mention of Races and Rounds involves a short explanation for those not familiar with the terms, which can, perhaps, be best given in an adaptation, or rather condensation, of what Mr. Sinnett has said upon the subject, in the fourth chapter of his *Esoteric Buddhism*, but corrected by the more accurate teaching of *The Secret Doctrine*.

The great tide of human life, then, we are told, sweeps round the whole circle of the globes composing our Earth-chain in successive waves, and each of these waves is called a Round. But the Monad entering upon this pilgrimage does not merely touch each globe of that chain and then pass on, but has to pass through a series of seven Races upon that globe, each of these races occupying a long time, and having within its limits seven sub-races, that are each again divided into seven branch races. And each sub-race has a certain extra vitality at its climax, which leads it to throw off an additional offshoot race at that point in its progress, and to develop another at the end, by its dying momentum, so to speak. Moreover each Monad incarnates at least twice in each branch-race, making a total of about eight hundred incarnations {777?}, while between each physical existence the individual unit passes through a period of existence in the corresponding spiritual world, thus completing the analogy of day and night, work and sleep, the larger part of the time, however, as we reckon time, between one Round, or wave of evolution, and the next, being spent in subjective existence, or Devachan. Four times that great wave of human life has swept over this earth of ours, and we are now in the age of intellectual development, the Fifth Race, and have, therefore, to use the words of *The Secret*

*Doctrine*, “crossed the meridian point of the perfect adjustment of Spirit and Matter, and are cycling onward upon the spiritual side.” With each Round some one of the seven “principles” or vehicles of the Divine Spirit in man is especially developed, and *Mind*, as the fifth of these, can only reach its full development in the Fifth, or next succeeding Round. “But as every sub-race and every nation have their cycles and stages of evolution repeated upon a smaller scale,” we find some of our sub-races still on the shadowy descending arc of their respective national cycles; while others are at the apex of spiritual development as sub-races (*The Secret Doctrine*, II:301).

According to the diagram given on II:172, and the following explanation, we are shown that the Monads circling round any septenary chain are divided into seven classes. Class I is swept by the wave of life from Globe A through Globes B, C, D, E, F, to Globe G, thus completing its seven Rounds upon the lunar chain. Close upon its heels comes Class II, which enters Globe A just as Class I passes on to Globe B, and so on with all the other classes and Globes, so we see that by the time that Class VII, the last class, has left Globe A, that Globe begins to die, and in dying transmits its life-energies to the first Globe of a new chain, that of our Earth, in time to accommodate Class I, whose last Round has just been completed upon the last Globe of the Lunar chain, and who have been awaiting their new quarters, in the *Nirvāṇa* or period of planetary rest between the two chains. It is as if a family of seven children began their education by the eldest child’s entrance into a school divided into seven grades, each with its appropriate room. The next year the second child enters the first grade, and the first child passes into the second. By the time the seventh child enters the first grade, the eldest child has finished the course, and has a vacation, after which he enters the first grade in a new school.

Now we are told that the function of the “lunar ancestors,” is to evolve the astral body, upon which the physical body is built up. The first or lunar chain of globes, then, must be intended, it seems to me, for the evolution of the astral body, and the second, or earth-chain, for the evolution of the physical body, for we are told that when the First Class from the Lunar chain enters the first Globe of the Earth-chain, it begins with the lowest kingdom and so on successively. Therefore, it is only this First Class that has time to get through the seven grades and attain the human state of development during the First Round.

Meanwhile the “Solar ancestors” are “the givers of intelligence and consciousness,” the fashioners of the inner man. They are called also the *Agnīś-vatta*, the *Kumāras*, the “Sons of Fire,” and we are told (I:87), that they bear the latter name because they are the first beings (or “Minds”) evolved from Primordial Fire. “But there are two Fires; the first, or the purely *formless* and *invisible* Fire concealed in the *Central Spiritual Sun*, is spoken of as ‘triple’ (metaphysically), while the Fire of the manifested Kosmos is septenary, throughout both the Universe and our Solar System.” . . . The Occult Doctrine rejects the hypothesis born of the Nebular Theory, that the seven great planets have evolved from the central mass of our visible Sun. The first condensation

of cosmic matter of course took place about a central nucleus; but our Sun, it is taught, merely detached itself earlier than the other planets, and is therefore their elder brother, not their father.

We are warned in *The Secret Doctrine* itself that many of the theories therein blocked out are symbols, and that much of even the more esoteric teaching is also purely symbolical, and intended simply as a representation on our plane of what properly belongs to another. It is as if the poetry of John Milton or Dante Alighieri were translated into the picture-language of the early Egyptians. We must be careful, then, how we take these descriptions of globes and chains and so forth as literal astronomical facts belonging to our present visible and material plane, and be ready always to study the higher analogies and relations that these are meant to shadow forth. In any case the material fact always corresponds to an immaterial truth, and it is this that is the really important thing after all; the Kingdom of Heaven is within us, and all education is merely a *drawing-out* of the light within. As Robert Browning says in his *Paracelsus*:

*To Know*

Rather consists in opening out a way  
Whence the imprisoned splendour may escape,  
Than in effecting entry for a light  
Supposed to be without. Watch narrowly  
The demonstration of a truth, its birth,  
And source within us, where broods  
radiancē vast.

KATHARINE HILLARD.

## PLUCK AND PATIENCE

The famous English artist, Charles Robert Leslie, once painted upon his easel as a motto, “Pluck and Patience.” Pluck is but a familiar name for courage, yet it seems, like most familiar names, to bring the quality down from its heroic heights to the level of everyday life, and that is where we need it. For courage is not only to be thought of as comprising physical and moral courage, but also as being divided into active and passive courage, and the latter borders so closely upon patience that the English artist’s motto seems, upon reflection, almost tautological. Active courage takes the initiative, rushes into the fight, leaps into the gulf, executes some brilliant feat, some deed of heroism, is like a leaping flame, one splendid flash and then — darkness. Passive courage is the quality of endurance, that stands quiet and suffers unmoved, like the rock buffeted by many waves, but unshaken by all the tempests. In the words of Dante, it

Stands like a tower firm, that never bows  
Its head, for all the blowing of the winds.

Active courage, to be true courage, must be distinguished from hardihood or recklessness. Real courage will ever go hand in hand with reason, not in defiance of it. That action which is of no advantage to any man, being done, but a simple flinging of the gauntlet in the face of death, is no act of courage, but of foolish hardihood. Sir Philip Sidney, who was one of the bravest of the brave, once said that “courage ought to be guided by skill, and skill armed by courage. Neither should hardness darken wit, nor wit cool hardness. Be valiant as men despising death, but confident as unwonted to be overcome.” It is this confidence that is the secret of success; we are never afraid to do what we know we can do well. But let a man once admit the traitor Doubt within the citadel, and the gates are soon flung open to the foe and the city surrendered. True courage is ever sure of itself, not from overweening vanity, but from a reasonable confidence that a brave heart, strong in the right, *must* win the field. The first step to victory is the conviction that it belongs to us, because we are on the side of right and truth. The head must second the heart, judgment must confirm impulse, and then we are full-armed for any battle. When Paul wrote to the Thessalonians and called them “the children of day and of the light,” he exhorted them to put on the breastplate of faith and love, and to take for a helmet the hope of salvation. Was it an intentional distinction that when he wrote to the Ephesians they were told to put on the whole armor of God, that, having overcome all, they should *stand*? “Stand, therefore,” which surely indicates

*passive* courage, or endurance, “having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness” (which is equivalent to right-thought, right-speech, and right-action), “and having your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace” (which surely means love to man), “and, above all, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit,” or faith, hope, and the Divine word, to complete the heavenly panoply. Possibly Paul intended to imply that to resist, the soul needed more preparation than to attack. It is far easier to nerve the energies to one swift onslaught in some moment of trial, than to stand firm beneath the pinpricks of successive tiny arrows. The crudest torture known is the Chinese punishment that lets water fall drop by drop upon the culprit’s head. It is passive courage, the faculty of endurance, for which women are especially noted, as it is the form that they are especially required to exert. The faculty of resisting persistent pain without a murmur, of continuing the same wearisome tasks from day to day cheerfully and uncomplainingly, of ministering from hour to hour to the needs of others without a thought of self, this is what many of our sisters are doing all the time, and we call it patience, but it seems to me that we should call it courage, and of the noblest kind. To take up, day after day, the same task, one that never can be accomplished and ever remains to be done, is an heroic achievement, not merely an effort of patience. In *The Voice of the Silence* patience is the key to the third of the seven portals, but it is explained to be the gate of *fortitude* that that key unlocks; then comes “indifference to pain and pleasure,” and then “the dauntless energy that fights its way to the supernal truth.”

“Beware of trembling,” says *The Voice of the Silence*. “ ‘Neath the breath of fear the key of *patience* rusty grows: the rusty key refuseth to unlock. — The more one dares, the more he shall obtain. — Fear, O disciple, kills the will and stays all action. — If thou hast tried and failed, O dauntless fighter, yet lose not courage; fight on and to the charge return again, and yet again. — Remember, thou that fightest for man’s liberation, each failure is success, and each sincere attempt wins its reward in time.”

Perhaps, then, we may define pluck or courage as that which inspires us to act, and patience as that which helps us to repeat the action, even if apparently a failure. And it is here that reason comes to the help of courage, for the wise man will study the causes of that failure that he may avoid them in his next attempt. Then there is ever one obstacle the less in the way of his progress.

There is another phase of patience, that sweet unruffled serenity which nothing can disturb. One of the most beautiful passages of the old English drama is Thomas Dekker’s description of it {in his play}:

Patience! why, 'tis the soul of peace:  
Of all the virtues, 'tis nearest kin to heaven;  
It makes men look like gods. — The best of men  
That e'er wore earth about him was a sufferer,  
A soft, meek, patient, humble, tranquil spirit;  
The first true gentleman that ever breathed.

However one may dilate upon the subject, when we have said "Pluck and Patience," we have summed up in two words the manner of our duty in life, and the lesson is for every day as well as for those heroic moments that come but occasionally. We have but to remember that every mountain-road, however steep and arduous, is climbed step by step, that every year, however long and tedious, is made up of successive minutes, and that they come to us one by one, however we may loiter or hasten. So thinking, we shall find that courage and patience are two strong-winged angels to bear up the fainting spirit in its progress through life; courage to strengthen it to fight and to endure, patience to keep its serenity as undisturbed as "a lamp well guarded in a spot free from all wind."

KATHARINE HILLARD.

## REINCARNATION

In Mr. Judge' remarks on Reincarnation last week, he reminded us of the necessity of distinguishing clearly what it *is* that reincarnates. At the risk of repeating much that has been said already, I should like to say once again, for it can hardly be said too often, that a right understanding of the more abstruse teachings of Theosophy depends upon our being able to free ourselves from materialistic conceptions of spiritual things. The tendency of the human mind is always towards the embodiment of abstract ideas in a concrete form, particularly in the Western World, where the intellect has not been trained in the subtleties of Eastern metaphysics for countless generations. The ordinary intellect, plunged into the sea of abstract ideas, is like a man who does not know how to swim, and is distractedly baffling with the waves. It is in vain to tell him that the human body is lighter than water, and *must* float, if he will but put himself in the proper position and keep still; he clutches wildly at the smallest plank, and feels that only a rope or an oar, or something tangible that he can grasp with his hands, can possibly be of any use to him. Not even when Peter *saw* Jesus walking upon the water, was he able to follow his example.

So the Western mind, launched upon the sea of Oriental metaphysics, grasps eagerly at an image, a metaphor, a diagram, anything that can be seen with the eye and leave a definite trace upon the memory. It is certainly better to have a life-preserved when we are compelled to jump overboard, than to be drowned, but we must be very careful that the life-preserved keeps its proper place, and does not hold our heels above water instead of our head. There are certain truths that can be impressed upon the mind by means of images and metaphors, but there are others that only the intuition can apprehend, and where that is silent, it is in vain to force the intelligence, which is as incapable of the higher insight as Peter was of treading the waves over which his Master passed so lightly.

We are often warned in *The Secret Doctrine* and other books against the danger of accepting as a fact what is meant to be an allegory, but we need to have that warning repeated at frequent intervals. The moss of concrete conceptions will gather on the walls of the temple of Truth, and needs to be scraped away again and again, if the beautiful marble is to be seen in all its purity.

It is impossible to take a right view of the doctrine of Reincarnation unless we have, to begin with, a proper conception of man's nature. We may talk glibly of the sevenfold constitution of man, and name the seven so-called "principles" in proper order, but let us beware of thinking of them as seven *things*. We might as well try to construct a rainbow by repeating the names of its seven colors. Every day almost, we hear some one say: "I can't bear the idea of Reincar-

nation; I don't want to come back to this weary world; when I leave it, I long to have everlasting rest; better annihilation than a return to such a life."

When you ask such a person *what* they think is to return, you will invariably find that it is the *personality*, the man of today, thickly incrusted with a weight of bodily ills, mental fatigues, and physical accumulations of every kind, whims, idiosyncrasies, fixed habits. It is the John Smith who stands before you, tired out beneath his earthly load, which he cannot dissociate from his real Ego. He expects to return as John Smith behind the mask of a new body, nothing changed but the flesh; the memory in abeyance, to be sure, but perhaps to revive occasionally in dreams, or in shifting, half-caught glimpses of former existence;

Some vague emotion of delight,  
In gazing up an Alpine height,  
Some yearning towards the lamps of night.

— *Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse*, Matthew Arnold.

But were the constitution of man as taught in theosophy properly understood, that weary mortal would realize that with death he will lay down *all* the burdens of this life, and that with the body must pass away every thing but the thinking principle, the consciousness, that real entity, whose intelligence, passions, desires, all the lower faculties of mind, in fact, are but aspects of the immortal being within. "There is but one real man," says *The Key to Theosophy*, "enduring through the cycle of life, and immortal in essence if not in form, and this is *Manas*, the mind-man, or embodied Consciousness."

It is difficult indeed to realize the idea of unembodied Consciousness, of immortal mind; perhaps the best way is to recall our own experiences in our highest moments, to recollect how independent of all *personality* was the soul at such moments; how we might have been a King or a beggar for aught we knew or cared when absorbed in the higher existence, even though it were only on the intellectual plane that our freed soul disported itself, and all the mysteries of the Spirit were still far beyond our ken. But such moments of keen thought, of intense feeling, of deep affection, give us glimpses of a state of pure consciousness apart from personality, and this is the reincarnating Ego.

So that the tired mortal may lie down to his last sleep, safe in the thought that he has done with *all* his personal incumbrances, and that not a trace of the existence he has left behind will remain in the being who returns. Not a trace of the *personality* that is, but Karma waits for the reincarnating soul, and as it has sown in this life, the harvest will be reaped in the next.

The farmer may fix his mind upon results, and work purely for the sake of the bushels of grain that he will garner in the fall, but we must learn, while making very effort to sow the seed of better harvests for the future, to keep our eyes fixed upon the duty nearest us, and give ourselves no concern for consequences. To do the right because it is the right, not because it will be better for us in this life or another, is the true principle.

“Whoever in acting dedicates his actions to the Supreme Spirit and puts aside all selfish interest in their result, is untouched by sin, even as the leaf of the lotus is unaffected by the waters,” says the *Bhagavad Gītā*. Let us then devote ourselves to working, each in our own place, for the benefit of all, secure in the knowledge that thus eternal Justice and eternal Law shall work with us, for Duty is their child.

I slept, and dreamed that life was Beauty:  
I woke, and found that life was Duty.  
Was then my dream a shadowy lie?  
Toil on, sad heart, courageously,  
And thou shalt find thy dream to be  
A noonday light and truth to thee.

— *The Present Crisis*, James Russell Lowell

KATHERINE HILLARD.

## THE BEATRICE OF DANTE (1)

### FROM A THEOSOPHIC POINT OF VIEW

One of the most interesting things in the history of intellectual development, is to note the manner in which certain ideas crop up here and there in different ages and different countries, seemingly without connection, and yet bearing the marks of unmistakable family likeness. And as the summits of the highest mountains resemble each other closely, and in all countries the towering pinnacles of snow and ice catch the first gleams of sunrise upon their dazzling brows, and glow with the rose of sunset long after the lower world is dark, so it is with the greatest minds. They rise above the general level of the race, to receive the first glimpses of the eternal light, and in all countries and all ages, Wisdom is their common portion. Especially is this to be noted of the seers of the world, of those who use their spiritual *insight* rather than their intellectual *outsight*, and of these was Dante Aligheri — as he himself said of Aristotle — “master of those who know.” Dante is said to have belonged to the Order of the Templars, to that body of men acknowledged by all to have been reared in the utmost refinement and culture of the day, men imbued, through their travels and residence in the East, with much of its mystic learning and hidden secrets. The religion of the Templars has long been known to have been no tissue of childish absurdities and superstititious practices, but to represent that advanced thought which in an age of persecution it was most necessary to conceal. Rightly considered, says Wilcke (the great German authority on the subject) their secret doctrine was nothing more than Protestantism in general and rationalism in particular. But we are told that the *Temple* signified the Wisdom-religion, handed down in secret from remote antiquity, and even Frédéric Ozanam, the principal Roman Catholic writer upon Dante, declares that the plan of the *Divine Comedy* closely follows the outlines of an initiation into the Egyptian mysteries.

However this may be, it is at least true, as Ozanam says further, that “mystics, by a certain divine intuition which they had no leisure to verify, often had a presentiment of certain natural laws whose complete revelation was reserved for subsequent ages. . . . In mysticism a great power was given to the heart over the mind, and the imagination held the keys of the heart; thence a real need, a constant habit, of allegorical expressions and legendary allusions. Contemplative, ascetic, symbolical, such has mysticism ever been, and it has left its triple seal upon the philosophy of Dante.”

Science has found in that philosophy, the germ of many of the most modern ideas in physiology, more than a hint of the laws of gravity and

attraction, a foreknowledge of a western continent, and a theory of morals far in advance of Dante's age. He was accused of heresy many times, as a Ghibelline {a member of the imperial party in medieval Italy} and a Templar {Knights Templar}, both before and after his death, and Cardinal del Poggetto was with difficulty restrained from exhuming his lately buried remains and having them publicly burned as those of a heretic. Many authors, English, French, Italian, have held similar views as to Dante's secret connection with the Templars, and about 1835, Vecchioni, President of the Supreme Court of Naples, tried in vain to be allowed to publish a book on the *Divine Comedy* in which he proposed to show that a treasure of primitive wisdom had been handed down by the Egyptian priests who transmitted its secrets to the initiated alone, by means of a secret language; that this language passed with the mysteries into Greece, was employed by the early poets, and then adopted by the philosophers, especially by Plato; from Greece it was transmitted to Italy, and handed down to the time of Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio, who used it in their works; and finally, that the *Divine Comedy* was arranged after the plan of a *Taletes*, or initiation to the mysteries, ending in the *Eposis* or vision of the Divine. This secret language, or rather conventional use of language, was taught by grammarians, *Grammar* being the first of the seven mystic sciences known as the *Trivium* and *Quadrivium*, and defined as *the art of expressing a thing with two meanings*.

I have no time to go into the history of heresy in the Middle Ages, but it is a significant fact, that *Catharism*, generally identified with the religion of the Templars, is said to be derived, not from a Greek, but from an Indian word, the name of a river and of a people. The Brahminical white thread was used as a girdle by both Catharists and Templars.

Jean-Marie Loiseleur, the great French authority on the Templars, says that they believed in a Divine Spirit, as opposed to the organizer of matter and the creator and preserver of the world, and that they were closely connected with the sect of the *Enchêtes* or worshippers of Lucifer. Here we recognize the old opposition of Spirit and Matter, and the dawning recognition of the formula *Demon est Deus inversus*. Charles William Heckethorn, in his *Secret Societies of all Ages and Countries*, speaking of the Catharists, says that in their chivalric orders, the degrees, at first three, afterwards became seven, and at the time of *their presumed fusion with the Albigenses, the Templars, and the Ghibellines*, thirty-three. We know, at least, that Dante was a Ghibelline, and thirty-three, the number of the degrees in Masonry, is the number upon which he bases the structure of the *Divine Comedy*. "The statutes of the Catharists closely resembled those of the Templars," continues Heckethorn, "and their clothes were of the same three colors with those of Beatrice, and the three circles in Paradise," *i.e.*, red, white, and green, the colors of the Trinity.

The idol Baphomet, that the Templars were accused of worshipping, represented the head of an old man with a flowing white beard, undoubtedly identical with the *Ancient of Days* or the *White Head* of the Kabbala, a symbol

of the Deity. The name signifies the *baptism of wisdom*, and corresponds to the *Abraxas* of the Gnostics, often represented under the same figure, surrounded by four stars, and beheld as the sun. Dante uses *Cato* in the *Banquet* as a symbol of the Deity (*Banquet* iv. 28), and describes him in the *Purgatory*, Canto I, as an old man with a long white beard, surrounded by the four consecrated stars, which shone so brightly upon his face that the poet beheld him as the sun.

One of Dante's French critics speaks of the Pagan characteristics of the *Inferno*, of the many occult elements of the *Purgatorio*, where we have all the tests of initiation, both ancient and modern, of the many heretics and heathen in the *Paradiso*, of the fact that Virgil and Statius, Dante's guides, are both pagans, and that St. Bernard, to whom is given the part of third hierophant, or high priest, was the compiler of the rules of the Templars.

Many authors, as I have said before, have pointed out the resemblance between the course of the *Divine Comedy* and the old initiations, but we must not forget that, while to the profane these mysteries represented the story of a hero's descent into hell and subsequent ascension into heaven, and to the scientist the progress of the sun through the signs of the Zodiac, to the more enlightened they typified the regeneration of the soul. The Masonic initiation for instance, exoterically represents the murder and resurrection of Hiram, the architect of Solomon's Temple, and the assassins slay him at the *west* door, because the sun sets in the west. They are twelve in number, to correspond with the signs of the Zodiac, and they bury the body and mark the spot with a sprig of acacia (emblem of immortality) to typify the new vegetation to follow the sun's resurrection. The body of Hiram is discovered on the seventh day, to symbolize the renewed life of the sun in the seventh month, and can only be brought to life by "the lion's grip," because the sun's full strength is attained when he enters *Leo* (July).

This is the astronomical key, but we are told that to all significant myths, the keys are *seven*. We are also told that the building of Solomon's Temple typified the acquirement of the Secret Wisdom, and that this is why it is said to have been reared without sound of hammer or axe. All initiations follow the same general lines. Beginning with the death of *the old man*, they symbolize rebirth, accompanied by the baptism of Lethe, or the forgetfulness of evil, and Eunoë, or the reception of good, followed by resurrection, or ascension to the higher life. The neophyte's entrance to the new life is almost always made through a narrow crevice, from which the initiate emerges, as from the gates of birth. Such passages still exist in the old crypts of many cathedrals, as well as in the Great Pyramid, and when Dante leaves Hell, he emerges through a *narrow crevice* in the rock, from which he first beholds the stars.

The Freemasons of today proudly claim descent from the Templars, and there are many singular coincidences in Dante's poem with portions of the Masonic symbolism. It would take too long to go through the whole story of the regeneration of the soul, which Dante himself tells us to be his subject, its *mystical* sense; "the passage of the holy from the slavery of present corruption

to the liberty of the eternal glory.” Some of the most striking resemblances, however, are found in the description of the gate of Purgatory, led up to by three steps, at whose top stands an angelic warder with a naked sword, to demand of the poet who he is, and where is his escort. In fact, the whole description of his passage through the seven circles of Purgatory, with its two baptisms, and the vision of the glorified Beatrice, or Divine Wisdom, at the end, corresponds most closely, as has been said, to the old *Taletes*. So in the Paradise, with its voyage from star to star, there are many symbols recalling the Masonic temple with its starry roof. Reghellini de Schio (who wrote a book on Masonry as the result of the Egyptian religions {titled *Freemasonry considered as the result of the Egyptian religions*}) was so impressed by these resemblances, that he declared Dante an initiate of the Kabbalistic and Rosicrucian orders. Charles William King, in his book on *The Gnostics and Their Remains*, says that the 18th canto of the *Purgatory* is “replete with the profoundest symbolism, which the Freemasons claim for their own.” It is enough to speak of Dante’s use of such symbols as the imperial eagle, the mystic ladder, the rose and cross, the pelican, the supper of the Lamb, the three pillars of Faith, Hope, and Charity; of symbolic colors, letters, and geometric figures — the point, the circle, the triangle, the square; the trampling of crown and miter under foot by the neophyte; the invoking of Divine vengeance on the destroyers of the Temple; the choice of St. Bernard, organizer of that Order, as High Priest; to confirm these statements.

To all these coincidences in the *Divine Comedy*, the other works of Dante’s great trilogy, the *Vita Nuova* (or *New Life*), and the *Convito* (or *Banquet*) supply even more ample confirmation, and it seems to me strange that any one familiar with the character of the man, his age, and his Studies, could fail to see the mystical element to be the uppermost in all. Lest this should be missed in the *New Life*, in spite of his efforts to make it plain, Dante wrote the *Banquet*, a philosophical work in prose, especially intended to explain and corroborate his other works, and he also wrote to Cangrande della Scala a much-neglected letter about the *Divine Comedy*, in which he tells him that this book, like all other books, can be understood, and ought to be interpreted, in four ways, the *literal*, the *allegorical*, the *moral*, and the *mystical*; and moreover he is careful to inform us that the *literal* is not necessarily the historical, but may be only “a beautiful fiction.”

The *Vita Nuova*, or story of Dante’s *New Life*, has been too much studied from the *historical* point of view, and the Beatrice of that “beautiful fiction” considered as a real person. Of course, there is no time to go fully into this much-vexed question; suffice it to say that we know that a Beatrice Portinari existed, but we have only the authority of Boccaccio for her identification with the Beatrice of Dante, who nowhere names any family or any place in his book; that Boccaccio is an exceedingly untrustworthy chronicler, and all his dates (which are very few) are at variance, either with Dante’s, or with history, while all Dante’s dates in the *Vita Nuova* are mystical combinations of the number 9.

The usual number of degrees in the secret societies is 33, the number Dante uses in the *Divine Comedy*. In the mediaeval associations at least, these degrees were denoted by a series of odd numbers, and when the man was *born again* and rose to the *new life*, these numbers were called years. The third degree, for instance, was called the 9th year. Dante's story of his *New Life* describes his meeting Beatrice (the "giver of blessings") for the first time when he was *nine* years old, and though he *sees* her often after that, it is nine years before their second meeting, when for the first time he *hears her speak*. Now in the third degree, the neophyte (then said to be *nine years old*) "beholds the light," symbolised by a fair woman, with whom he is said to fall in love. "Beholding the light," consisted in *seeing* the sacred symbols and *hearing* them explained. The two mystic baptisms of Lethe and Eunoë signified *purification*, or death to sin, and *manifestation*, or rebirth in purity. Manifestation was performed in two ways, by showing the symbols to the neophyte, and by explaining their meaning to him, and was therefore the same process as "beholding the light," or "falling in love with Madonna." This ocular inspection and oral instruction were called "the eyes and mouth" (or smile) of Madonna, and constituted her *first* and *second beauty*.

In his *New Life*, as I have just said, Dante at the age of nine, *sees* Beatrice, and nine years later, *hears* her speak. And when he meets her in Purgatory, after her death, she wears a veil, through which he can only see her glorious *eyes*, and then she throws it off, and he discovers her *second beauty*, her smile, "the splendour of the living Light Eternal." "Not in mine eyes alone is Paradise," says Beatrice to him, further on.

In the *Banquet* Dante explains that by the *eyes* of his lady he means the demonstrations of Wisdom, and by her *second beauty*, her smile, that intuitive conviction whereby we perceive Wisdom as without any veil.

Such mystical dates as Dante uses all through the *New Life* occur in almost all the writings of the mediaeval poets, and these coincidences, if they are nothing more, are very striking. The Holy Week is almost always made the turning-point of their lives and of their loves. As Dante chooses it for the time of the *Commedia*, so Boccaccio takes it for the *Decameron*, and dates his mystical work *Filocopo* on Holy Saturday. He first meets his Fiammetta "in a temple," on Holy Saturday, while Petrarch meets Laura "in a temple" on Good Friday, at "the first hour of the day"; she is born on Good Friday, and she dies on Good Friday, "at the first hour of the day." Luís de Camões and several of the Troubadour poets describe themselves as falling in love on Good Friday, and their ladies, like Laura, all die on Good Friday, many of them, like Laura and Beatrice, "at the first hour of the day." The degree already described as "beholding the light" or "falling in love with Madonna," was given at "the first hour of the day," and when the light was withdrawn again, in the last degree, it was said to disappear, or "Madonna died," at "the first hour of the day."

KATHERINE HILLARD, F.T.S.

(To be concluded.)

## THE BEATRICE OF DANTE (2)

### FROM A THEOSOPHIC POINT OF VIEW (Concluded from III:464.)

Dante then begins the story of his *New Life* by saying that he was nine years old when first the glorious lady of his mind appeared before his eyes, even she who was called Beatrice (the giver of blessing) by many who did not know it to be her name. She was not quite nine, and when he saw her, the spirit of life, which hath its dwelling in the secretest chamber of the heart, trembled violently, and said to him (in Latin) “Here is a deity stronger than I, who, coming, shall rule over me.” And the animal soul, dwelling in the lofty chamber whither all the sensitive spirits carry their perceptions, was filled with wonder, and speaking more especially unto the spirits of vision, said: “Your *beatitude* hath now been made manifest unto you. . . And Love many times commanded me to go in search of this very young little angel,” continued Dante, “wherefore many times in my childhood did I go in search of her, and saw her to be of such noble and praiseworthy bearing, that certainly to her might be applied these words of the poet Homer,

“She seemed not the daughter of mortal man, but of God.”

Nevertheless, it was nine years to a day after their first meeting before Dante ever heard her speak, and then she only saluted him as she passed him in the street. It is after this second meeting that the poet’s love makes such havoc with his bodily health, that his friends, noting his weakness, ask him: “By whose help has Love done this?” “I looked in their faces smiling,” says Dante, “and spake no word in return.” And then, seeing Beatrice across a church one day, he notices a gentle lady midway between them, and makes, in his pretended devotion to her, a “screen” for his love to Beatrice, by this means keeping his secret for some months and years. Now the love of a boy of 18 or 20, whose only demonstration had been one salutation to his lady in the street, scarcely needed such concealment, and yet when this lady left the city, Love named to him another “screen,” and this second pretended devotion was so well enacted that people gossiped of it, and accused him of vicious conduct, so that when next Beatrice met him, she denied him her most sweet salutation, in which lay all his beatitude.

Passing over his glimpse of Beatrice at a wedding (where none but *married* ladies were wont to go) and the account of the death of her father (the only *realistic* incident in the book), we come to Dante’s mention of his severe illness, on the ninth day of which he has a vision of Beatrice as dead, in many respects

like the vision of her in *Purgatory*. Following this dream, comes his description of his last meeting with Beatrice in life, as she passes by him preceded by that lady Joan, whom he compares to St. John, going before the True Light, saying, "I am a voice crying in the desert: prepare ye the way of the Lord." And then Dante declares that Beatrice should be called *Love*.

The narrative of the *New Life* abruptly breaks off soon after this, with the news of the passing away of Beatrice, which news comes to Dante as he is writing a sonnet in her praise. "This happened," he says, "at the *first hour* of the *ninth* day of the *ninth* month (according to Syrian reckoning) of that year of the thirteenth century in which the perfect number (*ten*) was *nine* times completed." And one reason why *nine* plays so conspicuous a part in her history, he tells us, is, that all the *nine* heavens were in the most perfect harmony at her birth, but "the more subtle and infallibly *true* reason is, that she was a miracle whose *sole root* was the blessed Trinity."

At this point the story of the *Banquet* comes in (as Dante said he intended that it should) to help out and corroborate the *New Life*. In both books the idea is the same, and it is a curious fact that neither in them nor in the *Divine Comedy* (except once where the rhyme necessitates it) does the poet ever use the word death in connection with Beatrice. Two years after she had been made "a citizen of the Eternal Life," Dante says in the *Vita Nuova*, he first beheld at a window a gentle lady, who so comforted him with her pitying glances, that he thought of her with too much pleasure. By this gentle lady, he tells us in the *Banquet*, he meant Scholastic Philosophy, and for the next two years and a half he devoted himself to this branch of learning.

But in spite of its attractions, and those of the active life of soldier and statesman that soon followed, the love of his first ideal was still latent in the soul of the poet, and as the *Banquet* proceeds, Dante shows us how far beyond all science and all morality is the Divine Philosophy or Eternal Wisdom, which is full of all peace, and whose dwelling-place is that *Quiet Heaven* where the soul is at rest with the Supreme. So at the end of the *New Life* he has a vision, about the *ninth* hour, of the glorified Beatrice, clothed in that sanguine raiment in which she first appeared to him, and seeming as young as when he first saw her. And remembering the past, he grieves to think that he has ever been led aside by any other love, and all his thoughts return to center upon their first beatitude. And he has another vision of Beatrice receiving homage "beyond that sphere of widest range," the *Primum Mobile*; that is, within the Quiet Heaven of Divine Wisdom and Peace. And after that other vision embodied in the *Divine Comedy*, he resolves to say no more of this blessed one till he can more worthily treat of her.

When Dante next meets Beatrice, on the summit of the Mount of Purgatory (in that terrestrial Paradise, explained by the Fathers of the Church to mean the contemplative life,) she says to him with keen irony, "How didst thou deign (being lost in the pride of learning) to come unto this Mount?" And turning to her attendant Virtues, she continues: "Not only by the influence of the stars at

his birth did this man receive great intellectual power, but also by special gift of Divine grace did he become such in his new life that everything good was possible to him. I revealed myself to him in his youth, and for some time led him with me in the right way, but . . . as I ascended from flesh to spirit, and beauty and virtue increased in me, I became less dear to him, and he turned to pursue those false images of good that never fulfil their promises. . . . The law of justice would be violated, should he pass Lethe without tears and repentance." And when he has repented, confessed, and undergone the double baptism of water and fire, Beatrice leads the poet upward from heaven to heaven, until St. Bernard guides him to the final Vision of the Divine.

In the *New Life*, the *Banquet*, and the *Divine Comedy*, the descriptions of Beatrice are almost identical with those of Wisdom in the various books of the Bible and the Apocrypha, which Dante was so fond of quoting, and he identifies Beatrice continually with Love, with Wisdom, and therefore with the Logos. In the *New Life* he declares her to be identical with *Love*, and in the *Banquet* he writes: "Wherefore it is written of this eternal Love *which is Wisdom*, 'He created me from the beginning before the world, and I shall never fail.' (Ecclesiastes 24:9.) And in the Proverbs of Solomon (8:23) she, Wisdom, says, 'I was set up from everlasting.' And in the beginning of the Gospel of John her eternity is openly declared."

From these and many other passages quoted or assimilated by Dante, we see the deep hold that the Gnostic ideas had taken upon his mind, and the close resemblance that his *Wisdom* (here and in many other places identified with the Logos and the Second Person of the Trinity) bears to that spiritual intuition, or secret Knowledge of Divine things, common to mystics of all ages. The highest Good, beyond which there is nothing to aspire to, Dante tells us, is that blessedness (or beatitude) which follows the exercise of the soul in contemplation<sup>1</sup>. He has a vision of this beatitude as a child, he loses it for awhile in the busy whirl of the active life, the pursuits of the world, the cares of the state and the family, the duties of the soldier, the studies of the poet, the artist, the musician, and the scientist (for the many-sided Dante was all these), but at last the vision of the higher life, as he had seen it when a boy, came back to him, and he returned to the love of Divine Wisdom, that "splendour of the living Light Eternal."

"And thus it appears," says Dante, in the *Banquet*, "that our beatitude, that is, this felicity of which we are speaking, we may first find imperfectly in the active life, that is, in the exercise of the moral virtues, and then almost perfectly in the contemplative life, that is, in the exercise of the intellectual virtues; which two operations are unimpeded and most direct ways to lead us to the supreme beatitude that cannot be obtained here, below."

The schoolmen of Dante's time, who based their philosophical speculations upon the system of Aristotle, defined the intellect as the capability of receiving abstract ideas, the *possibility* of understanding, in short, and therefore this was called the "*possible intellect*." It was compared to a mirror, and ideas to the reflections therein, and Aristotle was the first to recognize that as this

faculty bore the same relation to pure conceptions that the sense of sight does to visible things, it was necessary to admit also the existence of an active principle which should stand to this in the relation of light to the sense of vision. This principle Aristotle called the “*Active Intelligence*,” and in the union of this with the *Possible Intellect*, is consummated, he said, the act of pure comprehension. This Active Intelligence is universal, immortal, perpetual; “the intellectual life through her is the greatest beatitude to which man can aspire; indeed, it marks him more than man, divine.” So that Dante was following his Master closely when he wrote: “In every noble soul is its own virtue, and the intellectual and the divine,” and again in the *Banquet*, when he speaks of *mind* as “that culminating and most precious part of the soul, which is Deity.” (*Banquet*, 3:3.)

Dante then, in identifying Beatrice with the Logos, with “that eternal Love which is Wisdom,” identifies her with that principle that Theosophists would call *Buddhi*, or Spiritual Wisdom, the vehicle by which the Supreme (or *Ātma*) enters into and illuminates the mind of man. For to Dante, who followed closely the system of Aristotle, ideas corresponded to things seen; the intellect to the sense of sight; and the intelligence or intuition (“that most precious part of the soul which is Deity”) to the light by whose aid alone the sense of sight can perceive visible things. “In every noble soul is its own virtue, and the intellectual, and the divine,” and so (while realizing that all such divisions are but varying aspects of the Consciousness, not different entities), Dante divides the soul into *life*, which is one in all things (corresponding to *Prāṇa*); into *feeling*, which includes desire and passion (corresponding to *Kāma*); and into *reason* (or *Manas*) which he divides into the higher and lower, the imaginative and creative, and the reasoning or logical faculties. “And thus,” he says, “the soul partakes of the Divine nature in the form of sempiternal Intelligence” (which we should call *Buddhi*), “because the soul, by virtue of this sovereign power, is so ennobled and set free from matter, that the Divine Light, as in the angels, can shine through her.” “And this Divine Wisdom,” says Dante, quoting from the Book of the Wisdom of Solomon, “is the brightness of the Everlasting Light (or *Ātma*), the unspotted mirror of the majesty of God.”

There could scarcely be a closer parallel with the theosophic ideas than this, and many more such passages could be cited, both from Dante’s prose and his poetry. No less significant is that chapter of the *Banquet* (4:21) wherein he explains the conditions necessary to growth in spiritual knowledge as they have been so often explained to us, the absoluteness of the law that when the vessel is ready, it will be filled, and that if some are made to honor and some to dishonor, as St. Paul says, it is because they have made themselves fit for such various use. If a man purify his soul, “he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work.” (2 Timothy 2:21)

“And if it happen,” says Dante, “that by the purity of the receiving soul the intellectual virtue be absolutely separate and free from any corporeal shadow, then the Divine goodness multiplies in that soul, as in a thing worthy

to receive it; and further, it multiplies in the soul endowed with this intelligence according to her capacity of reception. . . . And some are of opinion that if all these powers should cooperate in the production of a soul according to their most favorable disposition, the Deity would descend upon that soul in such fulness that it would be almost another God incarnate." (*Banquet*, 4:21.)

Not all the poetry and philosophy of mysticism embodied in Dante's *New Life*, however, were sufficient to convince the world at large that it was the history of a *soul* that he was writing, and not that of a lover, and so in the *Banquet* (begun even before the *New Life* was finished, and left uncompleted at the poet's death), he tried to be even more explicit. In the first part he declares his object in writing the *Banquet* to be twofold; firstly, to set forth certain teachings which he could give in no other way; and secondly: to clear himself from the infamy of being held subject to such passion as those who read his *Canzoni* (lyrics) might consider to possess him, whereas not *passion* but *virtue* was their moving cause. "And I say that Love held discourse within my *mind*, that it might be understood that this Love was born of the noblest part of our nature, that is, of Truth and Virtue, and also to exclude any false opinion of me, by which my love might be suspected of being a sensuous delight" . . . . "By my lady," he says again, "I always mean that Philosophy treated of in the preceding *Canzone*" — that is, Philosophy identified there with Wisdom, "which exists above all in God, because in Him is supreme Wisdom, and supreme Love, and supreme Power, which cannot exist elsewhere, except as it proceeds from Him. Therefore the Divine Philosophy is of the Divine Essence, because in Him can be nothing added to His Essence; and she is most noble, because the Divine Essence is most noble: and she exists in Him perfectly and truly, as it were by eternal wedlock."

Therefore I think, we may conclude, from Dante's own words, that his Beatrice was the light of Divine Wisdom first made manifest to him in his youth, then for a time obscured by the shadows of the world, to shine out more clearly than ever as he neared the end of his mortal pilgrimage. He spent the last nineteen years of his life in loneliness and exile, occupied with his greatest work, the *Divine Comedy*, and writing at the same time the *Banquet*, a prose exposition of his philosophy, full of hints as to the hidden meaning of his symbolism, so often and so grossly misunderstood. To a man whose thoughts continually soared above the earthly plane, whose very features bore such marks of profound study and profound sorrow, that the Florentine women pointed at him as he passed, and said: "here goes the man who has seen Hell"; to a regenerated soul who had chosen the contemplative life as his beatitude, what need was there of earthly ties? There is no occasion, I think, to stigmatize the wife of Dante as unworthy of him, because he did not send for her to join him in his exile: he had become a wandering ghost, wrapped in visions of another world, long before his body was laid to rest in the ancient city of Ravenna.

“And since God is the source of our soul,” says the great poet and seer in his latest work, “and has made it like unto Himself, therefore this soul desires above all things to return to Him. . . . And because her knowledge is imperfect, because she has neither experience nor learning, things of little value seem great to her, and therefore she begins by first desiring them. . . . Wherefore we may see that one desirable thing stands before the next one to the eyes of the soul, almost like a pyramid; for at first the smallest thing hides all the rest, and is, as it were, the point of the ultimate subject of desire, which is God, standing at the base of all.” (*Il Convito*, 4:12.)

“Therefore” (says Dante again, in his book on the *Monarchy*) “the ineffable Providence of God proposes to man two aims; the one the beatitude of this life, which consists in the operation of his peculiar faculties, and is represented by the terrestrial paradise: the other the beatitude of the eternal life, which consists in the fruition of the Divine aspect, to which human goodness cannot ascend if not aided by the Divine light, and this is what is meant by the celestial paradise. To these two beatitudes, as to diverse conclusions, we must arrive by different ways.” And again, in the *Paradiso*:

All natures, by their destinies diverse.  
Tend more or less close to their origin;  
Hence they move onward unto different ports  
O'er the great sea of being; and each one  
With instinct given it, which bears it on.

KATHARINE HILLARD, F T. S.

NOTE

1. Identical with the “Concentration” of Patañjali.

## THE ALLEGORY OF THE CUP

When François Rabelais' hero, Pantagruel, has completed the long and toilsome voyage of discovery that he makes for the benefit of his friend Panurge, the two arrive at last at the shrine of the Divine Bottle, to which they are guided by the illustrious Lantern, emblem of the light of Truth. The whole description of their progress through the underground region in which the temple they seek is built, is full of the symbolism of initiation, through whose manifold tests the travelers are obliged to pass. The mystical seven planets, with their appropriate jewels and metals, are represented here, and the twelve signs of the zodiac, with other astronomical figures, are painted upon the dome over the fountain, which is itself shaped like a heptagon within a perfect circle. From this temple the neophyte, specially arrayed for the ceremony, is conducted to the inner shrine, a round chapel built of transparent stone of richest workmanship. Within it is another seven-angled fountain, in the midst of which stands the Divine Bottle, a pure, oval crystal. The hymn of invocation having been sung, the oracle pronounces the one word "Drink!"

And the priestess dismisses the seekers with these words: "Here below, in these circumcentral regions, we establish as the sovereign good, not to take and receive, but to impart and give; and we reckon ourselves happy, not in taking much of others' goods, but in imparting and giving of our own to our fellows. Go, friends, in the protection of that intellectual sphere of which the center is everywhere and the circumference nowhere, that we call God. All philosophers and ancient sages, the more surely and pleasantly to accomplish the road of divine knowledge and the pursuit of wisdom, have esteemed two things necessary — the guidance of God and the love of mankind. Now go, in the name of God, and may He be your guide!"

It is easy to see the identity of this Divine Bottle with the sacred cup or consecrated drink of all nations. The Greek and Roman gods drank from the cup of Hebe or Ganymede (two personifications of the same idea), and the priestesses of their oracles also drank deep draughts of the sacred beverage before they prophesied, as in India the Soma juice still inspires the Brahmin at the altar. In the second Book of Esdras, chapter 14, Esdras is commanded by a vision to rewrite the burnt books of the law, and to prepare him for the task he is told by the Voice, "Open thy mouth, and drink that I give thee to drink." "Then opened I my mouth," says Esdras, "and behold, he reached me a full cup, which was full as it were with water, but the color of it was like fire. And I took it and drank: and when I had drunk of it, my heart uttered understanding, and wisdom grew in my breast, for my spirit strengthened my memory."

In *Isis Unveiled* (II:560), we are told that in the sacred rites of Bacchus (from which the ceremony of the Eucharist was derived) the hierophant-initiator presented symbolically before the final *revelation* wine and bread to the candidate, who partook of both in token that the spirit was to quicken matter, that is, that the divine *Wisdom* was to be revealed to him. And in the note in *The Secret Doctrine* (I:228), we read that “Soma is with the Hindus the father, albeit illegitimate, of Buddha Wisdom,” that is, that occult knowledge comes from a thorough understanding of lunar mysteries, or, taking Soma as the sacred beverage, that wisdom, “albeit illegitimate,” follows the drinking of it.

With the ceremony of the Eucharist and its sacred vessels is closely connected the symbolism of the Holy Graal {Grail}, the principal *motif* in the legends of King Arthur.

The stories of the Holy Graal are all to be traced back to the legend of St. Joseph of Arimathea, who was said to have brought to Britain from the Holy Land the sacred vessel of the Last Supper. In the French prose romance of the *Saint Graal*, it is said that St. Joseph, having obtained leave from Pilate to take down the body of Jesus from the cross, first went to that upper room where the Last Supper was held, and found there the shallow bowl from which Christ was said to have eaten the paschal lamb with his disciples. And into this cup, as the body was lowered from the cross, fell many drops of blood from the still open wounds. “According to Catholic theology, where the body or the blood of Christ is,” (points out Mr. Thomas Arnold), “there, by virtue of the hypostatic union, are His soul and His divinity.” The Graal therefore becomes a divine marvel and mystery, a worker of miracles and wonders. By the Graal, St. Joseph’s life was sustained in prison for forty-two years without food, and from it he imbibed also the food of spiritual wisdom. Wherever we find the symbol of the bowl, the bottle, or the cup, the idea is expressed or implied of divine wisdom as its contents. So in Hermes Trismegistus, as translated into French by Louis Ménard, we read: “God did not create all men with Intuition, because he wished to establish it in the midst of the souls of men as a prize to strive for. He filled a great bowl with it, and sent it by a messenger, ordering him to cry to the hearts of men: ‘Baptize ye, ye who can, in this bowl; ye who believe that you will return to Him who has sent it, ye who know wherefore you are born!’ And those who answered the call, and were baptized in this Intuition, these possess the *Gnosis*, and have become the initiated of the Spirit, the perfect men. Those who did not understand the call possess reason but not Intuition, and know not wherefore and by whom they were formed. Composed alone of passions and desires, they do not admire that which is worthy to be contemplated, but give themselves up to the pleasures and appetites of the body, and believe that this is the end of man. But those who have received the gift of God, judging by their works, O Tat, are immortal, and no longer mortal. They embrace, by intuition, all that is in the earth and in the heavens, and all that there may be above the heavens. Disdaining all things corporeal and incorporeal, they aspire towards the One and the Only. This is the wisdom of

the Spirit, to contemplate Divine things, and to know God. This is the blessing of the Divine Bowl."

Sometimes the symbol of the *cup* is transmuted into that of the *well* or the *fountain*. In a note in *Isis Unveiled* (II:551), H.P.B. says: "The 'well,' in the kabbalistic sense, is the mysterious emblem of the Secret Doctrine." "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink," says Jesus (John, 7:38), and therefore Moses, the adept, is represented sitting by a *well*, to which the *seven* daughters of the Priest of Midian come for water. And in the story of the woman of Samaria Jesus sat by a well, and used it as the symbol of spiritual wisdom. "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again," said Jesus, "but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life." (John, 4:13-14.)

As the fountain of Moses had seven priestesses, the fountain of Rabelais seven angles, so the mystic fountain of Giovanni Boccaccio (in the *Ameto*) is surrounded by seven nymphs, for "Wisdom has rested her house upon *seven* pillars." (Proverbs, 9:1).

When we come down from the symbolism of the Middle Ages to that of modern times, we find the story of the Holy Graal most beautifully retold by Alfred, Lord Tennyson {"The Holy Grail"}. If he has omitted the incident of the drops of blood that fell from the figure upon the cross into the Cup, he has restored another point in the old legends of King Arthur quite as significant, the story of the "Siege perilous" of Merlin, that magic chair that always stood vacant, for Merlin had declared that therein

No man could sit but he should lose himself.

But Sir Galahad, the maiden knight, burning with desire to find the Holy Graal, caught the true meaning of the oracle, and crying "If I lose myself, I save myself!", sat down in Merlin's chair.

And all at once, as there we sat, we heard  
A cracking and a riving of the roofs,  
And rending, and a blast, and overhead  
Thunder, and in the thunder was a cry.  
And in the blast there smote along the hall  
A beam of light seven times more clear than day:  
And down the long beam stole the Holy Graal  
All over covered with a luminous cloud,  
And none might see who bare it, and it past.  
But every knight beheld his fellow's face  
As in a glory,

and then it was that all the knights present swore a vow to ride for a year and a day in search of the Holy Graal, because they had seen not itself, but only the

cloud that covered it. But Sir Galahad, having “lost himself, to save himself,” had seen the Holy Graal descend upon the shrine, and move before him like a blood-red star, to guide his steps. Sir Percival comes up with him as he is nearing the end of his quest, and Sir Galahad bids his friend come with him to watch his departure to the spiritual city. And Sir Percival went, and saw, stretching out across a great morass, an ancient way

Where, link'd with many a bridge,  
A thousand piers ran into the great Sea.  
And Galahad fled along them bridge by bridge.  
And every bridge as quickly as he crost  
Sprang into fire and vanish'd, tho' I yearned  
To follow; and thrice above him all the heavens  
Opened and blazed with thunder such as seemed  
Shoutings of all the sons of God: and first  
At once I saw him far on the great Sea,  
In silver-shining armor starry-clear;  
And o'er his head the holy vessel hung  
Clothed in white samite or a luminous cloud.  
And with exceeding swiftness ran the boat,  
If boat it were — I saw not whence it came.  
And then the heavens opened and blazed again  
Roaring, I saw him like a silver star —  
And had he set the sail, or had the boat  
Become a living creature clad with wings?  
And o'er his head the Holy Vessel hung  
Redder than any rose, a joy to me,  
For now I knew the veil had been withdrawn.  
Then in a moment when they blazed again  
Opening, I saw the least of little stars  
Down on the waste, and straight beyond the star  
I saw the spiritual city and all her spires  
And gateways, in a glory like one pearl —  
No larger, tho' the goal of all the saints —  
Strike from the sea: and from the star there shot  
A rose-red sparkle to the city, and there  
Dwelt, and I knew it was the Holy Graal,  
Which never eyes on earth again shall see.

In *Lucifer*, for October 1888, Mr. Ashton Ellis had a fine article {“A Glance at ‘Parsifal’ ”} on the *Parsifal* of Wagner, whose hero is identical with Tennyson’s Sir Percival. Speaking of the Holy Graal, Mr. Ellis says: “Is not this the Divine Wisdom of the ages, the *Theosophia* which has been ever jealously guarded by bands of brothers, and to which, in the words of the drama, there leads no path, nor can any one find it unless it guide his footsteps?” (as Sir Galahad was guided.) . . . “Sought by no earthly paths, found by no course of learned study, set in a spot whence Time and Space have fled away, this is

the eternal well of changeless truth." And as Mr. Ellis points out, "when the spirit of Love and divine Compassion has conquered the world, then the command shall be 'Unveil the Graal, open the shrine!'"

And so we come back to the teachings of that great, but grossly-misinterpreted soul, Rabelais, to find that his priestess also declares that the two things necessary to the pursuit of Divine Wisdom are the guidance of God and the love of man. The oracle of the Divine Bottle has but one word to say to the listening soul — "Drink!"; but is not this one word equivalent to the saying of Jesus, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink"? Both oracles imply the same thing, an effort on the part of the applicant. The water of Wisdom is to be had for the asking; but that "asking" is not a mere formula; it is labor as well as prayer. "To reach Nirvāṇa one must reach self knowledge," says *The Voice of the Silence*, "and self-knowledge is the child of loving deeds." Before a man can become a vessel of honor fit for the Master's use, he must have purified himself from all sin, and then the Divine Wisdom will fill his soul.

In studying the words of the seers upon the subject of Intuition, or Spiritual Wisdom, we must remember that the spirit has to do with things of the spirit, not with the concerns of everyday life. When Rabelais' hero first set out in search of the oracle, the question upon his lips related only to the advisability of marriage, but to such queries the oracle gave no response. When Laurence Oliphant felt that "intuition" bade him follow another man as a god, he mistook the nature of intuition, which is not active upon this plane and could take no cognizance of individuals. That is the property of *instinct*, and is but an extension of that faculty of the animal soul that we see developed to such an extent in the likes and dislikes of dogs, for instance. Give to Caesar the things which are Caesar's; do not expect the Divine Spirit to do your fortune-telling, or to direct your daily comings and goings.

There is another source of confusion, sometimes, in the fact that wisdom, or intuition, is spoken of in both an active and a passive sense, as a process and as the result of that process. So we may think of intuition as the clear light that shines in upon the soul and enables us to see truth, or we may think of it as the sense of vision by which we apprehend that truth. In the teachings of theosophy we speak of *Buddhi* as a passive principle, the vehicle of Ātma, or as an active principle whose vehicle is *Manas*. All depends upon the point of view; upon whether we begin at the top or at the bottom of the scale. But though, in thinking of the prism, we may think of the yellow as following the green or preceding the orange, we cannot place it between the violet and the red. Instinct may guide the reason, but intuition enlightens the soul. For intuition is one with that Wisdom which is "privy to the mysteries of the Knowledge of God," and "in all ages entering into holy souls, she maketh them friends of God and prophets."

KATHARINE HILLARD.

## THE FIRST OBJECT OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The three principal objects of the Theosophical Society as laid down in the books are: *First*, “To form a nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction of race, color, or creed.” *Second*, “To promote the study of Aryan and other Scriptures, of the world’s religions and sciences, and to vindicate the importance of old Asiatic literature, namely of the Brahminical, Buddhist, and Zoroastrian philosophies.” *Third*, “To investigate the hidden mysteries of Nature under every subject possible, and the psychic and spiritual powers latent in man especially.”

The three divisions are but three roads leading to one goal, but as St. Paul, in enumerating the theological virtues, declared that “the greatest of these is charity,” so of the three objects of the Theosophical Society the greatest of these is Universal Brotherhood, the others but side-paths leading into it. The study of Oriental literatures and religions will enlighten the intellect, and the study of the hidden mysteries of Nature will develop the psychic powers, but the endeavor to promote Universal Brotherhood will assist more directly the growth of that altruism which alone can affect the spirit, and which is, indeed, the “charity” of which Paul spoke.

The outside observer who inquires as to the objects of Theosophy, as soon as he hears “Universal Brotherhood” mentioned immediately objects that there is no need of a Theosophical Society to teach us this, that Christianity has always taught it, that even agnostics and Jews and Muslims practice it, and that, in fact, it is a great piece of presumption for theosophists to suppose they can make anything original out of so threadbare a doctrine. To which we would reply, in the first place, that truth never can be new, that the poet spoke of her with absolute assurance when he said “The eternal years of God are hers,” and that that eternity stretches as far into what we short-sighted mortals call the Past, as into what we are pleased to term the Future, and when we learn to know the eternal verities, we shall realize that upon the dial of the Absolute there are no figures, because beyond the realm of Illusion there is no Past, no Future, only one everlasting Present.

The power and weight of truth are in its *age*, not in its newness; in the way that it appeals to our hearts as something that we have always known but somehow have unaccountably lost sight of; something that we greet like a dear friend we rejoice to see again after long absence. Therefore we will not try to claim novelty as a characteristic of the doctrine of Universal Brotherhood.

But we may claim a certain freshness in the method of our teaching. Universal Brotherhood as taught by the churches has too often far too much of the “elder brother” element in it, of a certain virtuous condescension of the truly

good towards those so far beneath them in physical and moral qualities that they can afford to demonstrate the height of their own position by the amount of effort they make to stretch a helping hand towards those whom they acknowledge as their “brethren in the Lord.” Outside of this rather indefinite location, the brothers occupy the usual uncomfortable position of poor relations.

Brotherhood as taught in the churches is founded generally upon a physical basis. It implies equality, but not identity; men are brothers because they have similar organs, passions, capabilities, a common lot; because they share the great experiences of birth and death and a possible immortality. They are a collection of similar units, an agglomeration of shells upon the shore of Life. But they are not *one thing*; each has his personality which shuts him out from his kind by inclosing him within the limits of self; and between man and man that barrier of personality is ever firmly set; come as near as they can, the consciousness of the *I* and the *Thou* is ever between them.

But in Theosophy the fundamental doctrine is that of absolute identity. These outward shows of things are but illusion, a deception of our senses, themselves but a fleeting image on the screen of Time. As life departs, our bodies fade and crumble into dust, our mental faculties fail and disappear, our desires and our passions perish with the organs that gave them birth; — what remains? Only the Spirit of man, which is the Spirit of God. And Spirit — however inadequate our conceptions of it must necessarily be — we all acknowledge to be one and indivisible, the Great Reality, the Everlasting Truth; Infinite, and therefore formless and identical, whether it send its pulsating life through man or crystal, through zoophyte or star.

Only by recognizing this absolute Unity of Spirit can we possibly understand the real meaning of the doctrine of Universal Brotherhood, and realize that it means, not the equality of *men*, but the *identity of MAN*. Only when we learn to think of man as a whole, as a collective being, of which, each one of us forms a more or less insignificant part, as the separate cells in our bodies make up that physical machine which we think of as our own, only when we can grasp this idea of *identity* instead of equality, shall we begin to see what “The first object of the Theosophical Society” really implies.

It implies a common association for a common good, it implies subordination of the individual to the whole, and it implies the annihilation of self, the breaking down of the limitations of the physical, mental, and psychic Egos that the SPIRIT may be all in all. When these barriers are at last thrown down, and the soul realizes that the limitations which have hampered her never had a real existence, but were painfully built up by herself out of one false conception after another, then indeed she realizes her freedom, and knows herself as one with the Divine. And when the lover of mankind has learned (as in Jellaleddin’s poem) that in the house of the Spirit “there is no room for *Me* and *Thee*,” but that his brothers are *himself*, then in that soul has been attained the first great object of the Theosophical Society. He has learned his lesson, learned to feel the great heart of the universe beating in his own breast, learned

to rejoice in the joys of others and to bear their sorrows as his own, learned that he is but one cell in that great Being called Humanity, and that the functions of that one cell improperly discharged will ruin the harmony of the whole organism.

The doctrine of Universal Brotherhood, then, teaches us at once a great moral and a great spiritual lesson. It defines our position not only as part of a great working community, but as part of the Divine Spirit that animates that organization. So closely linked is every part and parcel of the mighty whole called Man, that no one of us can afford to neglect our small portion of the great work, the bringing of harmony out of chaos, of perfection out of imperfection. For the law of analogy holds good throughout the universe, and as the object of our individual existence is to return, a glorified and perfected consciousness, to that great Fount of Being whence we sprang, so Humanity as a whole must purge away the evil, dominate the physical, and become a God. To this end we must all work, and as each of us recognizes more fully the identity of Man, each year as it closes will bring nearer the end of the Dark Age, and the time when the Divine Voice can say in the highest, "Let there be light." Then indeed that time shall come upon earth that the poet has described as the Golden Year, and then

Shall all men's good  
Be each man's rule, and universal Peace  
Lie like a shaft of light across the land,  
And like a lane of beams athwart the sea,  
Thro' all the circle of the golden year.

— "Locksley Hall Sixty Years After," Alfred, Lord Tennyson.

KATHARINE HILLARD.

## CONSCIENCE

In listening to a conversation upon “Conscience” the other day, I was struck by the apparent confusion in the minds of many of the speakers between the instinct itself and the opinions which we formulate upon its promptings. A desire was shown by nearly all to base an absolute ethical rule upon this inward voice, and to decide beforehand certain vexed questions in morals by an appeal to its jurisdiction. But surely this is to consider conscience as equivalent to a well-considered and carefully balanced *opinion* upon a given course of action, instead of the swift unreasoning impulse that impels to action. In other words, should we not consider conscience as of another nature than reason, or at least as acting upon a different plane?

The instinct that deters us from doing wrong is an intuition, and is quite independent of all formulas. It is not necessarily based upon such ethical knowledge as we may have acquired, because it often acts under conditions that are entirely novel, and in circumstances that we have never anticipated.

The old conundrum compares it to an omnibus strap, as being “an inward check to the outward man,” and this is precisely what it is, an inward check. It gives no direction, it formulates no law, it simply stings. Thereupon reason steps in and says to us; “Conscience forbids you to do this thing, therefore it must be wrong, and it is wrong because it is contrary to such and such received ideas of morals.” And before we realize the fact, we have gone through this mental process, and are ready to declare that our conscience told us that we must not vote illegally, for instance, whereas it has told us nothing of the kind, but we have felt its prick and have translated it into our own opinion as to what is wrong; we have transferred an impression upon the spiritual plane into an expression upon the mental and moral plane.

We can call conscience the divine light in the soul of man, burning in each one of us with different degrees of brightness according to the nature of the lamp that holds the light. If the lamp be neglected, the wick untrimmed, the oil unreplenished, the glass coated with dust and dirt, the light will burn dim and low, and its rays be of little service, nay, often invisible to the careless eye. And then we go stumbling along the dark and stony road, often bruising ourselves against obstacles that another would avoid, enlightened by a clearer ray of the Divine wisdom. And as men’s natures vary in quality, so in one the lamp may be of tinted glass, and throw a lurid or a ghastly light on all around, and in another be of crystal clearness, without imperfection or distortion to obscure or to divert the ray within.

But whatever be the character of the lamp, so formed by our own Karma, which has built its many-sided form and wrought its purity or its foulness out

of the work of our own hands, nevertheless within every lamp most surely burns that Divine ray. If we would have our conscience, then, to be in very truth "a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path," we must purify the medium through which it shines, and so order our lives that we may become transparent to that heavenly light. It will never formulate for us a code of ethics that will enable us to decide beforehand upon difficult questions in morals, but the more we listen to its voiceless promptings the more clearly we shall hear them, and the more we shall find these problems of our imagination to be indeed "the baseless fabric of a vision," that shall dissolve at the first touch of reality.

How often, in sailing up a winding river, our way seems suddenly shut in by hills; some great mountain-shoulder thrusts itself across our road, and there seems no outlet through which our boat can pass. "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther" the unrelenting hills seem to say, and we can see no possibility of further progress. But still the boat goes on, until all at once a sudden turn takes us round what seemed an impassable barrier, and the river still stretches out before us.

And so with these puzzles that we make for ourselves and call "problems of conscience." When we really get to the tight place, a way that we never dreamed of opens out before us. There is no such thing, actually, as "a problem of conscience." Conscience simply says "Halt!" or "March!": it is ours to reason why, and instead of obeying to befuddle ourselves with questions of casuistry.

No one can decide for another what is right for that other to do, because, however wise and good he may be, it is impossible for him to understand all his brother's nature and circumstances, to say nothing of the unseen influences which his Karma heaps about him. Therefore none may be the keeper of his brother's conscience, nor, for the same reasons, can he be his brother's judge.

Each must be content to manage his own lamp, and to keep it so clear and clean that the light from it shall not only guide his own feet, but shine out upon the world, so that they who walk in darkness shall be helped to find the way.

KATHARINE HILLARD, F.T.S.

## THREE LETTERS TO A CHILD (1)

### 1 — THE MAKING OF THE EARTH

My dear little Margaret:— I was very much interested, a little while ago, to hear from your mamma that you had been asking her various questions about how the world was made, and how things began, and so on, and the reason I was interested was because these are just the questions all little girls and boys are sure to ask, and just the questions I used to ask myself. I think I was about seven, a little younger than you are now, when I had answered many of them in my own mind, and *to* my own mind, and had resolved that some day or other I would get up a “Crusade of the Children” like the one I read about in my history, and we would go about the world teaching the grown-up people a good deal they did not seem to know! Of course I learned as I grew older myself that the grown-up people often knew more than they pretended, and sometimes said “I don’t know” because they did not want to take the trouble of putting difficult things into easy words that a child could understand. And sometimes they really didn’t *know*, but could only guess, or imagine, or infer. But there are more ways than one of knowing things, which I will not stop to explain here, but will only remind you that you seem to know some things that nobody has told you, but that you seem to feel in your heart, and some things you have learned from books, and some things have been told you by other people.

If you were to find an old chimney standing in a lonely field, I think your eyes and your wits are sharp enough to tell you that that chimney must have been part of a house belonging to someone, and that “someone” must have been poor and lonely, because the house was certainly very small and far away from other houses, and it must have been built a long while ago, because the ruins were all grown over with grass and weeds, and a little tree was growing out of the top bricks of the chimney.

And if you told your mamma these things, and she asked how you knew all that, I think you would probably say, “Oh, I know it!” Well, that sort of knowledge that is made of seeing one or two things and guessing at what they mean is called *inference*, and much of what the wisest men have to tell us about the beginnings of things is inference, because, of course, they were not there to see, but can only guess, as you guessed that there must once have been a house where you found a ruined chimney. Some of these scientific men are so clever that if you show them one little bone they can tell you all about the animal it belonged to, and some of them are so {thoughtless} that they cannot see any real difference between your brain and your mind. Your brain is part of your body, just as your blood is, but your mind is the *thinker* inside the brain, and it

is this *thinker* which really decides for you as to what you believe, and what you do not believe, to be true.

Now if we are going to learn anything at all about the beginning of the world, I think we shall have to fall back upon *inference* to a very great extent. That is, I think we must find out some facts about things we really know, and they will help us to find out the truth about things we don't know. If you ever tried to put together some of those pictures that are all cut up in queerly shaped pieces, you will remember that after you had put together a certain number of the pieces you could tell by the shape of the hole they left what the form of the piece must be to fill it. And so with the learned men; they very soon found out what thing was needed to help them out with *their* puzzle. They saw that they must find some one thing that everything was made of, or they should never get back to the beginning. Just as if you wanted to know how all kinds of cake and all kinds of pies and all kinds of bread were made, and your mamma should tell you you must first know what *flour* was, because they were all made of flour, mixed up in different ways and cooked in different ways. And so these learned men thought and thought, and pulled things to pieces and got at their very insides, till at last they discovered, I don't know how many thousand years ago, that you can turn everything that goes to make up the world into two or three kinds of gas, and that if you are clever enough you will see that even these two or three kinds are only varieties of one original stuff that they called *matter*, and that this was stirred about and mixed up in various ways to make earth, or water, or air, or vapors, or fire, and out of these first mixtures all other things were made. And the wise men found that whatever they knew or didn't know about matter, they did know this, that it was always moving. If you look at the very smallest speck of anything in a strong microscope or magnifying glass, whether it be a little bit of a leaf, or a tiny drop of blood, or even a bit of amber so small that your eyes can't possibly see it without the glass, still you will see its tiny particles moving, moving, moving, all the time and forever. And if you look at the stars from night to night, you will see that they too move, and you will be told that our earth is one of the stars, and is swiftly moving round the sun. So you see we have another thing that must have been before the world began, and that is *Motion*.

But this letter is long enough, and I must wait till next time to tell you more about Motion.

KATHARINE HILLARD, F.T.S

## THREE LETTERS TO A CHILD (2)

### 2 — THE MAKING OF THE EARTH

My dear little Margaret:— In my last letter you will remember we had found out that there must be some stuff of which everything was made, and that was called *Matter*, and that as it was always moving, this moving, or *Motion*, was another thing that was before the beginning of the world. And when you are older, you will be taught that there are a great many kinds of Motion, or rather different *forms*, that heat is one form, and light is another, and, in fact, that all force, everything that pushes or pulls, backwards or forwards, in or out, is a kind of Motion, “a *mode* of Motion,” these wise men say. And I am sorry to have to tell you that when they had said that everything was made out of Matter and Motion, some of them wanted to stop there, and tried to make people believe that all their thoughts were nothing but modes of motion in the matter that makes up the brain, and that all the beauty and glory of the world and the sky, and all the order of the stars, and the wonderful doings of birds and beasts, to say nothing of little children, just *came* by the stirring up that Motion gave Matter, and that all the rest of it was more or less chance first, and then habit. They did not want to believe in a God that sat outside somewhere (as if there could be any “outside”), and so they said they did not believe in anything but Matter and Motion.

But we believe that there was something else always, that had no beginning, called *SPIRIT*, something inside of Matter and inside of Motion, that was a *thinker*, like the thinker in your brain, only more so, and that directed every motion of matter, just as the thinker in my brain directs my pen and makes it go where I want it to go. If I were dead, the little particles of matter that the pen is made of would still throb and vibrate, but the pen itself would not write till some hand with a thinker behind it took it up and made it form words.

Now there is one thing that Matter and Motion alone cannot do, and that is, make other things: for that you must have the spirit of Life, and not only of life, but of thought and of love. And when you are a big girl and have studied more, you will know perhaps why we say that, after all, the only real thing is Spirit, which is the beginning and end of Matter and Motion and Life, and is the Thinker in every one of us, and the One Thing that always existed and never had any beginning or had to be made, and out of which everything is made, and in which everything lives and moves. We don’t see the air, you know, and we don’t feel it unless the wind blows, but it is inside and outside us, and we could not live if it were not for air. So it is with Spirit; it is our mind and our life, and

it makes and guides all the worlds, and in the tiniest speck of dust there is the Spirit of Life, just as much as in your little mind trying to think about it.

We cannot understand it, but we can see some of its ways, and we can *feel* some of its ways that we cannot see. And one thing that we must believe is that there is one set of rules everywhere, one law, and that all things are ordered alike, or else what a topsy-turvy sort of world this would be!

Suppose fire was sometimes hot and sometimes cold, and you never knew whether it would cook your dinner or freeze it, how very inconvenient it would be! Or suppose the law that makes things cling together, and heavy things fall down, should sometimes stop working, and you never knew when you let go of a thing whether it would stay on the table or fly up in the air and blow away, how very troublesome *that* would be! And the rule that makes fire always hot, and ice always cold, and keeps the stars in their places and your books on their shelves (when you put them there) is called Law, and sometimes "the Laws of Nature," Nature being the world as we know it. And when people talk about the laws of nature, they really mean the ways that Spirit has of forming the sky and the earth (which are really part of It) and of keeping them in order.

And to go back a little, we believe that Spirit (which some people call God) always existed, and never had any beginning, but only was sometimes quiet and silent, and sometimes active and working. And all these things are too difficult for you to think about now, but I only want to try to make you understand that at some time, many hundred million years ago, out of the Darkness and the Silence came a sort of cloud of light, thin like a mist, and bright like fire, but cold. And then, because it was part of Spirit, which is also Motion and Life, this bright mist began to move, and its little atoms to turn round and round till they formed themselves into a ball, but still thinner and finer than any mist you ever saw floating like a fine white veil in the sky. And the more the mist whirled round and round, the thicker it grew, for it had Spirit, the Great Thinker, in it, with its laws, that showed every particle how to move. And the mist grew as thick as air, and then as thick as water, and then as thick as earth, and, as it whirled, pieces of it flew off and made stars and moons and comets that all came whirling, each in its proper place, round the central ball, or Sun, which stood in the middle of the dance, for it was a sort of dance of stars, and our Earth is a star, like the rest. Now it is one of the laws of Nature that all moving things get hot, and so the middle of the Earth grew very hot, but as it became more and more solid, the outside cooled off and made a thick crust, which separating itself from the fiery part naturally got colder and colder. But some of the heat bubbled out now and then, and heaved up great mountains and made the surface of the Earth all uneven. And at first the surface was nearly covered with water, which was mostly warm, and great monsters floated about the water, and queer plants, like seaweed, with enormous leaves grew in the moist hot air.

KATHARINE HILLARD, F.T.S.

## THREE LETTERS TO A CHILD (3)

### 3 — THE MAKING OF THE EARTH

My dear little Margaret:— Of course you know that *we* could not live in such a world as I told you about in my last letter, so soft and wet and hot. The men who lived then, like the plants and the animals, were more like soft jelly than anything else, and very large, great giants in fact, to match the other things. For we know, as I said before, that Law always works in the same way, and when all vegetation and all animal life was enormous, and soft, and more than half water, you may be sure that the men were like the other animals, and the learned professors who say there were no men then, only say so because they don't like to think that human beings could ever be very different from what they are now.

But they know, and they will tell you, that every separate human being goes through a great many changes before it is born as a real live baby, and so I think they might realize that all men were at one time different, and that the soft jellyfish kind belonged to the soft and wet earth, and could not leave any bones behind them to prove what they were like, because they had no bones to leave! And so, if you will believe my story, which has been told by men I believe to be *very* wise, because all they say agrees with *universal* law (that is, law which is the same everywhere and always) — if you will believe my story, I say — the Earth and the plants and the animals and the men all grew drier, and harder, and smaller, and more and more different from each other as time went on. And the ice at the cold ends of the earth, where the sun does not shine much, grew thicker and heavier, and heaped up higher and higher, till finally the Earth tipped up a little, and great floods of water and ice came crashing down over the warmer countries and burying everything in what is called a Deluge, or a great flood. And the ice blocks, or glaciers, made great marks as they tore their way over the rocks and mountains in their path, and you can see the marks yet on some rocks, and they are called glacial scratches. And sometimes the inside fires boiled up through the volcanoes, and through great cracks in the earth, or the floor of the sea, and made a different kind of destruction. Whole continents disappeared under water, and new ones came up, so that the earth we live on today is a very different place from the home of the first families of men. It is even very different from what it was when the first men like ourselves began to live in it, which was many million years ago, and many great nations have lived and flourished and vanished away, to make room for others. We are the fifth great Race or family that has lived here, we are told, and there are to be seven in all, but it will be many thousand years yet before

this Race has learned all it was put here to learn, and has brought up another Race to take its place. And besides the changes that have been made in the whole face of the earth, parts of it have grown hotter and colder and perhaps hotter again, as it has tipped up more or less towards the sun and the ice has thickened or melted. Away up in Greenland, where it is winter now nearly all the time, people find skeletons of elephants and remains of magnolia trees, and many other animals and plants that can live now only in hot countries, far to the south of us, and so we know that once upon a time it must have been much hotter in Greenland than it is in New York.

And now I hope you will be able to see, although this is a very rough and hurried story of the making of the Earth, that it was not quite what you thought it was when you asked your Mamma "what they laid it on, when it was only a little tiny speck, millions and sextillions of years ago?" For I think that you will understand now that it did not begin as a hard "speck," however small, but as a cold bright mist, thinner than anything you can think of, floating about in space, which you can think of as the open part of the sky, far beyond the clouds. And as there are two kinds of force always at work, one pushing out and one pulling in, they pulled and pushed at the floating mists, and squeezed them together and made, them into balls, and one pushed and the other pulled, and so they kept the earth and the stars going round and round. And the sun pulls one way, and the earth and the stars pull another way, and their strength is so well balanced that they keep each other in order, and they all move in their proper places and don't interfere with each other. And so the mists became first round and then gradually harder and cooler, and at last the Earth was formed, and by degrees became fit for our kind of men to live on it. When you are older, you can study astronomy and geology and ethnology, and many other things with very hard names, and perhaps you will know a great deal more about it, and perhaps you won't, but at all events this is all I can tell you now. And some day or other, if you like, I will write you another letter and tell you some more wonderful stories about the making of Man.

KATHARINE HILLARD, F.T.S.

EVOLUTION  
ACCORDING TO  
THEOSOPHY.  
IN TWO PARTS.

PART I. THE EVOLUTION OF THE EARTH.  
PART II. THE EVOLUTION OF THE RACES.

BY  
KATHARINE HILLARD, F.T.S.

{NOTE: This pamphlet was republished in its entirety in six articles in *The Path* (Australian) in 1925-1926, and again in 1943-1944.}

PREFACE

The two lectures here printed were written with the purpose of sketching, in a comparatively brief and compact form, an outline of the Eastern scheme of evolution as given in *The Secret Doctrine* by Mme. Blavatsky. The wealth of illustrative digression in those volumes, (as well as the abstract and symbolical nature of much of the teachings) makes it difficult for the unpracticed reader to put together the salient points. In this attempt, which is purely a compilation, I have given the number of volume and page quoted, that those who choose to do so may know where to turn for fuller details. In the second lecture there are many quotations from other authorities, among them some of the most advanced of our modern scientists, and much more original matter than in the first. I have occasionally made some slight change in the wording of extracts from *The Secret Doctrine* for the sake of greater simplicity and clearness, but, of course, these changes concern only the expression, not the thought.

*March 7, 1893.*

KATHARINE HILLARD, F.T.S.

# THE THEOSOPHICAL THEORY OF EVOLUTION

## I THE EVOLUTION OF THE EARTH

### AS THE FIELD OF MAN'S EVOLUTION

The law of Evolution as defined by the scientist means, first of all, "a law of continuity or causal relation throughout nature," or, in other words, "a continuous progressive change according to certain laws and by means of resident forces." (See Joseph LeConte on *Evolution and Its Relation to Religious Thought*.)

A Law which holds good therefore "throughout nature" must govern alike the kosmos and the individual, and its workings on the plane of the infinitely little should be but a reflection, on a minute scale, of the infinitely great, as we may see the whole landscape mirrored in a dewdrop or the pupil of a baby's eye. Materialism, however, the predominant scientific type of our day, would eliminate from her scheme every kind of evolution that has not a physical basis, as she professedly deals only with such phenomena as are susceptible of material proof. Therefore when confronted with the first principles that lie at the root of all phenomena, such science finds herself sometimes very hard pushed to maintain her position, and her statements as to the origin of things are hardly what most of us would call *exact*. If, for instance, we ask Mr. Samuel Laing (the author of *Modern Science and Modern Thought*), "Of what is the material universe composed?" he tells us: "Of Ether, Matter, and Energy"; but if we furthermore ask, "What is Ether?" he answers: "Ether is not absolutely known to us by any test of which our senses can take cognizance, but it is a sort of mathematical substance which we are compelled to assume in order to account for the phenomena of light and heat" (I:669).

And if we ask Mr. Thomas Henry Huxley, "What is Matter?," he says: "In perfect strictness it is true that chemical investigations can tell us . . . *nothing directly* of the composition of living matter, and . . . it is also in strictness true that we *know nothing* about the composition of *any* (material) *body whatever as it is*."

If we further inquire, "What then is Energy?" we are told that "it can only be known to us by its effects"; that the molecules of all bodies are "under the influence of two contrary forces, one which tends to bring them together, the other to separate them. . . . The first is molecular attraction, the second force is due to *vis viva* or moving force." (Adolphe Ganot's *Elementary Treatise on Physics*.)

But when we ask again, “What is this moving force?,” Mr. Huxley replies: “It is an empty shadow of my imagination!” (*Physical Basis of Life.*) And Professor Tyndall himself confesses that the intellect “retires in bewilderment from the contemplation of the problem involved in the first marshalling of the atoms.”

Surely this is hardly worthy to be called exact science, and it is not very far removed from the well-known synopsis of the Berkeleyan philosophy: “What is matter? Never mind. What is mind? No matter. What is spirit? That is quite immaterial.”

If, in despair, we leave “first principles,” and go to astronomy and geology for our “exact science,” we are not much better off. The question of the temperature of the Sun, for instance, has been settled with perfect confidence by many scientists, from Newton down, but we find in their *very* varied estimates a difference of nearly six million degrees! (I:484)

If we ask the probable age of the Earth — since its solidification, that is — Sir W. Thompson gives it us in one place as ten millions, and in another as one hundred millions of years; Buffon was satisfied with ten millions, and Huxley is disposed to demand a thousand! (II:694) In fact Darwin himself says that he “looks upon the geological record as a history of the world imperfectly kept and written in a changing dialect; *of this history we possess the last volume alone*, relating only to two or three countries. Of this volume *only a short chapter here and there has been preserved*, and of each page only here and there a few lines.”

And yet this science calls herself “exact”! To parody the phrase of Professor Tyndall: “Occultism retires in bewilderment before the marshalling of such discrepancies as the above,” and ventures in her turn to propose a theory of the evolution of man and the universe from an entirely different basis, a trinity of Spirit, Matter, and Energy, considering the three as coexistent, eternal *aspects*, of the One Great Reality, that ABSOLUTE of which nothing can be predicated.

This theory is based upon the uniformity of law throughout every phase of being, of the truth of the axiom, dear to science also, that “the history of the individual is the history of the race and the history of the Kosmos”; and furthermore it is based upon that body of secret knowledge treasured up by Eastern sages from time immemorial, and now, in part at least, given to the world in the pages of *The Secret Doctrine*. This book is a commentary and explanation by Mme. Blavatsky of certain stanzas of an archaic manuscript called *The Book of Dzyan*, which, she tells us, was taken down in *Senzar*, the secret sacerdotal language, from the words of the Divine Teachers at the very beginning of the present or Fifth Race. From the teachings of this manuscript were derived the earliest Chinese Bibles, the oldest books of the Kabbala, and the sacred volumes of the Chaldean, Egyptian, and Indian religions. And there exist also many ancient Commentaries upon this manuscript supplementing and explaining its more abstruse or condensed statements, these being again

amplified and explained in the pages of *The Secret Doctrine*, but with a bewildering amount of digression and illustration. Also it is asserted that in the hidden rock-temples and crypts of India and Western Asia are concealed numberless manuscripts of priceless value and immense antiquity (some of them saved from the destruction of the Alexandrian and other ancient libraries), which give many details of the older religions and histories of the world. (See *Man: Fragments of Forgotten History* {by Laura C. Holloway and Mohini Mohun Chatterji}, (78); *From the Caves and Jungles of Hindustan* {by H. P. Blavatsky}, (69); Introduction to *The Secret Doctrine*, xxiii et seq.)

But I must remind you that in the short space or even two lectures, it is a physical impossibility to present more than the barest skeleton of this great philosophic system, and many of the facts and illustrations advanced in support of some of its most startling assumptions have perforce to be omitted here.

And furthermore we must remember that, as we are told in the book itself, a large portion of even the *esoteric* teaching is symbolical, and we must beware of accepting *literally* statements that are meant as the veil of spiritual truths. The deeper the meaning we find, the more likely it is to approach that Truth which now, as always, lies hidden at the bottom of a well; a well, by the bye, being the old Kabbalistic symbol of the secret doctrine. And those who know assure us that every *important* myth has at least seven Keys, or methods of interpretation.

I shall devote this first lecture to the explanation of the evolution of the Earth, and the second to the evolution of the Races of Man.

To begin with, then, *The Secret Doctrine* says that “the essential faculty possessed by all the cosmic and terrestrial elements of generating within themselves a regular and harmonious series of results, a concatenation of causes and effects, is an irrefutable proof that they are animated by an *extra* or *intra* intelligence.” That is, the fact that the simplest elements are the beginning of a long chain of complicated and harmonious results proves that they must be animated by intelligence coming either from within or from without. “Occultism does not deny the certainty of the mechanical origin of the Universe; it only claims the absolute necessity of *mechanicians* of some sort behind — or within — those elements. . . . Celestial space, containing matter so attenuated as ether, cannot be called on, with or without attraction, to explain the common notion of the sidereal hosts. . . . Even Newton was forced to abandon the idea of ever explaining, by the laws of *Known* Nature and its material forces, the original impulse given to the millions of orbs.” (It was this “first marshalling of the atoms on which all subsequent action depends,” that Tyndall confessed formed a problem that caused “the most highly trained intellect, the most refined and disciplined imagination, to retire in bewilderment.”) . . . “Newton also, recognized fully the limits that separate the action of natural forces from that of the *Intelligences* that set the immutable laws into order and action.” . . . “To become complete and comprehensible, a cosmogonical theory has to start with a primordial Substance, diffused throughout boundless Space, of an *intellectual*

*and divine nature.*” (Here of course, *substance* is used in the metaphysical sense of a something which underlies phenomena.) “That substance must be the Soul and Spirit, the synthesis and highest principle, of the manifested Kosmos, and to serve as a physical basis to this there must be its vehicle — *primordial physical matter*, so to speak, though its nature must forever escape our limited *normal* senses. (I:594 *et seq.*) . . . That matter is truly homogeneous, the noumenon of all the matter we know of. . . . It is this original, primordial *prima materia*, divine and intelligent, the direct emanation of the Universal Mind, which formed the nuclei of all the ‘self-moving’ orbs in Kosmos. It is the informing, ever-present, moving-power and life-principle, the vital soul of the sun, moon, planets, and even of our earth.” (I:602.) (So the first verse of Genesis, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth,” we are told by Oriental scholars should be translated: “By Wisdom the Elohim formed the disposers, or the *motive powers*.” And Esdras (chapter 6) speaks of the beginning, “before ever the *motive powers* were established, before the innumerable multitude of angels were gathered together.”)

“But the two parts of the general problem, that of the formation of the suns and stars from the primitive matter, and then the development of the planets around their sun, rest on quite different facts in nature. They are at the opposite poles of being.” (I:595) . . . “For the Occultists maintain that all the ‘Forces’ of the scientists have their origin in the *Vital Principle*, the ONE LIFE collectively of our Solar system — that ‘life’ being a portion, or rather one of the *aspects*, of the *One Universal Life*.” (I:591) . . . And while rejecting even the “gravity” of modern science, Occultism accepts instead *attraction and repulsion*, “seeing, moreover, in these two opposite forces only the two aspects of the Universal Unit called MANIFESTING MIND; in which aspects, Occultism, through its great Seers, perceives an innumerable host of operative Beings whose essence, in its *dual* nature, is the cause of all terrestrial phenomena. For that essence is of one substance with the one universal Electric Ocean which is LIFE; and being dual, as said — that is, positive and negative — it is the emanations of that duality that act now on earth under the name of ‘modes of motion.’ . . . It is the dual *effects* of that dual essence which are called centripetal and centrifugal forces, negative and positive poles, heat and cold, light and darkness, etc.” (I:604) . . . It is the link uniting Spirit and Matter, the mysterious divine Energy that science calls *Force*, by which the “ideas,” so to speak, of Universal Mind are impressed on Universal Matter as the “laws of Nature,” the life of the physical world. These laws or forces of Nature, which may be roughly summed up as Light, Heat, Sound, Cohesion or Attraction, Electricity, and Magnetism or Nerve-Force, synthesized as *Motion*, are not, then, the “blind forces” of Science, working in the dark towards a fortuitous end, but the manifestations of intelligent Powers, (I:145) the Builders of the Universe, the first differentiation of the manifested Logos, that “Word, by whom are all things made that are made.” For while science recognizes innumerable degrees in the scale of physical

being, Occultism maintains that there are at least as many in the scale of spiritual existence.

And Huxley himself has said in his *Essays on Controverted Questions*: “Looking at the matter from the most rigidly scientific point of view, the assumptions that amidst the myriads of worlds scattered through endless space, there can be no intelligence as much greater than man’s as his is greater than a black beetle’s; no being endowed with powers of influencing the course of nature as much greater than his, as his is greater than the snail’s, seems to me not only baseless, but impertinent.”

But while the degrees are infinite, none the less does Occult Science assert as its fundamental law, “*the radical unity* of the ultimate essence of each constituent part of compounds in Nature, from star to mineral atom, from the highest spiritual being to the smallest infusoria, throughout *all* the worlds, whether spiritual, intellectual or physical {is the one fundamental law}.” (I:120)

“The informing intelligences, then, which animate the various centers of being, . . . are called by the truly ignorant, gods; by the learned-profane the *One God*; and the wise, the Initiates, honor in them only the periodic manifestations of THAT which neither our Creators nor their creatures can ever discuss or know anything about. The ABSOLUTE is not to be defined, and no mortal nor immortal has ever seen or comprehended it during the periods of existence. The mutable cannot know the immutable, nor can that which lives perceive Absolute Life.”

Beginning with the dawn of manifestation therefore, we are told that the first flutter of awakening life is towards the center, the contractive force of “the Great Breath,” as it is called in Hindu symbolism — its equivalent on the material plane being Motion. “The one eternal Element, or element-containing vehicle, is *Space*; dimensionless in every sense; coexistent with which are endless *duration*, primordial *matter*, and *motion*, the ‘breath of the One Element,’ which can never cease, even during the *pralayas*” (or periods of non-being). (I:55)

After attraction, comes expansion, or the action of the repulsive force. Herbert Spencer had a glimpse of the same truth when he wrote: “Apparently the universally coexistent forces of attraction or repulsion, which necessitate rhythm in all minor changes throughout the Universe, and also necessitate rhythm in the totality of its changes — produce now an immeasurable period during which the attractive forces predominating, cause universal concentration, and then an immeasurable period during which the repulsive forces predominating, cause universal diffusion — alternate eras of Evolution and dissolution.” (I:12) These eras are known in the Hindu cosmogony as the Days and Nights of Brahmā,” and describe the active period, during which the Universe emerges into existence, develops like a flower by the eternal laws of being, and having fulfilled its destiny, is succeeded by the passive period, when “darkness broods over the face of the deep,” and the manifested gives way to the unmanifested.

It is a fundamental law in Occultism, known to science as the conservation of energy, that there is no rest or cessation of motion in Nature during these active periods. “That which seems rest, is only the change of one form into another; the change of substance going hand-in-hand with that of form. . . . Motion is eternal in the unmanifested, periodical in the manifested.” (I:97) And another fundamental law is, that there is no such thing in Nature as *inorganic* substances or bodies. Stones, minerals, and even chemical “atoms,” so-called, are simply organic units in profound lethargy. Their coma has an end, and their inertia becomes activity, . . . “for the transformation of the mineral atom through crystallization, bears the same relation to its *inorganic* basis, as the formation of cells to their organic *nuclei*, through plant, insect, and animal, into the physical being of man.” (II:255) For not man himself, but the molecules which make up his physical body, have passed through all the kingdoms of nature, rising higher and higher in the scale of being, till they have become fitted to form the vehicle of *mind*.

In the “beginning,” we are told, (to go back to first principles) “that which is called in mystical phraseology ‘Cosmic *Desire*’ evolves into absolute Light. Now light without any shadow would be absolute light — in other words, absolute darkness — as physical science seeks to prove.” (I:201) That shadow first appears under the form of primordial matter, cold, luminous, fire-mist, or as the Stanzas of *The Book of Dzyan* express it: “Darkness radiates light, . . . and the radiant light was fire, and heat, and motion.” The incandescent cosmic dust becomes a fiery whirlwind, as the forces of the universe, synthesized as Motion, intelligent not blind forces, form that vortical movement which was one of the earliest conceptions of philosophy. The whirlwind of cosmic dust forms into spheres, that “move in converging lines and finally approach each other, and aggregate.” At first, scattered through Space without system, these spheres come into frequent collision, until their final aggregation, after which they become Comets. “This essence of cometary matter, Occult science teaches, has totally different chemical and physical characteristics from those known to our modern scientists,” although Humboldt recognized the fact that “trans-solar space does not hitherto show any phenomenon analogous to our solar system.” (I:497) Cometary matter “is homogeneous in its primitive form beyond the Solar Systems, differentiating entirely once it crosses the boundaries of our Earth’s region, (vitiated as it is by the atmosphere of the planets, and the already compound matter of the inter-planetary stuff) and is heterogeneous only in our manifested world.” (I:101) “Born in the unfathomable depths of Space, every nucleus of Cosmic matter suddenly launched into being, begins life under the most hostile circumstances. Through a series of countless ages, it has to conquer for itself a place in the infinitudes. It circles round and round between denser and already fixed bodies,” that draw or repel it in turn. (I:203) Many such nuclei perish, chiefly by being absorbed by the various Suns. Those which move more slowly, and in an elliptic course, are doomed sooner or later to annihilation. “Others moving in parabolic curves —

the comets — generally escape destruction, owing to their velocity.” (I:204) It is only after losing their velocity, and therefore their fiery tails, that the comets finally settle down and become Suns.

*The Secret Doctrine* rejects the hypothesis born of the Nebular theory, that the seven great planets of our solar system have evolved from our visible Sun. The first condensation of cosmic matter in our solar system of course took place about a central nucleus, its parent Sun; but our sun, it is taught, merely detached itself earlier than the planets as the rotating mass contracted, and is their elder brother, therefore, not their father. (I:101)

The occult theory describes the Sun as a fountain of magnetism, the heart of its system (I:530), giving and receiving the life-principle, throughout that system, as the Universal Life-giver. (I:593)

Having evolved from Cosmic Space before the laws of attraction and repulsion had finally adjusted the relations of our system, the Sun, we are taught, drew into the depths of his mass all the cosmic vitality within reach, and threatened to engulf his smaller brethren. After the scattered orbs had settled into order, he began to feed upon those portions of the universal Ether of whose existence and constitution Science is, as yet, absolutely ignorant. (I:102) Some-what similar theories, however, as to the reinforcement of the Sun’s heat have been advanced by several modern astronomers, notably by Mr. W. Mattieu Williams, who suggests that the diffused matter or ether which receives the heat radiations of the universe, is thereby drawn into the depths of the solar mass, expelling the previously condensed and thermally exhausted ether, to go through the same process of compression, exhaustion, and expulsion in its turn. This is as close as possible to the occult theory, which however, denies that the Sun is a globe in combustion, but defines it simply as a glowing sphere, the reflection or shell, of the real Sun, which is concealed behind it. “The Nasmyth willow leaves,” mistaken by Sir John Herschell for possible “solar inhabitants,” are the reservoirs of solar vital energy, the vital electricity that feeds the whole system, and which circulates as regularly throughout that system — of which, as I said before, the Sun is the heart — as does the blood in the human body. Only, this circulation, instead of a few seconds, takes ten of our years and the passage through the solar *auricles* and *ventricles* a whole year more, before it washes the *lungs* and passes thence to the great veins and arteries of the system. “This science will not deny, since astronomy knows of the fixed cycle of eleven years as connected with the increase in number of the solar spots, which increase is *due to the contraction* of the solar HEART.” (I:541)

As for the Moon, she is considered by the occultists, as by the scientists, to be virtually a dead planet, but nevertheless as the mother, and not as the child of the Earth. In reality the Earth is the satellite of the Moon, and subject to her control, as is evidence by the tides, the growth of plants, the cycles of many diseases, and many other physiological phenomena. The Earth’s influence on the Moon is confined to the physical attraction which causes the Moon to revolve around her, as a mother might walk around the cradle of her child.

(I:180) The Moon was the earliest measurer of *time*, and the astronomy of the Hebrews and their observance of *times* was regulated by her movements. (II:75) In all the old mythologies, she was the great Mother of all existences, as the Sun was the Father, and the Earth the nurse. (II:462)

The scheme of evolution somewhat hastily and erroneously sketched out by Mr. Alfred Percy Sinnett in his *Esoteric Buddhism* differs from the subsequent and more esoteric teachings of *The Secret Doctrine*, in that the Earth is described by Mr. Sinnett as one of a chain of seven planets, including the chief planets of our solar system. But *The Secret Doctrine* teaches that every planet has its own chain of seven “globes,” (or states of matter) of varying density, or rather materiality, conditions which descend through three grades of increasing denseness into the fourth, or most material, (represented by our Earth in its present state) to ascend through three grades leading back to the spiritual: Necessarily, our physical eyes are capable of perceiving only objects on the physical plane, and therefore any stars or planets visible to the inhabitants of the Earth, must be on the same plane of existence as themselves, and neither higher nor lower in the scale of being. It is therefore impossible that any visible planet such as Mars or Mercury should be on either a higher or a lower plane than our own. (I:164) And these seven conditions of matter, answering to the seven planes of consciousness, (or the perception of each such condition), are therefore capable of simultaneous existence, as the more ethereal interpenetrate the more substantial.

“The fundamental physical conditions into which the matter of the heavenly spheres is transformed, are described as seven; 1, the homogeneous; 2, the aeriform and radiant, (or gaseous); 3, the curd-like, (or nebulous); 4, the atomic, ethereal, (beginning of motion, hence of differentiation); 5, the germinal, fiery, (differentiated, but the germs only of the elements as we know them); 6, fourfold, vapory, (the future earth); 7, cold and depending (on the sun for life and light).” (I:205) This, as will readily be seen, is simply a summing up of the nebular theory as taught by the occultists. We have first the *primordial*, homogeneous matter, the One Element; then its second stage, called by science, Cosmic dust, and Fire-mist; (I:140), the third stage is the *nebulous* or *curd-like*, then comes the fourth, the *atomic*, *ethereal*, when Divine Force, thrills through this primordial matter, and “eternal vibration in the unmanifested, becomes vortical motion in the manifested world.” (I:118) With motion, the differentiation of the elements begins and we have the *germinal*, *fiery* stage, so-called because these “elements” are but the germs of those we know. The sixth stage, the *fourfold*, *vapory*, shows us the beginning of our elements, the future Earth, and the seventh stage is the cold and solidifying globe, dependent upon the Sun for life and light.

Very briefly and roughly sketched, this is the *field* of man’s evolution. The *reason* of it is to be found in that often-quoted saying of Patañjali: “The universe exists for the sake of the soul’s experience and emancipation.” And as man, to accept the popular division, is composed of body, soul, and spirit, the

process of his evolution must necessarily be threefold — physical, mental, and spiritual. For it is evident that only a union with a physical basis can differentiate abstract consciousness into self-consciousness, the consciousness that “I am I,” and this gives us the reason for what is called “the Cycle of necessity” or Incarnation, the pilgrimage of every soul, every spark of the Universal Over-Soul through the process of involution and evolution, back to its Divine Origin. For no soul, we are told, can acquire conscious — that is, individual — existence, until it has passed through every elemental stage of such a cycle, and has acquired that individuality first by natural impulse, and then by self-induced and self-devised efforts; as a vine raises itself from the ground, first by the life-impulse imparted to the germ, and then by the constant upreaching and clinging of its tendrils to higher and higher points. So must the individual consciousness ascend through all degrees of being from the wholly latent consciousness of the mineral to the highest vision of the Archangel, but owing all privileges, all acquirements, to the force of his own efforts.

The *Esoteric Catechism* teaches us that God, Monad, and Atom, are the correspondences of Spirit, Mind, and Body in Man. (I:619) Every atom becomes a visible complex unit (a molecule), and once attracted into the sphere of terrestrial activity, the Monadic Essence manifesting first in the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms finally becomes man. The mineral kingdom is the lowest point of descent, or involution, and from thence begins the ascent through the stages of terrestrial evolution “to that point where a correspondence is firmly established between the human and the divine consciousness.”

The ocean of matter, we are told, “does not divide into its potential and constituent drops until the sweep of the life-impulse reaches the evolutionary stage of man-birth.” (I:178) Like all the processes of Nature, the tendency towards segregation into individual Monads is gradual, and in the higher animals almost reaches that point, while in the vegetable kingdom there is only an almost imperceptible differentiation towards individual consciousness. Such a tendency we see in the persistent struggle of a vine towards a support upon one side of it, or in the slow seeking of a poplar’s roots after the water of a distant well. The Monads, properly speaking, are uncompounded things, are a spiritual essence, and the atomic aggregation is only the vehicle through which thrill the different degrees of intelligence.

The Ray of the Universal Mind, then, (or THE MONAD), passes through seven planes, three below and three above our “threshold of consciousness,” to use the expression of which modern psychologists are so fond. First it passes through three elemental planes or nascent centers of forces, which answer to the primary nebulous stages in the earth’s history; then through the mineral kingdom, which is the turning-point in the evolution of consciousness, where it becomes wholly latent, its envelope being at its densest, most material stage; then through the three stages of “organic” life, the vegetable, the animal, the human. (I:176) “The total obscuration of spirit is the complete perfection of its polar antithesis, matter,” says *The Secret Doctrine*.

We have seen the world-stuff “differentiating from its primal homogeneous condition, through the gaseous, the nebulous, the ethereal, the fiery, the vaporous states, into a cold and solidifying globe; we may see the human embryo following in its progress towards the perfect human being all the steps that nature takes through her lower forms of life, and the uniformity of law would teach us that the same kind of differentiation should take place in the development of the race, and that we should not endeavor to begin the history of Man with the human form as we now know it. Moreover occultism teaches that no form can be given to anything, either by nature or by man, whose ideal type does not previously exist on the subjective plane. That is, no sculptor can carve a statue, no carpenter can even make a box, until they have first created in thought the statue or the box in all its dimensions.” (II:660) For all Forms existed as Ideas in the Eternity, and will exist as reflections, when their material representations shall have passed away. Neither the form of man, nor that of any animal, plant, or stone, has ever been “created” and it is only on this plane of ours that it has begun to pass into the objective stage, expanding from within outwards. (I:282)

The Sun gives life to man, and therefore in the Eastern symbology is rightly called his father, while the Moon represents his mother, for it is to the “lunar ancestors” we are told that he owes that astral form around which is built up the physical body given by his nurse, the Earth. This astral prototype, is formed of molecular matter far too ethereal to be perceptible to our normal senses, and interpenetrates the matter of our physical bodies, as a subtle odor interpenetrates the air.

And as the seed that perishes in the ground, nourishes by its decaying matter the germ of a new plant, so the Moon, having completed her cycle of existence, transferred her energies in dying (according to the law of conservation of force) to a new cosmic center, which became our Earth. Now the Earth furnishes man with his physical body, and the Moon being one stage anterior to her in the great drama of evolution, she corresponds naturally to that astral body of which the physical body is the vehicle, so to speak. The process of evolution upon the Earth as well as upon any other globe, is by seven successive waves of life-giving energy, which it has been agreed to call *Rounds*, and during each of these Rounds or stages of evolution, seven Races with many subdivisions inhabit the world, each Race being specially adapted to the conditions of its environment. But the human Monad which has begun its pilgrimage upon the Earth, does not merely touch each of these stages of development once, and then pass on, but has to go through many incarnations in each Race, the development of the individual soul being a long process. Between each individual incarnation, and between each *Round* or wave of evolution, the human Ego passes through a period of subjective existence, thus completing the analogy with the shorter cycles of day and night, life and death. Four times that great wave of evolutionary force has swept over this earth of ours, and four great Races have passed away. The present humanity is the fifth

division of the Fifth Race, so that we have passed the lowest point of materiality, and are beginning to reascend towards spirit.

Each great Race, we are told, has evolved upon its own “continent,” or special condition of the Earth’s surface. But all the accounts of these early conditions of the Earth in the Purāṇas and elsewhere, are exceedingly perplexing, as they all have a symbolical meaning, and refer, not only to actual divisions of the Earth’s surface, but to the different planes of consciousness, as has been suggested by Mr. Charles Johnston in two articles in *The Path*, April and May, 1889.

The occult teaching shows the (now) polar regions as the earliest of the seven cradles of humanity, and as the tomb of the bulk of the mankind of that region during the Third Race, when the gigantic continent (now called) Lemuria began separating into smaller continents. (II:324)

Such changes are due, according to the old *Commentary*, to an inclination of the Earth’s axis, and a decrease of velocity in its rotation, which causes a submersion of the land nearer the poles, and a rising of new lands towards the equator. “For the Earth is subject to, and regulated by, the Spirit of the Moon for the breath of its waters.”

“In the first beginnings of human life,” continues the *Commentary*, “the only dry land was at the Right end of the sphere (or North Pole) where the globe is motionless”; (for the nearer one approaches the poles of course the less rotation is felt; at the poles proper the diurnal revolution is quite neutralized). “The whole earth was one vast watery desert, and the waters were tepid. There man was born on the seven zones of the immortal (land) the indestructible of the Manvantara.” (II:400) (For the land, or island which crowns the North Pole like a skullcap, is the only one which prevails through a whole Manvantara or cycle of evolution. All the other lands will emerge from the sea-bottom many times in turn, but this will never change.) — “There was eternal spring in darkness. (But) that which is darkness to the man of today, was light to the man of his dawn.”

If then the teaching is understood correctly, the first continent which came into existence capped over the North Polar region and remains to this day beyond that open sea enclosed by an impassable barrier of ice, whose discovery has been the dream of so many explorers.<sup>1</sup> (II:401)

As to the Second Continent we are told that only with the middle of the Third Race did humanity exist as we now know it, in a solid and human form, and that the Earth itself was in a comparatively ethereal condition before it reached its last consolidated state, while up to the period just mentioned, such things as coral and some shells were in a semi-gelatinous, astral condition, (“astral” signifying *pellucid* or *filmy* rather than *vaporous*). (II:250) The Second Continent has been called the *Hyperborean*, and comprised the whole of what is now known as Northern Asia. (II:7) It was a land that knew no winter in those early days, nor have its sorry remains more than one night during the year even now. “The nocturnal shadows never fall upon it,” said the Greeks, “for it is the

favorite abode of Apollo, which he annually visits.” And the naturalists all agree that during the Miocene Age — whether one or ten million years ago they are uncertain — Greenland, and even Spitzbergen, the remnants of our Second or Hyperborean continent, had almost a tropical climate. (II:11) There the elephant and the magnolia flourished, and the pre-Homeric Greeks called it the “Land of the Eternal Sun.”

During the Second Race more land emerged from the waters. (II:401) Beginning on both hemispheres, on the line above the most northern part of Spitzbergen, (“the place of no latitude”), on Mercator’s projection, on the English side, it may have included, on the American side, the localities that are now occupied by Baffin’s Bay and the neighboring islands and promontories. *There* it hardly reached southward the 70th degree of latitude, *here* (from the English side) it formed a horseshoe continent, of whose two ends, one included Greenland and the other Kamschatka, the two ends being united by what is now the northern fringe of the coasts of Eastern and Western Siberia. This broke asunder and disappeared.

The Third Continent it is proposed to call *Lemuria*, after Mr. Philip Lutley Sclater’s idea, who asserted, (between 1850 and 1860 {in “On the Geographical Distribution of the Mammalia,” published in the *Proceedings of the Linnean Society of London*, 1858}), upon zoological grounds, the actual existence in prehistoric times, of a continent which extended from Madagascar to Ceylon and Sumatra, and included some portions of what is now Africa. (II:7) According to occult teaching this continent covered the whole area of space from the foot of the Himalayas, which separated it from the inland sea rolling its waves over what is now Tibet, Mongolia, and the great desert of Gobi; from Chittagong westward to Hardwar and eastward to Assam. From thence it stretched south across what is known to us as Southern India, Ceylon, and Sumatra; then embracing on its way as we go South, Madagascar on its right hand, and Australia and Tasmania on its left, it ran down to within a few degrees of the Antarctic Circle: and from Australia, an inland region in those ages, it extended into the Pacific Ocean far beyond Easter Island. (II:324)

Easter Island belongs to the earliest civilization of the Third Race. Submerged with the rest, a volcanic and sudden uplifting of the ocean floor raised this small relic of the Archaic ages untouched, with its volcano and statues, during the Champlain epoch of northern polar submersion, as a standing witness to the existence of Lemuria. It is said that some of the Australian tribes are the last remnants of the last descendants of the Third Race. (II:327) This theory is corroborated by Ernst Haeckel, who, when speaking of Blumenbach’s brown or Malay race and the Australians and Papuans, remarks: “There is much likeness between these last and the aborigines of Polynesia, that Australian island-world, that seems to have been once on a time a gigantic and continuous continent.”

And it must be remembered that this continent not only embraced a vast area in the Pacific and Indian Oceans, but extended in the shape of a horseshoe

round South Africa (then a mere fragment in process of formation) through the Atlantic up to Norway. (II:333) The Atlantic portion of Lemuria was the Geological basis of the Fourth Continent, generally known as Atlantis, which was, indeed, rather a prolongation of the older continent, than an entirely new mass of land, for the unbroken continuity in natural processes is universal, and continents as well as races, merge gradually into the new order. Violent minor cataclysms and colossal earthquakes are recorded in the annals of most nations, if not of all. Elevation and subsidence of continents is always in progress. Huxley has shown that the British islands have been four times depressed beneath the ocean and subsequently raised again and peopled. The north of Europe is still rising from the sea, and on the other hand, the coast of Greenland is sinking fast. Why may not a gradual change have given place to a violent cataclysm in remote epochs? — such cataclysms occurring on a *minor scale* even now. (II:787)

The cataclysm which destroyed Lemuria was due to a series of subterranean convulsions, and the breaking asunder of the ocean-floors, caused by the “inner fires.” It is said to have occurred about 700,000 years before the commencement of what is now called the Tertiary Age, the Eocene. (II:313)

For in the same way that the evolution of the First Race took place on seven distinctly separated regions at the arctic pole — the only land there was at that time — so the ultimate transformation of the Third began about Behring’s Straits and what then existed of dry land in Central Asia, while the climate was semi-tropical even in the Arctic regions, and most adapted to the primitive wants of nascent physical man. The *Commentary* tells us that the Third Race had reached only about the middle point of its development when:—

“The axle of the Wheel tilted. The Sun and Moon shone no longer over the heads of that portion of the SWEAT BORN; people knew snow, ice and frost, and men, plants and animals were dwarfed in their growth, . . . This was the third *pralaya* of the races.”

“Which means that our globe is subject to seven periodical *entire* changes which go *pari passu* with the races; seven terrestrial *pralayas*, or periods of dissolution during this Round (or cycle of evolution), of which three are occasioned by the change in the inclination of the earth’s axis. In Occultism this inexorable law is referred to as ‘the great ADJUSTER’.”

“Thus during the present Round, there have already been four such axial disturbances; when the old continents — save the first one — were sucked in by the oceans — other lands appeared, and huge mountain chains arose where there had been none before. The face of the globe was completely changed each time; the *survival of the fittest* nations and races was secured through timely help, and the unfit ones — the failures — were swept off the earth. . . . Every sidereal year, (25,858 solar years) the tropics recede from the pole *four degrees* in each revolution from the equinoctial points, as the equator rounds through the zodiacal constellations. Now, as every astronomer knows, at present the

tropic is only twenty-three degrees (and a fraction less than half a degree) from the equator. Hence it has still 2½ degrees to run before the end of the Sidereal year; which gives humanity in general, and our civilized races in particular, a reprieve of about 16,000 years.” (II:330)

The fourth continent, which it has been agreed to call *Atlantis*, was formed by the coalescence of many islands and peninsulas which were upheaved in the ordinary course of time, and became ultimately the true home of the great Race known as the Atlanteans, “a race developed from a nucleus of Northern Lemurians, centered, roughly speaking, towards a point of land in what is now the mid-Atlantic ocean.” (II:334)

In connection with the continent of Atlantis, we should bear in mind that the accounts which have come down to us from the old Greek writers contain a confusion of statements, some of them referring to the great continent, and others to the last small island of Poseidonis. (II:767) Plato, for instance, merged the history of Atlantis, which covered several million years, into an event he located upon this island of Poseidonis, (which was about as large as Ireland) whereas the priests spoke of Atlantis as a continent vast as all Asia and Lybia put together, (II:761) Homer speaks of the Atlantes and their island, and the Atlantes and Atlantides of mythology are based upon the Atlantes and Atlantides of history. The story of Atlas gives us the clue. “Atlas is the old continents of Lemuria and Atlantis, combined and personified in one symbol. The poets attribute to Atlas, as to Proteus, a superior wisdom and a universal knowledge, and especially *a thorough acquaintance with the depths of the ocean*; because both continents bore races instructed by divine masters, and because both were transferred to the bottom of the seas, where they now slumber till their time comes to reappear above the waters. . . . And as both Lemuria, destroyed by submarine fires, and Atlantis submerged by the waves, perished in the ocean depths, Atlas is said to have been compelled to leave the surface of the earth, and join his brother Iapetos in the depths of Tartarus.” (II:762) Atlas then, personifies a continent in the west said to support heaven and earth at once; that is, the feet of the giant tread the earth while his shoulders support the sky, an allusion to the gigantic peaks of the ancient continents. “Mount Atlas and the Tenerife Peak {Mount Teide}, two of the dwarfed relics of the two lost continents, were thrice as lofty during the day of Lemuria, and twice as high in that of Atlantis. . . . Atlas was an inaccessible island peak in the days of Lemuria, when the African continent had not yet been raised.” Poseidonis, or the last island of Atlantis, lasted till about 12,000 years ago.

“In the Eocene age,” quotes Mr. Sinnett from a Master’s letter, “even in its very first part, the great cycle of the Fourth Race men, the Atlanteans, had already reached its highest point, and the great continent, the father of nearly all the present continents, showed the first symptoms of sinking — a process that occupied it down to 11,446 years ago {in 1893 = 11,599 in 2026}, when its last island, (that translating its vernacular name we may call with propriety, Poseidonis) went down with a crash.” (*Esoteric Buddhism*, 106.)

"Lemuria should no more be confounded with the Atlantis continent than Europe with America. Both sunk and were drowned with their high civilizations and 'gods,' yet between the two catastrophes a period of about 700,000 years elapsed. . . . Why should not your geologists" (continues the Teacher) "bear in mind that under the continents explored and fathomed by them, in the bowels of which they have found the Eocene age, there may be hidden deep in the unfathomed ocean beds, other and far older continents whose strata have never been geologically explored, and that they may some day upset entirely their present theories."

As to former civilizations, we are told by the same authority, that "Greek and Roman and even Egyptian civilizations are nothing compared to the civilizations that began with the Third Race. . . , We affirm that a series of civilizations existed before as well as after the glacial period."

"The group of islands discovered in the arctic ocean by Nordenskiöld of the *Vega*, were found strewn with fossils of horses, sheep, and oxen, etc., among gigantic bones of animals belonging to periods when man, says your science, had not yet made his appearance on earth. How came those horses and sheep there?" (II:773) The secret books inform us that *the climate has changed in those regions more than once* since the first men inhabited those now almost inaccessible latitudes. "In the myth of Phaeton it is said that at his death his sisters dropped hot tears which fell into Eridan and were changed into amber! Now amber is found only in the Northern seas, in the Baltic (therefore the Eridan {a mythical river of Greek tradition} cannot be identical with the Po {the real northern Italian river}). Phaeton meeting with his death while carrying heat to the frozen stars of the boreal regions, awakening at the pole the Dragon made rigid by cold, and being hurled into the Eridan, is an allegory referring directly to the changes of climate in those distant times when, from a frigid zone, the polar lands had become a country with a moderate and warm climate. The usurper of the functions of the sun, Phaeton, being hurled into Eridan by Jupiter's thunderbolt, is an allusion to the second change that took place in those regions, when again the land where once the magnolia blossomed became a desolate region of eternal ice. This allegory covers the events of two *pralayas* (or cycles of dissolution) and if well understood, ought to be a demonstration of the enormous antiquity of the human races." (II:770)

And in the story of the three giants imprisoned by Kronos in a dark country, the esoteric commentary sees "three polar lands which have changed form several times, at each new cataclysm, or disappearance of one continent to make room for another. . . . Yet though the whole face of the earth was transformed thereby each time, the conformation of the arctic and antarctic poles has but little altered. . . . The continents perish in turns by *fire* and *water*; either through earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, or by sinking, and the great displacement of waters. Our continents have to perish by the former cataclysmal process." (II:776) So St. Peter speaks of the earth, "which being overflowed, perished, but is now reserved unto *fire*." (2 Peter, 3:6-7.)

Such are the teachings of *The Secret Doctrine*, (briefly and roughly summed up,) as to the growth and preparation of this earth, the field of man's evolution. I have not tried to quote the scientific authorities on the subject, that you may see wherein they differ from these teachings, because there is no time for such comparison, which you can make at your leisure. But remember "that it is now the conviction of more than one Greek scholar that Hesiod's theogony was based upon historical facts, . . . and that such symbolisms as are found in all the exoteric creeds, are so many landmarks of prehistoric truths." (II:777)

#### NOTE

1. This "Imperishable Sacred Land" is the cradle of the first man and the dwelling of the last *divine* mortal, chosen as a teacher for the first seed of humanity. (II:6)

Students of the primitive mythologies of all nations know that they universally report the instruction of the earliest men by a semi-divine being, who teaches them the rudiments of the arts, and having fulfilled his mission, mysteriously disappears. (See *The Serpent Symbol*, Ephraim George Squier, 184, 194, and *Mythical Monsters*, Charles Gould, etc.

## II

### THE EVOLUTION OF THE RACES

In the last lecture, we traced the growth and preparation of the Earth as the field of man's evolution; we are now about to sum up the teachings of *The Secret Doctrine* on the subject of the different Races which have occupied and will occupy that field during the present Manvantara, or cycle of evolution.

The estimates of science as to the age of the Earth since it became a possible home for man, we have seen to be so extremely divergent that they are practically useless, covering (as Professor Winchell shows in his *Comparative Geology*, a variation of some twenty-seven millions of years. *The Secret Doctrine* maintains that physical humanity has existed upon this globe for the last 18,000,000 years, that this period was preceded by 300,000,000 years of the mineral and vegetable development. That the present Round or cycle of evolution is the Fourth, the middle point of the life allotted to our globe, the period of its greatest development, and therefore of the greatest cataclysmic disturbances, which have been far more intense and terrible during this Round, (when matter is less fluidic and therefore more resistant) than during any of the three preceding Rounds, the cycle of the Earth's earlier psychic and spiritual life, and of its semi-ethereal conditions. Now the whole issue of the quarrel 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. But why the scientists should accept the theory of a once ethereal earth and reject that of a once ethereal man, it is hard to realize. As H.P.B. has said, "Analogy is the guiding law in Nature, the only true Ariadne's thread that can lead us through the inextricable paths of her domain, towards her primal and final mysteries. . . . If we can conceive of a ball of Fire-mist becoming gradually — as it rolls through aeons of time in the interstellar spaces — a planet, a self-luminous globe, to settle into a *man-bearing* world or Earth, thus having passed from a soft plastic body into a rock-bound globe;" (II:153) and if we see everything on it evolving from a *moneron*, a single homogeneous particle of albumen, into the animal form, to grow into "the gigantic reptiles of the Mesozoic times, and then dwindle again into the comparatively dwarfish crocodile of the tropics and the still smaller universal lizard — how can man alone escape the common law?"

There was a time when all the so-called "antediluvian" monsters appeared as filamentoid infusoria without shell or crust, with neither nerves, muscles, organs, nor sex, and reproduced their kind by gemmation: why not man also? (II:151)

The figures 18,000,000 of years, which embrace the duration of *sexual, physical* man have to be enormously increased if the whole process of spiritual, astral and physical development is taken into account. (II:157) Nor would the early conditions of the globe militate against this theory, as its carbonic vapors and steaming soil could have no effect on such human life and organism as is assigned by the Occultists to the early mankind (II:150), "such terrestrial conditions as were then operative, having no touch with the plane on which the evolution of the *ethereal astral* races proceeded. Only in relatively recent geological periods, has the spiral course of cyclic law swept mankind into the lowest grade of physical evolution — the plane of gross material causation. In those early ages, *astral* evolution was alone in progress, and the two planes, the astral and the physical, though developing on parallel lines, had no direct point of contact with one another. It is obvious that a shadow-like *ethereal* man is related by virtue of his organization — if such it can be called — only to that plane from which the substance of that organization (his *Upādhi*) is derived." And it must be noted that though the astral and physical planes of matter ran parallel with one another even in the earliest geological ages, yet they were not in the same phases of manifestation in which they are *now*. (II:157) The Earth did not reach its present *grade of density* till 18,000,000 years ago. Since then both the physical and astral planes have become more dense.

"It is shown in every ancient scripture and cosmogony," says *The Secret Doctrine*, "that man evolved primarily as a *luminous incorporeal form*," over which, like the plastic clay around the iron framework of the sculptor, the *physical* frame of his body was built by, through, and from, the lower forms and types of animal terrestrial life. "When Adam dwelt in the Garden of Eden, he was clothed in the celestial garment, which is the garment of heavenly light," says the *Zohar*. (II:112)

In *Lucifer*, for March 1892, there is a very fine article by Dr. Herbert Coryn, called "The Eternal Cell," which makes many of these teachings very clear, and shows too, how our newest science draws ever nearer to the teachings of Occultism. In this article, Dr. Coryn explains August Weismann's theory of the immortal cell, that original speck of protoplasm which does not die, but simply divides and re-divides, moving continually down the stream of life, entering ever into new combinations, but never perishing. "Darwin studies the *form*," he says, "the obvious body of the animal, thinking that what it acquires, it transmits to its offspring. Weismann studies the *thread of plasm*, assuming that the plasm-cells, growing, cast off from themselves again the material they have taken up and vitalized, and that they have cast it outside them to remain as a bodily organism about them, impressing on the cells of this organism a type which was an inherent potentiality and antetype in itself." The physical line of evolution then, "is this germ-plasm, passing in man and animal from parent to offspring. The very same physical atoms passing steadily along the line; those which are now the germ-cells in us being the germ-cells of an immeasurable past, cells which have threaded upon themselves, or thrown out

around themselves, and therefore learned experience through, every form of life-organization in Nature.”

Dr. Coryn traces the ascending scale of the animal kingdom, from the Protozoa up to the Catarrhine monkey, and then bids us imagine the great Tree of Life with its innumerable branches and twigs. The twigs and outer branches we see and can study, but the main trunk and its first great boughs are lost in the mists of the past, and only remain as *astral fossils*. “For if we press back far enough,” says Dr. Coryn, “we get *behind science* to a type of which to science there are no traces, because all matter was then in a very ‘unscientific,’ plastic, astral, state.” (II:68 note)

Therefore the fossils of these primitive types remain on the astral plane, for the study of the astral clairvoyant only. But it cannot be too often repeated that even the esoteric teaching, much more the exoteric, is, to a great extent, allegorical. (II:81) To make either comprehensible to the average intelligence, requires the use of symbols cast in an intelligible form. Hence many of those expressions and formulae, which are to the Jews a stumbling-block and to the Greeks foolishness. But to those who are capable of treating the symbol as a symbol, and not as a hard-and-fast statement of a fact, it becomes instinct with life.

In studying the evolution of man as a thinking being, the first step, according to *The Secret Doctrine* is to realize the difference between the MONAD, the Universal Unit, and the *Monads*, or the manifested Unity; the word *Monas* signifying *unity* in its primary sense. The Monads are not discrete principles, limited or conditioned, but rays from that one universal *absolute* Principle, the “Universal Unit” just mentioned. They are, in other words, part of the Universal Consciousness, individualized by combination with a physical form, just as a soap bubble encloses a certain quantity of air, which nevertheless is in nowise different from the air around it, into which it is presently absorbed. Personality depends on limitation, and the less limitation the more spiritual freedom. In the *Occult Catechism* the Master asks the pupil: “Lift thy head, my scholar; dost thou see one, or countless lights above thee burning in the dark midnight sky?”

“I sense one Flame, my Master; I see countless undetached sparks shining in it.”

“Thou sayest well. And now look around and into thyself. That light that burns inside thee, dost thou feel it different in any wise 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’.” (I:120)

That ray, then, of the Divine Mind, which is to become a human soul, and complete its pilgrimage by returning to the Source from which it sprang, follows of necessity the same cycle of evolution as the rest of the manifested Universe. But while studying this process of evolution, we are warned not to

think that it is this Monad, (or nucleole) itself which develops from animal into man, for it stands to reason that a Ray of the Divine can neither progress nor develop, nor can it even be affected by the changes through which its “vehicle” passes. Like the thread that a chemist suspends in a solution of alum, the beautiful crystals form around it, but the thread remains unchanged.

Therefore we are cautioned not to think of a Monad as a separate entity, passing through all the Kingdoms of Nature to blossom into man at last, an atom of hornblende, for instance, finally becoming a Humboldt. Instead of speaking of “a mineral Monad,” we should speak of *the* Monad, or the Universal Energy, manifesting in that form of cosmic Matter called the mineral kingdom. (I:178)

“Between man and the animal — whose Monads (or Jīvas) are fundamentally identical — there is the impassable abyss of Mentality and Self-Consciousness. . . . Can man — god in the animal form — be the product of Material Nature by evolution alone, even as is the animal? And what is it that creates such difference between the two, unless man is an animal *plus a living god* within his physical shell?” (II:81)

To return to the evolution of the Races as such, we are told that the first human stock was a reproduction, by higher and semi-divine Beings, of their shadowy selves. (II:87) They “became” the First Race, just as the eternal cell of which Weismann speaks, became the endless number of cells into which it sub-divided. The Stanzas of *The Book of Dzyan* (already referred to) give in a series of semi-allegorical pictures wonderful in power and condensation, the earliest history of the pre-human Earth, and describe the first forms that appeared upon her slowly-consolidating surface, “soft stones that hardened, hard plants that softened”; that is, the mineral and vegetable kingdoms in their incipient stage. (II:15) Then insects and minute creatures became visible, after which an inclination of the Earth’s axis caused all nascent life to be swept from its surface, to be reborn after the cataclysm, on a somewhat higher plane.

All the oldest cosmogonies speak of abortive creations, of primordial worlds, that perished as soon as they came into existence. The Chaldean fragments of Cosmogony on the Cuneiform inscriptions and elsewhere, show two distinct creations of animals and men, the first being destroyed, as it was a failure. (II:54)

The *Stanzas* go on to describe the Spirits of the Sun and Moon that came to look upon the earth-monsters and were displeased. “This is no fit dwelling for the divine spark of mind,” they said. Then the Fires came, and dried up the turbid dark waters with their heat, and the Spirits slew the forms of the animal-headed men, and the men with fishes’ bodies. When these were destroyed, and the waters had subsided, the dry land appeared. Then came the fashioners of the astral body of man, the shadowy prototypes of future human beings.

These “fashioners,” the “lunar ancestors,” (or the *Barhiṣad*, as they are called) bear the same relation to the physical body of man that the Moon bears to the physical Earth. (II:79) As the Moon formed the model, and still controls

many of the phenomena of Earth, so the astral body still gives the model of the physical form and controls the ebb and flow of its tidal energies. The Barhiṣad were on a level with the lower principles, those which preceded gross objective matter, that is, they correspond to the elemental kingdoms preceding the mineral, and being devoid of the higher *Mahātmic* element, the ray of Universal Mind, they could only give birth to the *model* of the physical, that is, the astral man. And being “boneless,” as the *Stanzas* say, that is, possessed of only an ethereal body, “they could give no life to beings with bones. Their progeny were phantoms, with neither form nor mind. Therefore they are called the *Shadows*.”

The “Solar ancestors” properly so-called, could, and did, impart to this astral body a semblance of life (for from the Sun, the Heart of our system, comes that great flood of electric magnetism that vivifies all nature), but the “Lords of the Flame,” the Agniṣvātta, refused to impart to this imperfect being the spark of *Mind* which they alone could give. They were said to be devoid of fire (or creative passion) because too near their divine original, the Unknown Root, too high in the scale to have aught to do with creation. (II:78) “Subservient to eternal law, the pure gods could only project out of themselves *shadowy* men, a little less ethereal and spiritual, less *divine* and *perfect* than themselves — shadows still.” (II:95), . . . “They *would* not simply because they *could* not give to man that sacred spark which burns and expands into the flower of human reason and self-consciousness, for they had it not to give.” Therefore man had to be formed by more material creators, who, in their turn, could give only what they had in their own natures and no more. It is the worshippers of form, we are told, who have made of the higher Spirits, the “Rebels,” and the “Fallen Angels.”

It was the “more material creators,” who projected the senseless model (the *astral* form) of the physical being. It was those who would not, because they could not, create, (having no double, or astral form to project) who sacrificed themselves to the good and salvation of *Spiritual Humanity*.

But as these higher Beings had no hand in his physical creation, we find primeval man, (issued from the bodies of his *spiritually* fireless progenitors) described as aeriform, devoid of compactness, and MINDLESS. (II:80) He had no middle principle to serve him as a medium between the *highest* and the *lowest*, the spiritual man and the physical brain, for he lacked *manas* or mind. The Monads which incarnated in those *empty* SHELLS, remained as unconscious as when separated from their previous incomplete forms and vehicles. “It is the inferior spirits, possessed of a dual body” (an astral within an ethereal form) “who are the fashioners and creators of our body of illusion,” we are told. (II:57) “Into the forms projected by them, the Monad descends. . . . But they are like a roof with no walls, nor pillars to rest upon. . . . For the Monad has no hold upon the mere form. It is like the breeze where there is no tree or branch to receive and harbor it. It cannot affect the form where there is no agent of transmission,” (which is the mind) “and the form knows it not.”

“The Sons of MAHAT” (or Universal Man) “are the quickeners of the human Plant,” says the Commentary. (II:103) “They are the Waters falling upon the arid soil of latent life, and the Spark that vivifies the human animal. They are the Lords of Spiritual Life eternal. In the beginning” (during the Second Race) “some only breathed of their essence into men, and some took in man their abode.” For there are always gradual modifications in the process of evolution, nor did the human mind itself leap full-orbed into being. And although the humanity of the First and Second Races were not what we call *men*, but merely rudiments of the future human beings, still even among these appeared here and there, some faint foreshadowing of the intelligence to come.

And as to their forms, not men only, but all the primitive models in every kingdom in nature, begin by being ethereal, transparent films.

These earliest types are very clearly described in the article by Dr. Coryn before mentioned. “The very earliest life-type on this globe, was circular, oval, or formless, masses of fluidic astral jelly, men of the first Races. They had no parts or structures, filmy ‘cells’ of astral vapor. This, condensed into a small compass, would solidify into matter as we know it, the objective protoplasm, and in its clear, gelatinous appearance, its shapelessness tending to sphericity, mobility, uniformity of structure and properties, would closely resemble the present lowest unicellular organisms. And this is what happened, for the ‘man’ of the first two Races was an expanded protozoon, an immense cell of astral jelly, which was and is eternal, propagating its like then in early man as now in Protozoa by simply dividing into two. There neither was nor is death; it is the physical *coat* that dies, the secreted externalized body.”

This is what Dr. Coryn meant by “the Eternal Cell,” and we read in the *Stanzas*: “When the Race became old, the old waters mixed with the fresher waters. When its drops became turbid they vanished and disappeared in the new stream, in the hot stream of life.” (II:18)

All analogy goes to show the truth of the occult teaching that man was not “created” the complete being he is now, however imperfect he still remains. (II:87) 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 evolutionist. This double evolution in two contrary directions, required various ages, of diverse natures and degrees of spirituality and intellectuality in which to fabricate the being now known as man.

“Worlds and men were in turn formed and destroyed, *under the law of evolution and from pre-existing material*, until both the planets and their men, in our case our Earth and its animal and human races, became what they now are in the present cycle; opposite polar forces, an equilibrated compound of Spirit and Matter, of the positive and negative, of the male and the female.” (II:84)

“Having passed through all the kingdoms of nature in the previous *three Rounds*” (or cycles of evolution) “man’s *physical frame* — one adapted to the thermal conditions of those early periods — was ready to receive the *divine Pilgrim* at the first dawn of *human* life, 18 million of years ago.” (II:254)

In the animals, the higher principles lie dormant, and only the life principle, the astral form, and the rudiments of Kāma or desire, can manifest through their physical body, unfit to become the dwelling of *mind* till it reaches the human stage. (II:255)

In strict analogy, the cycle. of seven Rounds that gradually leads man’s physical body through every kingdom of nature up to its perfect form, is repeated on a much smaller scale in the first seven months’ life of the human embryo {embryonic recapitulation}. As that, although fully formed at that period, yet needs two months more in which to to acquire a perfect development, so man having perfected his evolution during seven Rounds, remains two periods more in the womb of mother nature before he is born, (or reborn) a Dhyāni, (or Divine Intelligence) still more perfect than he was before he launched forth as a monad on the newly built chain of worlds.” (II:257)

The science of embryology is beginning to be considered by naturalists, “as a picture in little and outline of the progress or the race,” to use the words of Haeckel, and that science teaches us, not only that the human embryo repeats in its progress towards maturity the forms of all the lower animal types, and that even the adult man preserves the traces of organs properly belonging to these types, (and now useless), but also that the process of reproduction itself has passed in the animal kingdom through stages and processes that would seem to be the function of vegetable life alone. Professor Joseph Le Conte, in his book *Evolution and Its Relation to Religious Thought* distinguishes *seven* different stages. The first, *fission*, or a simple division of the animal into two or more parts, each of which immediately becomes a perfect being, as in the case of the Protozoa. The second stage is *budding*, when a small portion of the surface of the parent structure, a sea-anemone for instance, expands like a bud upon a twig, and finally breaks away, and grows to be a perfect duplicate of its original. The *reproductive cells differentiate*, in the third stage, into a special organ, and the fourth stage places this organ in the *interior* instead of the exterior of the structure. The fifth stage is the *union of two diverse cells*, the sperm-cell and the germ-cell in the ovule, two elements in one organ. The sixth stage shows *two organs coexisting* in one individual, and with the seventh and final stage, the two organs belong to separate individuals, the element of *choice* enters, and the great law of “sexual selection” comes into play.

Now the early history of mankind as taught by occultism follows exactly this method of progression. The first Race of men were 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. So the *Zohar* says, "In the shadow-image of 'Ēlōhīm (or the creative spirits) was made man." (II:137) And *The Secret Doctrine* tells us that the First *disappeared* in the Second Race, as the simple cells that divide and re-divide disappear in their progeny. (II:84) Therefore of course, the First Race never died, but became "the eternal cell." (II:121) Then, as the tendency of matter was still towards greater density, a physical form began to build itself around the astral shadow.

The *Commentary* sums up the early Races in a few words. "First came the SELF-EXISTENT on this Earth. They are the 'Spiritual Lives,' projected by the absolute WILL and LAW at the dawn of every rebirth of the worlds." (II:164) These, of course, are the creative spirits, or the fashioners of man. "From these proceed:—

"1. The First Race, the 'Self-Born,' which are the (astral) shadows of their progenitors. The body was devoid of all understanding (mind, intelligence, and will). The inner being (the Monad) though within the earthly frame, was unconnected with it. The link, the Manas (or Mind) was not there as yet.

"2 From the First (Race) emanated the Second, called the 'Sweat-Born' and 'the Boneless.' This is the Second Root-Race, endowed by the preservers and the incarnating gods with the first primitive and weak spark (the germ of intelligence). . . . And from these in turn proceeds:—

"3. The Third Root-Race, the 'Twofold' (or androgyn). In the *Stanzas* this is called the 'Egg-born Race,' the process of budding or exudation that produced the Second Race, having changed from a soft cell, into a gradually hardening egg. (II:132) 'The Sun warmed it; the Moon cooled and shaped it; the Wind fed it until its ripeness,' say the *Stanzas*. So the story of Leda and the Swan has an occult meaning, and the two heroes Castor and Pollux, born from the egg to which she gives birth, become the highly significant symbol of the dual man, the mortal and the Immortal, as well as a symbol of the Third Race, and its transformation from the purely animal man into a god-man with only an animal body. (II:122) For the third Race, as the process of evolution went on, and matter became more and more dense, separated itself into three distinct divisions, according to its methods of reproduction. From being entirely without sex, it became androgynous, "and finally the man-bearing eggs began to give birth, gradually and almost imperceptibly in their evolutionary development, first to beings in which one sex predominated over the other, and finally, to distinct men and women" (II:132) In the *Banquet* of Plato, we have much the same idea. "Our nature of old was not the same as it is now"; says Aristophanes. 'It was *androgynous*. . . . Their bodies were round, and the manner of their running circular. They were terrible in force and strength and had prodigious ambition. Hence Zeus *divided each of them into two*, making them weaker.' "

"Every living creature and thing on earth," says *The Secret Doctrine*, "including man, evolved from one *common primal form*," and man must have

passed through the same stages in the evolutionary process as the lower animals, the same stages that science traces today in the growth of the embryo. (II:659)

The history of the cell seems to be the same throughout the realm of matter. It divides itself infinitely, until the stream of life gradually separates into the active and passive, the male and female elements. The less nourished become the active cells, the more nourished, the passive. From the unconscious fusion of the primitive cells, science traces step by step the gradual building up of form, till with the multicellular organisms, death enters the world; in fact, as Goette and other naturalists have said, “reproduction has death as its inevitable consequence,” it is “the price paid for a body.” But “the eternal cell” still persists: to use the eloquent words of a recent writer on the subject,<sup>1</sup> “the bodies are but the torches which burn out, while the living flame has passed throughout the organic series unextinguished.”

While the earlier Races were scarcely removed from the conditions of the Protozoa and were exceedingly simple in structure, with the Third Race and its increase in materiality, came many changes of form, as it drew nearer to the point of complete physical development. Towards the end of the Third Race, men came into the world under the same conditions and by the same processes as our historical generations. This change required of course many millions of years, and follows the lines of general evolution very closely. In the old *Stanzas*, we are told that during the early days of this race “animals with bones, dragons of the deep and flying serpents were added to the creeping things. They that crept on the ground got wings. They of the long necks in the water, became the progenitors of the fowls of the air.” This represents the same transition from reptile to bird that is traced by modern biologists. Still later we read of the changes in the boneless animals, which became vertebrates, and afterwards mammals, and having gone through the same androgynous condition as man, still bear traces of their former state, or as Professor Schmidt, the Darwinian, says: “through the whole period of their development, they drag along with them these residues borne by their unknown ancestry no one can say how long ago” (II:184).

And at this point, according to *The Secret Doctrine*, occurs the great divergence of the occult theories from the Darwinian. For while Darwin and his followers would trace man and the anthropoid ape to a common animal ancestor, occultism would give them a common *human* parent, as it derives these apes from a union of the early mindless men with the animal races of their period. We have seen that the First Race was little better than phantoms, and devoid of all understanding; the Second Race, endowed only with the first primitive and weak spark of intelligence, and the earlier Third little better than animals, and not yet fit temples for the living God. The Monad, although within the earthly frame, was still without the connecting link of *mind*, which should unite it to the slowly developing brain.

For we are bidden to remember that “the human Monad, whether *immetallized* in the stone atom, or *invegetallized* in the plant, or *inanimalized* in the animal, is still and ever, divine.” (II:185) These mindless men, in whom the divine ray lay concealed, as the fire sleeps in the flint, “took unto themselves huge she-animals,” says the old manuscript, “and bred a race of crooked, red-hair-covered monsters, going on all-fours.” These were dumb, as were the men of that early period, for language came only with the development of mind. These monsters became ferocious, and men and they mutually destructive. “Till then there was no sin, no life taken,” but after the separation into sexes, the Golden Age was at an end. The axis of the earth tilted, the succession of the seasons began, and constant change took the place of eternal spring. “People knew ice, snow, and frost, and men, plants, and animals were dwarfed in their growth.” For with the separation of the sexes, strife came into the world, and the opposition of natures bred passion and sin and death. This was the fall of man, “the descent of the soul into matter,” as the old Platonists put it, and *involution* or the complete union of the spiritual with the physical having been effected, *evolution*, as the return towards the spiritual, began.

The original types of the anthropoid apes then, are a side-issue, an offshoot of an almost mindless race of men, an offshoot that perished in succeeding cataclysms. With the other, or distinctly human branch, the brain continued to develop, and having at last become a fitting vehicle for Mind, the divine spark kindled the fire of intelligence in man, and he acquired the consciousness of his own powers, and ate of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. (II:193)

“The Third 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*, where the *mind* succumbs to the temptations of desire.” (II:254 note)

No sooner had man been given understanding, and a consciousness of his divine powers, than each felt himself a god in his real nature, though an animal in his physical self. The struggle between the two began from the very day man tasted of the fruit of the Tree of Wisdom. (II:272) That is, when man had been given *mind*, and *Self-consciousness* had arisen from its union with matter, “he became as a god, knowing good and evil.” We cannot imagine good and evil existing without desire; only with manifestation, which springs from (abstract) desire can the duality of nature, (its “pairs of opposites”; to use the Hindu phrase) begin. Good and evil, light and darkness, heat and cold, male and female, active and passive, are the two scales of the ever-vibrating balance of creation. Therefore evil *must* be relative, and only through strife can man work out his salvation, only through constant conflict win his way back to perfect peace, “a struggle for life between the spiritual and the psychic, the psychic and the physical.” Those who conquered the lower principles by obtaining mastery over the body, joined the “Sons of Light.” Those who fell victims to their lower natures, became the “Slaves of Matter.” From “Sons of Light and Wisdom” they ended by becoming the “Sons of Darkness.” They had fallen in the battle

of mortal life with Life immortal, and all those so fallen became the seed of the future generations of Atlantean sorcerers.

For it was the Atlantean, or Fourth Race, “the first progeny of semi-divine man after his separation into sexes — hence the first humanly-born mortals — who became the first ‘Sacrificers’ to the *god of matter*. That worship degenerated very soon into *self-worship*, thence led to phallicism, or that which reigns supreme to this day in the symbolism of every exoteric religion of ritual, dogma and form.” (II:273) And with the Fourth Race developed language: in its first stage monosyllabic; in its second, agglutinative; in its third, inflectional, the root of the Sanskrit.

The early branches of the Fourth Race are described as being of gigantic stature, and endowed with extraordinary faculties, the are the origin of the traditions of Titans, and of Cyclopes. “We can easily believe,” says Mme. Blavatsky, “that the subsequent legends and allegories found in the Hindu Purāṇas and the Greek Hesiod and Homer, were based on the hazy reminiscences of real Titans — men of tremendous physical power — and of actual Cyclopes, three-eyed mortals.” (II:293) The third eye was not, however, in the middle of the forehead, as in the Greek legendary Cyclops, (by an exoteric license) but in the back of the head.

“They could see behind and before,” says the old Commentary, “but when after the separation of the sexes men had fallen into matter, their spiritual vision became dim, and the third eye began to lose its power. When the Fourth Race arrived at it’s middle age, the inner vision had to be awakened, *and acquired by artificial stimuli*, the process of which was known to the old sages. (II:294). (That is, the inner sight could henceforth be gained only through training and initiation.) The third eye, likewise, getting gradually petrified, soon disappeared. The double-faced became the one-faced, and the eye was drawn deep into the head, and is now buried under the hair.” But it has left a witness to its existence in the shape of the *pineal gland*, formerly regarded by Descartes as the seat of the soul. That the pineal gland is an atrophied eye is admitted by many scientists, as many animals, and more especially the lizards, have a distinct third eye, now atrophied, but necessarily active in its origin. Dr. Carter Blake, F.T.S., (of the *Anthropological Society of London*) says: “Paleontology has ascertained that in the animals of the Cenozoic Age, especially the Saurians, the third eye was much developed, and was a real organ of vision.” And in an article in *Scribner*, 1890, by John Bland-Sutton on “Evolution and Disease,” the author says: “Nothing can be more striking than what is known as the pineal eye in certain lizards,” and Regnier De Graaf<sup>2</sup> discovered that in the slow-worm the pineal gland is actually modified into an invertebrate eye. Sir Richard Owen<sup>3</sup> points out its presence in many fossil animals, and Professor Ray Lankaster suggests “that the original vertebrate must have been a transparent animal, with an eye or pair of eyes inside its brain, like those of the Ascidian tadpole.”<sup>4</sup> This eye was an active organ in man (says the occult teaching) at that stage of evolution when the spiritual element reigned supreme. And with the

consolidation of his frame and the development of his physical senses, the third eye, as well as the spiritual and psychic senses, ended by becoming atrophied. While this eye was (and still is) in man the organ of the inward sight, in the animal it was that of objective vision, to be replaced, in the course of physical evolution from the simple to the complex, by two eyes. In man it did not become entirely atrophied till the close of the Fourth Race, when his divine powers had been made the servants of his newly awakened physical and psychic passions instead of the reverse. The sin lay, not in using these powers, but in *misusing* them.

The sinking and transformation of Lemuria, as it has been agreed to call the Third Continent, the home of the Third Race, began nearly at the Arctic Circle, and the Third Race ended its career in the "Lanka" of the Atlanteans, of which Ceylon {now Sri Lanka} was the northern highland. (II:332) The new Race, the inhabitants of Atlantis, the Fourth Continent, were developed from a nucleus of Northern Lemurian men about 700,000 years before the beginning of what is now called the Tertiary Age, (the Eocene). Of course race-changes, like all others in nature, are slow and gradual, one race overlaps another, and even now, representatives of the Fourth, and even of the Third Races, are still living. It is simply a question of predominance.

"It is known to all occultists," we are told in *Man: Fragments of Forgotten History* (75), "that the first civilization of our Round began with the Third Race, of which lingering remnants are now to be found among {certain Aboriginal Australian groups described by early anthropologists}. These {peoples regarded by early writers as culturally degenerate}, strange though it might seem, are descended from ancestors whose civilization antedated by aeons that of Phoenicia and Babylon." Little trace of their work has come down to us except in the oldest remains of Cyclopean architecture such as are found in Peru and Central America, or in the curious statues of Easter Island, part of the submerged continent again upheaved to the light of day.

With the Atlanteans, physical beauty and strength reached their climax, in accordance with evolutionary law, toward their middle period. (II:433) But they must not be regarded as one race only, in our ordinary sense, or even as a nation. They represented several *humanities*, and an almost countless number of races and nations, and at their best, Greek, Roman, and even Egyptian civilizations were as nothing compared to theirs. (II:429) Their knowledge of the hidden powers of nature was far greater than our own; they built flying machines and navigated them, they had weapons of a destructive power beyond our conception, and their houses were floored with gold. Art, literature, and science had their origin during this race period, we are told in *Man: Fragments of Forgotten History* (77), but little of their literature is now preserved, and their art and science have scarcely left any vestige except in China, though one of the principal astronomical works in Sanskrit is the production of an Atlantean astronomer. {The *Sūrya Siddhānta*, revealed by Sūrya to Maya (Asura).} When they came into contact with the Aryans, they were on the decline, for their

highest pitch of civilization was reached while the Aryan race was still in its cradle, and the records of their grandeur, while inaccessible to the world at large, “are treasured with zealous care in the secret libraries of temples and lamaseries, and the crypts and caverns of initiated mystics.” (*Man: Fragments of Forgotten History*, 78.)

It was the abuse of their knowledge of the subtler forces of nature which led to the downfall of the Atlantean Race. (II:84) The great cataclysms which close the cyclic degeneration of races, are brought about by their overweening pride and wickedness which renders a general conflict between them and the powers of goodness inevitable. In all religions the memory of such conflicts is preserved under different names and symbols. This is the combat of Michael and his Angels against the Dragon; of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness; of the Devas against the Asuras.

“The famous Atlantis exists no longer, but we can hardly doubt that it did once,” says Proclus, for besides the histories of Marcellus and others, he quotes the testimony of the inhabitants of Poseidonis, (its last fragment) “who *preserved the memory* of the prodigious magnitude of the Atlantic island as described by their ancestors.” (II:408) This island of Poseidonis was Plato’s Atlantis, and was destroyed about 11,000 years ago. (II:8) The submersion of the main continent was several million years earlier, during the Miocene period. It is this great submersion which is the most interesting, as it gave rise to all the legends of the Deluge, and of Vaivasvata, Xisūthrus, Noah, Deukalíon, and the few holy ones saved from destruction. “It was brought on by successive disturbances in the axial rotation, that beginning during the earliest Tertiary period, and continuing for long ages, carried away successively the last vestiges of Atlantis, with the exception perhaps of Ceylon {Sri Lanka}, and a small portion of what is now Africa. changed the face of the globe, and little trace of the flourishing civilizations, arts, and sciences it swept away has remained, save in the secret records of the East.”

“The first great waters came,” says the old manuscript. “They swallowed the seven great islands.” All holy saved, the unholy destroyed. With them most of the huge animals, produced from the sweat of the earth.

“Few men remained: some yellow, some brown and black, and some red remained. The Moon-colored (the earliest type) was gone forever.

“The Fifth (Race) produced from the Holy stock remained; it was ruled over by the first divine Kings. . . . who redescended, who made peace with the Fifth, who taught and instructed it.”

Now it is a curious fact that all ancient nations, whether Akkadian, Chinese, Hindu, Egyptian, Hebrew, Greek, or Peruvian preserve some tradition of such early divine teachers. From Manu and Thoth-Hermes down, all tell us of the gods who descended from their celestial abodes and reigned on earth, teaching mankind astronomy, architecture, and other arts and sciences. These Beings always appear first as “gods” and creators; then they merge in nascent man, and begin to be known as divine kings and rulers. They are often spoken

of as the “Serpents” or “Dragons,” for from time immemorial the Serpent or Dragon has been the emblem of Wisdom, for the proofs of which assertion I must refer you to *The Secret Doctrine* where this symbol is most fully and carefully explained. “When mortals shall have become sufficiently spiritualized,” says Mme. Blavatsky, “men will *know* then, that there never yet was a great World-Reformer, whose name has passed into our generation, who was not (a) a direct emanation of the *Logos*, (under whatever name known to us), and (b) who had not appeared before, during the past Cycles. . . . They will then understand why it is impossible for them to assign any reliable date to Zoroaster, who is found multiplied by twelve and fourteen, why Kṛṣṇa and Buddha speak of themselves as *reincarnations*; . . . why Osiris reappears in Thoth-Hermes, and why Jesus of Nazareth is recognized, cabalistically, in Joshua the son of Nun.” (II:358) Each of these, as well as many others, we are told, had first appeared on earth as one of the seven powers of the *Logos*, individualized as a God or angelic messenger; then, more material in form, they had reappeared in turn as great sages and instructors of the Fifth Race, and finally sacrificed themselves, to be reborn under differing circumstances for the good of mankind at various critical periods. In the early Egyptian history, for instance, we read that Osiris-Isis, the dual god, the father-mother, “built cities in Egypt, and stopped the overflowing of the Nile; invented agriculture, the use of the vine, music, astronomy, and geometry.” (II:366) In *The Book of the Dead*, Isis says: “I am the Queen of these regions; I was the first to reveal to mortals the mysteries of wheat and corn.” (II:347) And the *Commentary* states; “Fruits and grains unknown to Earth to that day, were brought by the ‘Lords of Wisdom,’ for the benefit of those they ruled, from other spheres.” Now it is said to be a fact that wheat has never been found in the wild state, and it is the only cereal which has defied the efforts of botanists to trace it to its origin. And it was a sacred grain with the Egyptians, being buried with their mummies to come to life centuries afterwards.

Nearly five hundred years before the present era, Herodotus was shown by the priests of Egypt the statues of their Kings and Pontiffs, all of miraculous birth, who had reigned before Menes, their first *human* King. “These statues,” he says, “were enormous colossi in wood, 345 in number, *each of which had his name, his history, and his annals*.” And the priests assured Herodotus that no historian could ever understand or write an account of these superhuman Kings unless he had studied and learned the history of the *three dynasties* that preceded the human — namely, the DYNASTIES OF THE GODS, that of the demigods, and that of the heroes, or giants. (II:369) These “three dynasties” are the three Races that preceded the Atlanteans, or the Fourth Race, the climax of the material.

“The duration of the periods that separate, in space and time, the Fourth from the Fifth Race — in the historical, or even the legendary beginnings of the latter, is too tremendous for us to offer any more detailed account of them,” says *The Secret Doctrine*. (II:437)

The fifth continent was America, but as the sequence of the continents is made to follow the order of the evolution of the races, from the First to the Fifth, our Aryan Root-Race, Europe must be called the fifth great continent. “There was a time when the delta of Egypt and Northern Africa belonged to Europe, before the formation of the Straits of Gibraltar and a further upheaval of the continent, changed entirely the face of the map of Europe. The last serious change occurred some 12,000 years ago, and was followed by the submersion of Plato’s little Atlantic island that he called Atlantis after its parent continent.” (II:8)

Since the beginning of the Atlantean Race many million years have passed, yet we find the last of the Atlanteans mixed up with the earliest Aryans. “This shows,” says *The Secret Doctrine*, “the enormous overlapping of one race over the race which succeeds it, though in characters and external type the elder loses its characteristics and assumes the new features of the younger race,” (II:444) This may be seen in the formation of all mixed races, and Occult philosophy teaches that even now the next Race is in process of formation, and it is in America that that process has already silently commenced. For owing to the strong admixture in the United States of many nationalities, with their constant intermarriages, their peoples have become almost a race *sui generis*, not only mentally, but physically. “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.” For the Occult teaching divides each race of the seven Root-Races into seven sub-races, and these again into seven branches or family-races. “The Fifth will overlap the Sixth Race for many hundreds of millenniums, changing with it but more slowly, still *changing*), in stature, general physique, and mentality just as the Fourth overlapped our Aryan Race, and the Third had overlapped the Atlanteans.” And as in any series of seven the fourth must be the central or balance-point, so with the Fourth Race the spiritual element had become most deeply embedded in matter, and with the Fifth the reascent toward the spiritual regions. Only by the union with matter can Universal Consciousness become individual Mind, only by the purification of matter can it work out its own salvation, and regain the glorious liberty of the Sons of God. With each Race, we are told, a new sense, and a new element comes to perfection. We of the Fifth have five senses, and already the fifth element, ether, is beginning to be recognized even by the scientists. In her speech at the London Convention of 1892, Mrs. Annie Besant pointed out how “side by side with the position of humanity at this moment is the development of this fifth element of ether on the material plane. . . . It matters not whether you turn to the physicist, the chemist, the electrician”; she said, “you will see that each one of these classes of scientific men has been investigating ether, studying ether”; and Professor Crookes has said that, “in its vibrations, vibrations hardly understood yet, lie possibilities of the hidden powers of communication of human thought, possibilities of a new organ in the human

brain answering to these vibrations as the eye answers to the vibrations which we know as light.” And so the way is being prepared for the development of that *sixth sense* which will be the distinguishing characteristic of the coming race.

“Thus it is the mankind of the New world,” says the teacher, “whose mission and destiny it is to sow the seeds for a forth-coming, grander, and more glorious Race than any we know of at present.” (II:446) But as the coral island never could have risen above the waves had not each microscopic insect contributed its tiny quota to the work of untold millions, so does the future of humanity depend upon our individual exertions to help to a swifter evolution the progress of mankind. The progress of the race *is* the progress of each individual, and we too, like the poet {Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr.}, need to learn the lesson of “The Chambered Nautilus”:

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,  
As the swift seasons roll!  
Leave thy low-vaulted past!  
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,  
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,  
Till thou at length art free,  
Leaving thine out-grown shell by life’s unresting sea!

KATHARINE HILLARD, F.T.S.

March 7th, 1893.

#### NOTES

1. *The Evolution of Sex*, (262). (Patrick Geddes and J. Arthur Thomson.)
2. *Zoologischer Anzeiger* (Journal), (29). 1886.
3. “Aspects of the Body in Vertebrates,” etc. 1883.
4. “The Advancement of Science,” 1879. Partially retracted in November 1889.

## HURRY

[READ BEFORE THE SEVENTH ANNUAL CONVENTION, AMERICAN SECTION, AT NEW YORK.]

I have heard of a man who was born in a hurry, who lived in a hurry, who married in a hurry, who repented in a hurry — instead of at leisure, as so many do — who died in a hurry, and who went in a hurry — to another state of consciousness. His was undoubtedly an extreme case, and yet is not this element of hurry the curse of our Western civilization? What is it that reduces us to clamor for “rapid transit” as the crowning grace of life, and prevents our recognizing any element in a journey as superior to that of speed? As the now famous old Indian said: “We have all the time there is”: what, then, are we trying to secure? Nevertheless, how many people we all know, who enter a room as if borne on the wings of the whirlwind, who keep every particle of the atmosphere in a state of restlessness while they remain, whose brows are wrinkled with anxiety, whose voices are sharpened with care, and who, having fidgeted through a brief call, are borne away again in a tempest of haste!

Another class of people are always in a hurry because they are always behindhand. At some time or other they have lost a golden half-hour, and the rest of their life seems to be spent in its fruitless pursuit. I have a friend of this class who is always unpunctual, and who scatters the time of other people with most reckless prodigality. She explains her dilatoriness by saying that she is always so much interested in what she is doing now, that she forgets all about what she has to do next; an excuse more satisfactory to herself than to those who are waiting for her. And another disappoints people because she always tries to do the work of two hours in fifty-nine minutes, and never gets over the fond delusion that she will yet accomplish it. This is the vain hope that betrays most of us, I think, and is the cause of much of that nervous restlessness so generally charged to the much-abused American climate.

Yet there are those who live within its baneful influence, and are as unaffected by it as the dwellers on a mountain top are by the miasma of the valley far below. These are they who are in the world but not of it. Look at the clear and placid faces of the Sisters of Charity {a Roman Catholic religious congregation of women}, of the Society of Friends {the Quakers}, of those whose pursuits keep them far from the madding crowd and its constant and harassing interruptions. There are certain people whose presence is a benediction, whose coming brings with it a sense of repose that rests the weary spirit and seems to lift one above the petty turmoil of the world. These people are never in a hurry. It is impossible to associate the word with their gracious presence. When they enter, the busy wheels of existence stop, and the whirr does not begin again till they depart. Somehow they have lifted us above our

carking cares, and when they leave us we awake, bewildered, from a beautiful dream of peace. It is not that they are careless of time, for that would interfere with the convenience of others, but they manage to be its masters, not its slaves.

Behind the superficial aspects of our hurry, however, there must lie a deeper cause, and I think we find it in the element of Greed. The machinery of our modern civilization has Mammon for its stoker, and “making haste to be rich” for its watchword. All trade is corrupted by the money-getting instinct, and in the mad race for wealth the devil generally gets the foremost rather than the hindmost. Men are so absorbed in the pursuit of riches that they can give no thought to the cultivation of the mind or the elevation of the soul. Home represents to these galley-slaves of money only a dormitory where they may snatch a few moments of rest from their toil. Their sons follow the same routine; their daughters are carefully educated because it is the fashion, and when these young girls emerge into the world and look for the men they are to marry, what do they find? Men who have no time to think, much less to read, who snatch a few hours for a hasty courtship between the figures of a dance or the courses of a dinner, and then, as the brief honeymoon wanes, the inevitable gulf widens between the two and another tale of domestic unhappiness begins. For the fever born of greed spreads into every realm of life. It keeps the man grinding at the counting-house, it keeps the woman toiling over what she calls her “social duties,” born of the same greed for more prestige, more fine raiment, more display than her neighbors.

Nor is the desire for riches and social position the only form of greed; there are others more subtle, less objectionable on the face of them, but all, nevertheless, forms of desire for the advancement or aggrandizement of *self*, and all productive of that element of hurry which is the bane of modern existence. We, as Theosophists, profess to believe in reincarnation: but were it a *real* belief, it would, I think, give us that wide and far-reaching conception of life which alone should have weight to calm our excitement, and to make us say with Walt Whitman:

Whether I come to my own today, or in ten thousand or ten million years,  
I can cheerfully take it now, or with equal cheerfulness I can wait;  
My foothold is tenon'd and mortised in granite;  
I laugh at what you call dissolution;  
And I know the amplitude of time.

That is the great lesson the doctrine of reincarnation should teach us, *to know the amplitude of time*. Why should we fume and fret because we are “not so far advanced” as some one else, not so highly developed as we think we ought to be, “desiring this man’s art and that man’s scope”? We are set in the midst of Eternity, not time, and are in a truer sense than perhaps Alfred, Lord Tennyson thought, “the heirs of *all* the ages.” These years of life that we cling to so fondly as they sweep past us are but insignificant portions of our existence,

and each existence is but a lightning-flash across the dial of Eternity. All the phenomena of dreams and of hypnotic conditions teach us that time and space are illusions of this plane of consciousness which we call the waking plane, and that upon other planes all the relations of time and space are changed. We need to take this lesson to our hearts, then, of the uselessness of hurry, and, indeed, of its worse than uselessness. It is in the still liquid that the beautiful crystals form; the perturbed waters will bring forth nothing but idle foam. "Grow as the flower grows, unconsciously, but eagerly anxious to open its soul to the air." But there must be no hurry, no eager desire for growth, or the longing is frustrated and "you harden by the forcible passion for personal stature." And *Light on the Path*, from which these words are taken, says further: "The peace you shall desire is that sacred peace which nothing can disturb, and in which the soul grows as does the holy flower upon the still lagoons."

Nor does this quietude necessarily involve idleness. "Without haste" but also "without rest" is the watchword of the stars, and the elimination of hurry does not imply inactivity. It is always better to do three things well than to do thirty things badly, and if we wish to purge our lives of the element of hurry, we must take as our rule two golden maxims: Never to try to do more in a day than we can do *well*; and when sure we can accomplish a thing in half an hour, always to allow ourselves forty minutes. Then we are able to move serenely through the bustle of life, and although each day we seem to have accomplished very little and to have relinquished very much, at the end of many days we shall find that on the whole we have done more and have done it better than when we grasped with both hands at the hedge-flowers, and tore away few blossoms and many thistles.

For, indeed, much of our hurry arises from an overwhelming sense of our own importance. We are too sure that if we are not on the spot everything will go wrong; that the work will not be properly done unless we direct it; that no one else can conduct a certain difficult transaction, or fill with any sort of satisfaction our own vacant place. But some turn of fate compels us to step aside, and lo! the wheels of the universe manage to roll on just as well as if we had been there. Let us, then, lay this lesson also to our hearts — there never was a man yet whose place could not be filled, and we shall have plucked another fruitful seed of hurry from our lives. A hundred years at least before Columbus "discovered" America, the "Good Counsel" of Geoffrey Chaucer was given to the world, and part of that good counsel read:

Paine thee not each crooked to redress,  
In trust of her that turneth as a ball;  
Great rest lieth in little business.

And Shakespeare's keen insight recognized the root of much of our striving when he made Pembroke say:

When workmen strive to do better than well,  
They do confound their skill in covetousness.<sup>1</sup>

In that very delightful book {Zhuangzi (Chuang Tzu)} containing the philosophy of Zhuang Zhou (Chonang-tsu), the Chinese mystic, there is a chapter called "Autumn Floods," wherein the Spirit of the River converses with the Spirit of the Ocean, and confesses that having seen the ocean he at last realizes the existence of something far greater than himself. To which the Spirit of the Ocean replies: "Now that you know your own insignificance, I can speak to you of great principles. . . . Dimensions are limitless; time is endless. Conditions are not invariable; terms are not final. Thus the wise man looks back into the past, and does not grieve over what is far off, nor rejoice over what is near, for he knows that time is without end."

In a deeper sense, then, than was even in the thought of the wise old Indian, "we have all the time there is," and when once the idea of reincarnation shall have become a living reality to us, it will give us a sense of the fulness of time that nothing else can impart. For when we realize that we are not obliged to learn all the lessons of earthly existence in one brief life, a terrible urgency is lifted from our souls, and we can afford to wait, while we also serve.

Nor is the least of our serving the making of that atmosphere of repose which shall benefit the souls of others as well as our own. What is that element of hurry and unrest that makes life in our great cities so intolerable but the effect of each one's contribution to the general whirlwind surrounding us? There is nothing more contagious than haste, and the mere fact of seeing a wild necessity for hurry imprinted on the face of every one else almost inevitably inspires us with a feeling that we must hurry too. Watch the crowd leaving a ferry boat, for example, and see the outer fringe of men and boys leap from the deck and tear up the pier as though they were rushing from a sinking ship. But no sooner are they fairly beyond the gates than they settle down into a saunter, and prove, in nine cases out of ten, to be people who have more time than they know what to do with. None the less, this fictitious hurry of theirs has infected their neighbors, and they too have been swept away in the wild rush. If we walk through the bustling streets of lower New York on a weekday, we feel how strong is the effect in its atmosphere of all this element of greed that drives the wheels of business and makes men hasten to and fro as if each trivial errand were of the most vital importance. Go through the same streets on a Sunday, and you will feel the peace that settles upon those empty spaces as soon as the human element is withdrawn. No village green is more tranquil.

If, then, it is our fault that the atmosphere of city-life is so full of hurry, it is our privilege to be able to make it less so. If we can surround ourselves with a sphere of serenity, we shall tranquillize those around us, and from them the sense of repose will spread to others. Not very long ago I heard a lady say, "If I could look as serene and happy as all the Theosophists do, I should be willing to join the Society at once." So we may take heart of grace, and feel that even

as a nucleus of *repose* the Theosophical Society may hope to accomplish something.

And as a nucleus for the promotion of universal brotherhood, it should accomplish much more in the same direction. For the idea of universal brotherhood is based upon the conviction of our spiritual unity, and as the *Vedas* say: "To him who knows that all things are one with the Supreme Spirit, what room can there be for delusion, or what room for sorrow?" With the sense of separation from others killed out, there can be no more striving to excel our other selves, but realizing that in the truest sense we are all members of one body, we rejoice in their advancement as our own, and in our gains as theirs also. And knowing that in the light of Eternity a century is as insignificant as a second, we learn that time is to be measured, not by the revolutions of the sun and moon, but by the growth of our souls. As Thomas Carlyle has said {in *Sartor Resartus*}, in words that cannot be too often quoted: "The curtains of Yesterday drop down, the curtains of Tomorrow roll up: but Yesterday and Tomorrow both *are*. . . . With God, as it is a universal *Here*, so is it an everlasting *Now*."

The conviction of our unity in spirit with each other and with the Divine, that unity upon which rests the true basis of universal brotherhood, and the "Knowledge of the amplitude of time," are, then, the pillars upon which we should rear the structure of our lives. "To whatever object the inconstant mind goeth out, thou shouldst bring it back and place it upon the Spirit," says the *Bhagavad Gītā*. "For supreme bliss surely cometh to him whose mind is thus at peace." And this is the real meaning of that beautiful verse of Isaiah: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee."

KATHARINE HILLARD.

NOTE

1. King John (4:2).

## ON THE FUNCTIONS OF A DOORMAT

As I paused on the threshold of Headquarters one day, I found myself sympathetically regarding the doormat at my feet. What position could be lowlier than it held? Not even permitted to enter the house, but having the humble duty assigned it of cleaning the feet of those more favored ones who were admitted to the sanctum. It did not utter a word of complaint; I think no one ever knew it to remonstrate; and as to thinking that it was shamefully neglected, and that it had as good a right as the stair-carpet to climb to the innermost offices of *The Path*, and even to repose beneath the Editor's desk — I doubt if such a notion ever occurred to it.

Instead of complaining, of bewailing its unfortunate destiny, of accusing the powers that be of favoritism, or of trying to blazon its own virtues to the world, it remains with a divine patience where it was put, and does what it can to make the ways of others pleasant. It preserves the halls and stairways from the dust and mud of the street, and it lies there to be trampled upon, day after day and month after month, by the busy feet of those who never give a thought to the patient service it renders them. Talk about recognition! it never has any, it would not know the meaning of the word, much less does it claim the reward of gratitude for what it has done, a gratitude expressed in smiles and pleasant words, as a circus horse expects lumps of sugar after he has gone through his tricks. Once in a while it suffers a furious beating, for no fault of its own, but simply to free it from the impurities heaped upon it by others, and this too it undergoes in silence and without even a murmur. To remonstrate never occurs to it, much less to rise up in rebellion and oppose the hand that strikes it or the heel that grinds it into the dust.

So perfect is its humility, so absolute its patience, that I set myself to learn the lessons that it taught; and what higher ones could be studied by a scholar than those of trust, submission, humility, and patience? It is hard sometimes to be content with a place upon the threshold, where we feel ourself trodden under the feet of those who "go up higher," but if we can help those feet, we too have part and lot in their advancement. And if we have really learned the lesson of trust, we know that the place assigned us is the place where we belong, and where we can do the most good, if we will only consent to work with our own tools and not grasp at another's. What says the *Gītā*? "It is better to do one's own duty, even though it be devoid of excellence, than to perform another's duty well." But one of the most insidious forms of that ambition against which we are so strenuously warned, is what we call emulation, the desire to distinguish ourselves as we have seen others distinguish themselves, the feeling that, given the chance, we could do great things. But the greatest thing is to use

the chance we have, for “to him who hath shall be given,” and to learn the lesson of trust in those great Powers that have set us in our places and know better than we can what we are fitted to do.

This lesson of trust springs out of humility, for it is only when we recognize our own feebleness that we learn to confide in the strength and wisdom of others. In *Letters That Have Helped Me* we are told, “The Karma of your present life is the *higher patience*,” and this is explained by the compiler to mean “the fine line between pride and humility.” The doormat does not fling itself into the gutter in a foolish fit of self-abasement, but it remains at the top of the steps, in a place of its own, which is “the place neither too high nor too low,” on which Kṛṣṇa told Arjuna to sit.

Submission does not imply groveling, or even self-depreciation, but only the consent to do a lower duty that someone else may the better perform a higher, for which he has a better equipment than ourselves. A private holds as honorable a position as a captain, and without privates there could be no captains. In the army of the Lodge promotion never goes by favor or by seniority, and when we are fit to be captains we shall find ourselves marching at the head of our regiments. Till then, let us trust in our commanding officer and obey his orders as we would like to have our own obeyed.

The doormat was never known to complain that it was not appreciated, nor even to be despondent because it had to lie there alone with no one to help it, even to recognize its efforts. And when we have learned this lesson of silent devotion, we shall learn to know all that the Masters meant when they wrote, “Ingratitude is not one of our failings. The humblest worker is seen and helped.”

The crowning grace of service is joy, and verily this is its own reward.

KATHERINE HILLARD.

## CAN WE COMMUNICATE WITH THE DEAD?

[READ BEFORE THE ARYAN T. S., OCTOBER 17, 1893.]

### SOME REASONS AGAINST IT

In the course of last Tuesday night's discussion upon this subject, there was one point that might possibly bear further amplification, and that was the question of the means of such communication. The first question that would be asked about any distinguished Brahmin proposing to visit us would be, "Does he speak our language?" Otherwise he is to us a sealed book.

To carry this analogy a little further, I would ask you to consider the case of a man who should go to see the great actor Tommaso Salvini in his drama called *Civil Death*. The playgoer comes home enraptured with the performance, wrought to enthusiasm by the unselfish character of the hero of the tragedy, a loving father who breaks his heart rather than interfere with the welfare of his child. The spectator, thrilled with the splendor of the man's sacrifice, feels that of all men he is the noblest, and he demands of the manager an introduction to the being who has so uplifted him. "But, my dear sir," replies the manager, "that hero you so much admire is the creature of a night; he is not a reality, but an illusion. The real man is Salvini, who plays this and many other parts, and I would present you to him with pleasure, only you do not speak his language, nor he yours, nor have we an interpreter capable of giving you any satisfaction." "But it is not Salvini, it is the man I saw on the stage last night that I want to talk with," says our friend. "And I tell you again," says the manager, "that that man was an illusion, and ceased to be when the actor who created him laid aside his costume and left the theatre."

Such a desire and such an attempt as this would seem to us very childish and very futile, but, after all, is it not precisely analogous to the behavior of those who try to communicate with the dead?

All the world's a stage,  
And all the men and women merely players.  
They have their exits and their entrances,  
And one man in his time plays many parts.

But that "one man" is not the being we know, whose heroism attracts us or whose cowardice repels, but is the immortal entity we call the individual consciousness, the real Ego who, indeed, "in his time plays many parts." The man who has left us, and whom we so long to meet again, is but one of those "many parts" played by the Ego, who, when it leaves the body that we love, lays aside its costume and quits the theatre of life. That *personality* exists no longer; the Ego, the Mind that created and informed it, "home has gone, and

ta'en its wages," to quote our greatest poet once. more. It has thrown off the body, its more ethereal counterpart, the astral double, and the still more ethereal framework of its desires, its idiosyncrasies, its passions; it is a pure Intelligence, it belongs to another state of consciousness than ours. Can we expect to communicate with it when we do not know a syllable of its celestial language? Even if we could be shown its astral double, that filmy counterpart of the outer body, and could that form be made to utter a few of the unmeaning platitudes that such forms have been heard to speak, could that give any satisfaction to the friend who knows that the mind is not there? Is there any consolation in looking at a dummy made up of our friend's old clothes?

If we accept and learn by heart the theosophic doctrine of the sevenfold nature of man, of what earthly use is that knowledge unless we make it part of our life, a lamp unto our feet? When Captain Cuttle consulted his oracle, Jack Bunsby, that astute old mariner always wound up his Orphic utterances with the remark, "The bearin's o' this observation lies in the application of it." Unless we apply what we have learned, what good is it to us? If we *know* that the personality is an illusion, like all the things of this world, that it is made up of the body, the astral double, the body of desire, and the principle of vitality, and that all these are necessarily impermanent and must pass away at death, what is there left to communicate with in this fourfold division which we are accustomed to call the lower quaternary? And if we know likewise that the Higher Triad, or the *individuality*, persists, we know that this eternal being consists of the three immortal parts called Spirit, Soul, and Mind, in ordinary parlance, and that all three form that Ego whose condition is so far above this plane of illusions that there can be between us no medium of communication, no common language in which we may converse. So Tennyson says:

My old affection of the tomb,  
A past of stillness yearns to speak:  
Arise, and get thee forth and seek  
A friendship for the years to come.

I watch thee from the quiet shore;  
Thy spirit up to mine can reach;  
But in dear words of human speech  
We two communicate no more.

And here the poet, with a poet's intuition, has struck the same law that we have been told governs the "Kingdom of the Gods," or Devachan. That is, that under certain conditions a pure and lofty nature may pass into Devachan during life, and be drawn into communion with the disembodied spirit that can never descend to it. "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me," said David of his child, and it is true of all.

But here we must beware of allowing ourselves to think of disembodied existence in our terms of space and time. To the freed spirit there is no place,

but only *condition*, and there is no reason why our loved ones who have passed from our sight should not be still near us, still loving us, and through the power of that love influencing our lives for good. "We are with those whom we have lost in material form," says *The Key to Theosophy*, "and far, far nearer to them now than when they were alive. . . . For pure divine love is not merely the blossom of a human heart, but has its roots in eternity. . . . And love beyond the grave has a magic and divine potency which reacts on the living."

The lesson of the theosophic teaching as to communication with the dead is, then, briefly this. That with their fleeting and illusionary personality it were a futile thing to seek such intercourse; but that to bring about the highest form of communion with those pure Intelligences who dwell now on another plane than ours, we must so elevate and purify our own lives and our own souls that while yet upon this earth we may be caught up into heaven and hear unspeakable words. It is Tennyson again who has expressed this so beautifully that you can bear to hear it once more, for none but a poet can say it half so well.

How pure at heart and sound in head,  
With what divine affections bold,  
Should be the man whose thought would hold  
An hour's communion with the dead.

In vain shalt thou, or any, call  
The spirits from their golden day,  
Except, like them, thou too canst say  
My spirit is at peace with all.

They haunt the silence of the breast,  
Imaginations calm and fair,  
The memory like a cloudless air,  
The conscience as a sea at rest:

But when the heart is full of din,  
And doubt beside the portal waits,  
They can but listen at the gates,  
And hear the household jar within.

KATHARINE HILLARD.

## THE MYSTERY OF THE EIGHTH SPHERE

In *The Secret Doctrine* (2:559), in the Section called “The Fall of the Cross into Matter,” the reader’s attention is directed to the allegory of Viśvakarmā:

The creative power, the great architect of the world, called in the *Veda* the “all-seeing god,” who “sacrifices himself to himself” — (the Spiritual Egos of mortals are his own essence, *one with him*, therefore). Remember that he is called Deva-vardhakāḥ, the “builder of the gods,” and that it is he who ties Sūrya (the Sun), his son-in-law, on his lathe, in the exoteric allegory; on the Svastika, in esoteric tradition, as on earth he is the Hierophant Initiator — and cuts away a portion of his brightness. Viśvakarmā, remember again, is the son of Yoga-siddhi, *i.e.*, the holy power of Yoga, and the fabricator of the “fiery weapon,” the magic Agneyāstra.

In *The Theosophical Glossary* (366) Viśvakarmān is interpreted as the “Omnificent.” (But as the root *vish* signifies “to pervade,” and Karma means “action,” it may be translated “all-pervading activity.”) Viśvakarmān is a Vedic god, says the *Theosophical Glossary*:

A personification of the creative Force, described as the One “all-seeing god, . . . the generator, disposer, who . . . is beyond the comprehension of (uninitiated) mortals.” In the two hymns of the *Rgveda*, specially devoted to him, he is said “to sacrifice *himself to himself*.” The names of his mother, Yoga-Siddhi (see above), and of his daughter Samjñā (spiritual consciousness) show his mystic character. As the artificer of the gods, and maker of their weapons, he is called Kāru, “workman,” Takshaka, “carpenter” or “wood-cutter.”

The same authority gives us under the head of “Sūrya,” or the Sun, some valuable hints as to Viśvakarmān. Sūrya is here again described (313) as “the husband of Samjñā, or spiritual consciousness,” and is identified (361) with “Manas, the sun of the intellect.” “Sūrya,” says the *Theosophical Glossary* (313):

Is the great god whom Viśvakarmān, his father-in-law, the creator of the gods and men, and their “carpenter,” crucifies on a lathe, and cutting off the eighth part of his rays, deprives his head of its effulgency, creating round it a dark aureole. A mystery of the last initiation and an allegorical representation of it.

Turning back to *The Secret Doctrine* (2:558), we find that:

The initiated adept who had successfully passed through all the trials . . . [was] tied on a couch in the form of a Tau  $\text{\text{T}}$  (in Egypt), or of a Svastika without the additional prolongations, thus, (  $\text{\text{+}}$ , not  $\text{\text{H}}$  ) and plunged into a deep sleep. . . . He was allowed to remain in this state for three days and three nights, during which time his Spiritual Ego was said to descend . . . into Hades, . . . while his body lay in a temple crypt or subterranean cave. . . . In Egypt it was . . . carried during the night of the approaching third day to the entrance of a gallery, where at a certain hour the beams of the rising Sun struck full on the face of the entranced candidate, who awoke to be initiated by Osiris and Thoth, the God of Wisdom.

It is easy to see the correspondence between this ceremony and the crucifixion of Jesus, the son of “the carpenter.” Indeed, in the same chapter of *The Secret Doctrine*, we are told that:

The figure of the Hindu Wittoba [a form of Viṣṇu] even to the nail-marks on the feet, *is that of Jesus crucified, in all its details save the Cross*; and that *Man* was meant is proved to us further by the fact of the *Initiate being reborn after his crucifixion on the Tree of Life*.

For the Svastika represents (in one of its many significations) the Tree of Life, or material existence. And to take another passage from the same chapter (2:561), the idea of the cross represented in the mysteries (primarily significant of Cosmic Ideation and the Spiritual representation of the divine Ego — man) —

Expanded later into the beautiful idea . . . of regenerated man, the mortal, who, by crucifying the man of flesh and his passions on the bed of torture, became reborn as an Immortal.

These passages certainly explain the meaning of the allegory as far as the crucifixion is concerned, but there is more to be learned from it if we remember that *all* the gods may be synthesized as the Sun, as the representative of that active creative principle, here allegorized as Viśvakarmān, described elsewhere as identical with Viṣṇu, who is one with the Logos and with Fohat.

In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, Viṣṇu is the solar active energy, which neither rises nor sets, and is at once the sevenfold Sun, and distinct from it (*The Secret Doctrine*, I:290).

The very name of Viṣṇu (from the root *vish*, “to pervade”) identifies him with Fohat —

Called the “Pervader” and the “Manufacturer,” because he shapes the atoms from crude materials. In the sacred texts of the *Rgveda*, Viṣṇu also is “a manifestation of the Solar Energy,” and he is described as striding through the seven regions of the Universe in three steps (*The Secret Doctrine*, I:112),

symbolizing Spirit, Soul and Body, or (as explained in a note on 113):

The three strides relate metaphysically to the descent of Spirit into Matter, of the Logos falling as a ray into the Spirit, then into the Soul, and finally into the human physical form of man, in which it becomes *Life*.

The allegory of Viśvakarmān, then, may be taken to represent the Creative Energy (whether we call it Viṣṇu, Fohat, or the Logos), crucifying the Higher Ego upon the cross of physical existence, whereby it becomes connected with the physical body, and a portion of its radiance is lost. Now, if we study the nature of Sūrya, or the Sun (*The Secret Doctrine*, II:605-607), we find that:

His seven rays correspond to the seven worlds of every planetary chain, each presided over by one of “the seven great gods” of every religion. When the latter became degraded and anthropomorphized, and the metaphysical ideas nearly forgotten, the synthesis or the highest, the seventh, was separated from the rest, and that personification became the *eighth* god, whom monotheism tried to unify — but failed.

This synthesis of course represents the Sun-god of all religions and the seven planets, or that “solar active energy which is at once the sevenfold Sun, and distinct from it,” for neither Sun, Moon, nor Earth, were numbered among the seven *sacred* planets of the ancients. But nevertheless the Sun is said to stand in more occult relations with *its* seven planets to our globe than is generally known (*The Secret Doctrine*, I:575), and the Earth stood as a substitute for a secret planet now lost to astronomy, yet well known to initiated specialists.

Now the fact hinted at in the statement of the occult relations of the Sun and the Earth, and the statement before quoted from the *Theosophical Glossary* that the crucified Sūrya loses the *eighth* part of his rays, and has a dark aureole created around his head, leads me to connect this allegory of the spirit fallen into physical existence, or embodiment upon this earth, with the “Mystery of the Eighth Sphere” alluded to in *The Secret Doctrine* (I:163), as one of the points upon which European lay-chelas had indulged in “gratuitous speculation” when they related it to the moon. (See also I:156.) The inference to be drawn from both these passages is that the student who concludes with Mr. Sinnett (in *Esoteric Buddhism*) that “there is not much mystery left now in the riddle of the eighth sphere” is rather too sanguine. The same remark may apply to the present theory, and it is therefore advanced with much diffidence. There is, as far as I can find, but one more reference to the eighth sphere in *The Secret Doctrine* (I:227), and as usual with very significant hints it is embodied in a note. Let me first premise, however, that Mr. Gerald Massey (as quoted, *The Secret Doctrine*, II:633) identifies the moon-god, Taht-Esmun {Thoth-Eshmun}, with the later Sun-god. Taht-Esmun, then, according to the note, was considered by the Egyptians to be the first human ancestor:

This “moon-god” [or sun-god] expressed the Seven nature-powers that were prior to himself, and were summed up in him as his seven souls, of which he was the manifestor as the eighth one (*hence the eighth sphere*).

As the giver of the physical body, the Moon would have a certain connection with it, but it seems to be the incarnated soul, or that body, and its sphere, the physical earth, which are meant by “the eighth.” As spoken of in *Esoteric Buddhism* (168, edition 1884), the phrase is connected with the idea of “a personality which has absolutely no atom of spirituality, no trace of spiritual affinity in its fifth principle (‘Manas, or the human soul’) either of the good or bad sort.” In such a case, says Mr. Sinnett, “the surviving personality is promptly drawn into the current of its future destinies, the eighth sphere,” which he describes as an outside and separated field of evolution in connection with our earth, a sort of *cul de sac*, a bourne from which no traveler returns. But from these premises, he makes, I think, too sweeping a deduction when he goes on to *imply* (though he does not assert) that the only sphere lower than our own, in the planetary chain, must be as visible to the eye as the earth itself, and being immediately associated with the earth, its place in the sky has little mystery left in it, that is, it must be the moon. He has previously declared that “the future destinies” of the *unspiritual* being just referred to, as absorbed in the eighth sphere, “have nothing to do with this earth’s atmosphere or with Devachan.” This suggestion that the eighth sphere is the moon is that which is referred to as “a gratuitous speculation” in *The Secret Doctrine* (I:163). In the first place, he takes it for granted that the said sphere is on a lower plane of matter than our earth (in which case it would surely be invisible to our eyes), and in the second place, he speaks of it as a plane of consciousness, a *post mortem* state in fact, for he speaks of “such a total degradation of the personality as may suffice to draw it *after death* into the attraction of the eighth sphere,” as of very rare occurrence.

Now if we inquire into the destination of “a totally degraded personality,” we find that *Avīci*, which means “uninterrupted hell,” is defined in *The Theosophical Glossary* (45) as:

Another name for Myalba (our earth), and also a state to which some soulless men are condemned on this physical plane.

Mr. A. P. Sinnett himself (*Esoteric Buddhism*, 143) gives a quotation presumably from a Master’s letter, which defines *Avīci* as “a state of the most *ideal spiritual* wickedness,” seldom reached, however, and the extract goes on to say that “the place of punishment for most of our sins is the earth — the birthplace and playground of evil.” Christopher Marlowe had a vision of this state, when he wrote that superb reply of Mephistopheles to Faustus, who asks him how he comes to be out of hell? To which that lost spirit replies:

Why *this* is hell, nor am I out of it!

A personality which has lost all affinity with spirit, must have become more and more deeply immersed in matter, whose lowest condition is represented by our present plane of existence. In that magnificent chapter of *The Perfect Way; or, the Finding of Christ* {by Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland}, called “The Secret of Satan,” he is called a mighty angel, to whom God gave “the dominion of the *outermost sphere*.” Now in *The Secret Doctrine* (II:233), H.P.B. speaks of this whole chapter as containing the true esoteric view of Satan, and explains “the outermost sphere” to mean “*our earth* and the physical plane of consciousness.” And further on (234), in the course of the same exposition, she declares Hades, or the theological Hell, to be “*simply our globe, the Earth*, and thus Satan is called the ‘angel of the *manifest Worlds*.’” Moreover, in *Lucifer* for October 1893, in an article on “Elementals,” H.P.B. says again:

When (as in the case of criminals beyond redemption) . . . the disembodied personal entity is left to share the fate of the lower animals, to gradually dissolve into ether, fall into the terrible *state* of Avīci, or disappear entirely in the eighth sphere and have its complete personality annihilated — even then the spirit remains a distinct being.

If the earth then, or the plane of physical consciousness, for to that we must reduce this illusionary existence, is sevenfold in its nature, might not its lowest aspect, its most material phase, be that “eighth sphere” whose spiritual counterpart is Avīci? Avīci, described by the Master as a state of the most *ideal spiritual* wickedness, would be the positive (and least material) pole, whose counterpart and negative would be the purely animal state, where man’s complete personality becomes lost by being entirely absorbed in the gratification of animal desires. “He, being as one dead, still walks the earth,” said Dante, who maintained that true life was only consistent with the use of reason, and refused to see in a merely animal existence anything but a living death. “Such a person, being most vile, is dead though he seem to be living,” he says in the *Banquet*, and in the *Inferno*, iii. 64, he lashes with noble scorn “these miscreants who never were alive.” The height of spiritual wickedness, the depth of material degradation, can we not find between these two room for all possible hells? And surely such an “eighth sphere” might well be described in Mr. Sinnett’s own words as a bourne from whence no traveler returns, especially when H.P.B. also speaks of it as the complete annihilation of the personality. In writing the Epistle to the Romans the same idea must have been in the mind of Paul when he declared that “to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.”

KATHARINE HILLARD.

## NEMESIS

In a note on *The Secret Doctrine* (II:305), Mme. Blavatsky points out the difference between the Greek idea of Nemesis and the Aryan Karma, which is often thought to be exactly the same thing. But the conception of Nemesis varied with different poets at different epochs, and from the purely abstract idea of the inevitable punishment of sin became anthropomorphized into a goddess to be worshipped and to be placated by prayer and submission. “If we would connect Karma with Nemesis,” says Mme. Blavatsky in the passage referred to, “it has to be done in the triple character of the latter as Nemesis, *Adrasteia*, and *Themis*. For while the latter is the goddess of Universal Order and Harmony (who, like Nemesis, is commissioned to repress every excess and keep man within the limits of Nature and righteousness under severe penalty), *Adrasteia* — the inevitable — represents Nemesis as the immutable effect of causes created by man himself. Nemesis, as the daughter of *Dikē*, is the equitable goddess, reserving her wrath for those alone who are maddened with pride, egotism, and impiety. It is, then, *Adrasteia*, or “the inevitable” who would answer best to the Eastern conception of Nemesis, or Karma, as Eternal Law working out its necessary consequences. “Every act rewards itself,” says Emerson, “or, in other words, integrates itself, in a twofold manner; first, in the thing, or in real nature; and secondly, in the circumstance, or in apparent nature. Men call the circumstance retribution. The causal retribution is in the thing, and is seen by the soul. The retribution in the circumstance is seen by the understanding; it is inseparable from the thing, but is often spread over a long time and so does not become distinct till after many years. Crime and punishment grow out of one stem. Punishment is a fruit that unsuspected ripens within the flower of the pleasure which concealed it. Cause and effect, means and ends, seed and fruit, cannot be severed; for the effect already blooms in the cause, the end preexists in the means, the fruit in the seed.”

Emerson was thoroughly in sympathy with the teachings of the Oriental philosophy, and nowhere more completely so than in this passage from his essay on *Compensation*. For he not only points out to us that a deed and its consequences are one, but seizes that more occult view that the real thing is in the soul, and is perceived by the soul. It is in what we *are* that the reality lies, and what we do is but the impress that the seal of our nature prints upon the world without. If that seal be as the head of a god, so much the better for the world, and, in reversion, for ourselves; but that seal has been modelled by the forces of our own soul, and we only are responsible for the image that it bears. No subterfuge will avail us, no shirking and no dallying alter the preordained result of the forces we have chosen to set in motion. “The world is full of

judgment-days," says Emerson elsewhere, and we are continually being judged, not only for our sins, but for our blunders. "You should have known better," says stern Nature, when we transgress her rules and suffer the consequences and try to plead ignorance as an excuse. And deep in our inmost souls we know that she is right. "Nothing can work me damage except myself," says St. Bernard; "the harm that I sustain I carry about with me, and never am a real sufferer but by my own fault." And if the believer in only one life upon earth could realize this, how much more should those who have made the doctrine of reincarnation their own appreciate the idea of more remote causes for suffering than can be traced in one earthly existence! Far back in the mists of time, by some initial choice of good or evil, did we begin to create that Nemesis which surrounds us today, built up year after year and life after life the palace or the prison of the soul. For choice, within certain limits, we have always, and it is ours to weave the black thread or the white at will into the web of our future destiny. "Karma-Nemesis guards the good and watches over them," says the Occultist, "in this as in future lives, and punishes the evildoer, aye, even to his seventh rebirth. So long, in fact, as the effect of his having thrown into perturbation even the smallest atom in the Infinite World of harmony has not been finally readjusted. For the only decree of Karma — an eternal and immutable decree — is absolute Harmony in the world of matter as in the world of Spirit." (*The Secret Doctrine*, I:643).

So that we see that our Nemesis is no offended Deity, punishing with anger an infringement of his arbitrary decrees, but the striving of the universe to right itself, to repair the injuries that our heedless or willful actions have effected in the harmony of the whole. If, then, the cornerstone of the universe is that spiritual unity which manifests itself in universal brotherhood, the more we can do to make that brotherhood a material reality, the more nearly we shall approach the harmony of the spiritual world, which is Life and Love, not Death and Selfishness. And as Emerson has shown us, the real thing is in the soul, the causal retribution there. Can any punishment that earthly justice can inflict upon a man be half so terrible as that which comes from within, the torments that spring from his own fear, his own remorse? Not long ago, Felix Adler gave a magnificent discourse on "The Penalties of Sin," every word of which might find an echo in all right-thinking-minds. The report I read (for I was not so fortunate as to hear it) said that he concluded by stating the difference between the present generation and its forefathers in respect to the doctrine of sin. "Our forefathers were haunted by the sleepless eye of God, which they believed to be ever fixed upon them, piercing every veil and wall. They believed that God would punish them, either immediately or at the last judgment. . . . But now man has become his own accuser, and the judgment-seat is transferred to his own breast. In his own brain is the prototype of the universal laws. In the name of those universal laws he pronounces sentence upon himself.

"The more our moral nature unfolds, the more difficult does it become to satisfy the awful divinity within our bosom. The most agonizing pain which the

modern man can suffer, as many know to their bitter cost, is self-condemnation. The highest boon to which we can aspire is to be able to dwell in peace with the God within us."

Surely every Theosophist would re-echo these words of the great ethical teacher. And should we not agree with him also when he said that the true aim of punishment was reformation, not vengeance, and that the pangs of conscience were to be regarded as the beginning of a process of spiritual regeneration? For what is the voice of conscience but the voice of the higher Ego in man, of that diviner Self who is ever striving to reach the lower nature and bring it up into closer relations with the God within us? If we refuse to listen to that voice, if knowing the right we still the wrong pursue, we are knotting another mesh of that great net of Destiny in whose folds we shall some day struggle unavailingly, like captive birds. Our struggles will be all in vain, for the meshes of Nemesis hold fast, but neither Nemesis nor vengeance wove them, but we ourselves of our own free choice. The criminal sets in motion long years (it may be long lives) beforehand, the train of causes that one day lands him in a jail, but imprisonment will do him no good unless it go hand-in-hand with reform. What men call the vengeance of the law is but too often the right name for its punishments; it is the revenge of the community for its violated peace and order that is embodied in the verdict of the jury and the sentence of the judge, the strong arm of the law stretched out to slay and not to save. When the idea of universal brotherhood shall have become a more living reality, all prisons will be reformatories in the truest sense of the word, and the wrongdoer will be taught to listen to the voice in his own soul, and helped to obey its dictates and to struggle back towards the right. The way of the transgressor is hard, but how doubly hard when he has to retrace his painful footsteps with all the forces of his vitiated nature battling against him, all the demons of the sinful past rising up to oppose his progress! Lord Byron {George Gordon Byron, 6th Baron Byron of Rochdale} was said to have had every gift but the faculty of knowing how to use them, and he has left an ample record of the torments inflicted by a misspent life. Could there be anything more terrible than the *Incantation* in "Manfred" {by Lord Byron}, which summons the elements of his own character to be his torturers?

The Voice says to him:

From thy false tears I did distil  
An essence which has strength to kill;  
From thine own heart I then did wring  
The black blood in its blackest spring;  
From thine own lip I drew the charm  
Which gave all these the chiefest harm;  
In proving every poison known.  
I found the strongest was thine own!  
By thy cold breast and serpent smile,  
By thy unfathomed gulfs of guile;

By the perfection of thine art  
Which passed for human thine own heart;  
By thy delight in others' pain,  
And by thy brotherhood of Cain,  
I call upon thee! and compel  
Thyself to be thy proper Hell!

So much for Nemesis as "the just indignation of the gods." But justice has good gifts as well as evil in her well-balanced scales, and the soul can decree itself a nobler mansion as the swift seasons roll, and can lay the cornerstone today. Built up of lofty thoughts and noble purposes, founded upon the rock of steadfast resolution and unflinching courage, crowned with the fair white dome of love and truth, that edifice shall rise, a mansion not built with hands, but eternal in the heavens. And if we fashion our lives thus, Nemesis shall wear for us not the terrible aspect of the avenging Furies, but the smile that William Wordsworth saw upon the face of Duty.

Stern lawgiver! yet thou dost wear  
The Godhead's most benignant grace;  
Nor know we anything so fair  
As is the smile upon thy face;  
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds;  
And fragrance in thy footing treads;  
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong,  
And the most ancient heavens thro' thee are fresh and strong.

KATHARINE HILLARD.

## ON THE SOURCES OF *THE SECRET DOCTRINE*

It has often been my fortune to be asked upon what authority the statements in *The Secret Doctrine* were made, and I thought it might be useful to many members of the T. S. to have the few passages of the book itself that refer to its origins put into a more compact and easily-handled form. At the same time we must never forget the two points upon which H.P.B. herself laid so much stress; first, that nothing was to be accepted by the student simply and solely upon *authority*, however exalted, but only that to which his own soul testified as the truth; and second, that a large part, even of the esoteric teaching, was allegorical. Bearing these two statements in mind, we have as it were a touchstone wherewith to prove all things and to hold fast that which is good.

In the introductory chapter to Volume I the author speaks of the “Wisdom Religion” as the inheritance of all the nations, the world over, and states that Gautama’s metaphysics and secret teachings form but a very small part of the esoteric wisdom of the world since the beginning of our humanity, while he limited his *public* instructions to the purely moral and physiological aspect of the Wisdom Religion, to Ethics and Man alone. Things “unseen and incorporeal” the great Teacher reserved for a select circle of his Arhats, who received their initiation at the famous Saptaparna cave near Mount Baibhāra. These teachings, once transferred from this inner circle into the outer world of China, Japan, Siam {Thailand}, and Burma {Myanmar}, soon became greatly changed and corrupted, while early in the present century *one* key to the ancient symbolism having been discovered, its outer and grosser meaning was eagerly seized as explaining everything, and the literature of phallicism threatened to usurp the place of all other symbolism. And this, says H.P.B., is perhaps “the true reason why the outline of a few fundamental truths from the Secret Doctrine of the archaic ages is now permitted to see the light.”

The main body of the doctrines given is found scattered through hundreds and thousands of Sanskrit manuscripts, some already translated, more or less badly, others still in the vernacular. These are accessible to the scholar, while a few passages, taken from oral teaching or from the Commentaries, will be found difficult to trace. However, one fact is certain, says Mme. Blavatsky, that the members of several esoteric schools — the seat of which is beyond the Himalayas, and whose ramifications may be found in China, Japan, India, Tibet, and even in Syria and South America — claim to have in their possession *all* the sacred and philosophical works, whether in manuscript or in type, in whatever language or whatever character, that have ever been written, from the ideographic hieroglyphs down. And that these works have been carefully preserved in subterranean crypts and cave-libraries in the mountains of Western

Tibet and elsewhere, where there are said to be hidden collections of books far too numerous to find room even in the British Museum.

The documents have been concealed, it is true, but the knowledge itself has always been made known to the chosen few through the medium of the great Adepts and teachers. More than one great scholar has stated that there never was a religious founder who had invented a new religion or revealed a new truth. They were all *transmitters*, not original teachers, and handed on fragments of the truths they had learned, couched in the symbolism of their own special nation.

The teaching of *The Secret Doctrine* antedates the Vedas, and much of it has only been transmitted orally. The present installment is based upon the Stanzas of *The Book of Dzyan*, a volume written in Senzar, the secret sacerdotal tongue, once known to the Initiates of every nation. For this language, besides having an alphabet of its own (says H.P.B. in the preface to *The Voice of the Silence*), may be rendered in several modes of ideographic writing, common and international property among initiated mystics and their followers. *Dan* {*Dhyāna*?} (in modern Chinese and Tibetan phonetics, *Chán*) is the general term for the esoteric schools and their literature. In old books the word “*Janna*” {*Jñāna*?} is defined as “to reform one’s self by meditation and knowledge,” a second, inner birth. Hence *Dzyan* (*Djan*, phonetically), *The Book of Dzyan*. The only original copy now in existence, says *Isis Unveiled* (I:1), is so very old that modern antiquarians would not even agree upon the nature of the fabric upon which it is written. Tradition says that its contents were dictated to the first men of each race by the Divine Beings whose duty it was to instruct them. The old book, having described cosmic evolution and explained the origin of everything on earth, including physical man, gives the true history of the races from the First down to the Fifth, our present race, and stops short with the death of Krṣṇa, which occurred about 4,995 years ago {=3102 B.C.E., and is 5,127 years ago in 2026}.

It is the original work from which the many volumes of *Kin-ti* {*Kui-te*} were compiled, and not only this and the *Sifra di-Tzeniuta* (the most ancient Hebrew document on occult learning), but even the *Sefer Yetzirah*, the book of *Shu Jing* (China’s primitive bible), the sacred volumes of the Egyptian Thoth-Hermes, the *Purāṇas* of India, the Chaldean *Book of Numbers*, and the *Pentateuch* itself, are all derived from that one small parent volume, upon which an enormous mass of commentaries, glosses, etc., have been written. In *The Secret Doctrine* as we have it, certain portions of the Stanzas of *The Book of Dzyan* are printed, and extracts are also given from the Chinese, Tibetan, and Sanskrit translations of the original Senzar Commentaries and Glosses.

In addition we are told (I:208) that it is from the Divine Teachers before-mentioned that infant humanity got its first notions of all the arts and sciences, as well as of spiritual knowledge, and it is they who laid the foundation-stones of those ancient civilizations that are so puzzling to our modern scholars. The Druidical circles, the dolmens, the temples of India, Egypt, and Greece, the

towers and the 127 towns in Europe which were found “Cyclopean in origin” by the French Institute, are all the work of initiated Priest-Architects, the descendants of those primarily taught by the “Sons of God,” justly called the “Builders.”

*The Secret Doctrine* (I:272) is the accumulated Wisdom of the Ages, but such is the power of occult symbolism that the facts which have actually occupied countless generations of initiated seers and prophets to marshal, to set down, and explain, are all recorded in a few pages of geometrical signs and glyphs. It is useless to say that the system in question is no fancy of one or several isolated individuals, but is the one uninterrupted record covering thousands of generations of seers, whose respective experiences were made to test and to verify the traditions passed orally by one race to another of the teachings of the Divine Instructors who watched over the childhood of humanity. And for long ages the “Wise Men” of the Fifth, our own, Race passed their lives in *learning, not teaching*, in checking, testing, and verifying in every department of Nature the traditions handed down to them, by the independent visions of great Adepts; that is, men who have developed their physical, mental, psychic, and spiritual organizations to the utmost possible degree. No vision of one Adept was accepted till it was checked and confirmed by the visions — so obtained as to stand as independent evidence — of other Adepts, as well as by centuries of experiences.

In fact, the history of the world since its formation and to its end is “written in the stars,” that is, is recorded in the Zodiac and the Universal Symbolism whose keys are in the keeping of the Initiates (II:438). The records of the temples, zodiacal and traditional, as well as the ideographic records of the East as read by the Adepts of the Sacred Science, are not a whit more doubtful than the so-called ancient history of the European nations, now edited, corrected, and amplified by half a century of archaeological discoveries, and the very problematical reading of the Assyrian tiles, cuneiform fragments, and Egyptian hieroglyphics. So are our data based upon the same inscriptions *in addition* to an almost inexhaustible number of secret works of which Europe knows nothing, and *plus* the perfect knowledge by the Initiates of the symbolism of every word so recorded.

It was a correct inference of Auguste Barth from the study of the *Rgveda* {in *The Religions of India*}, that *this Scripture has been compiled by Initiates* (II:451). The whole of *The Secret Doctrine* is an endeavor to prove this truth. The ancient Adepts solved the great problems of science, however unwilling modern materialism may be to admit the fact. The mysteries of Life and Death were fathomed by the great masterminds of antiquity; and if they have preserved them in secrecy and silence it is because these problems formed part of the sacred Mysteries, and because they must always have remained incomprehensible to the vast majority of men, as they do now.

Such are the statements, in a more or less condensed form, of the sources of that most extraordinary book known as *The Secret Doctrine*, taken from the

two volumes of the work itself, as well as from the introductory chapters of *The Voice of the Silence* and *Isis Unveiled*.

KATHARINE HILLARD, F.T.S.

## A BASIS FOR ETHICS

One of the books which were most read and talked of last year was Mr. Benjamin Kidd's work on *Social Evolution*. His theory, expressed in the fewest possible words, was that in nature we could find no basis for ethics, that the keynote of natural and of human progress was self-interest, as shown in the struggle for existence, that this might and does become an enlightened self-interest and make for the preservation of the species in the end, but for the origin of true altruism we must look to something outside man and the physical universe, an impulse towards doing good to others which could only spring from a divine and what Mr. Kidd calls "an ultra-rational sanction," in a word, some religious conviction.

Close upon the heels of Mr. Kidd's book came Henry Drummond's *The Ascent of Man*, marked by all the fascinations of easy and brilliant style for which this author is so noted, and equally characterized by his well-known fancifulness and tendency to run off the track of scientific thought into the boggy wilderness of the fantastic. Mr. Drummond says of Kidd's theory (and I think the objection is well-taken), "Practically, as a vindication of the dynamic power of the religious factor in the Evolution of Mankind, nothing could be more convincing. But as an apologetic it only accentuates a weakness which scientific theology never felt more keenly than at the present hour. . . . Does not Mr. Kidd perceive that anyone possessed of reason enough to encounter his dilemma, either in the sphere of thought or of conduct, will also have reason enough to reject any 'ultra-rational' solution? That is, if our mind is of a character to be convinced, with Mr. Kidd, that altruism does not belong to human nature, but is foisted upon it, as it were, by some outside religious sentiment, will not that mind naturally repudiate the idea that any such God outside the machine can exist?" And furthermore Mr. Drummond remarks: "The first essential of a working religion is that it shall be congruous with Man; the second, that it shall be congruous with Nature. Whatever its sanctions, its forces must not be abnormal, but reinforcements and higher potentialities of those forces which from eternity have shaped the progress of the world."

In all probability, most of us would not interpret this sentence as Mr. Drummond would, but from either point of view it is an admirable statement. His own theory, as distinguished from Mr. Kidd's, is briefly this: That we find the germ of altruism in the struggle for the existence of others, as shown primarily in the maternal instincts of animals, which develop in some orders into the display of affectionate and protective impulses and actions in the father also, and finally into those associations for mutual protection which have for their object the preservation of the species rather than of the individual. In fact,

he is rather inclined to agree with Professor Paolo Mantegazza of Italy, another charming but not very trustworthy writer, who expounds the optimistic doctrine that "the whole of nature is one hymn of love." But is not this very association to which Drummond refers, an action prompted rather by fear of a common enemy than any desire to assist in the preservation of other lives? In that very valuable little book on *The Evolution of Sex* by Patrick Geddes and J. Arthur Thomson, its authors seem to have taken the desirable middle course by affirming with Émile Littré, Joseph LeConte, and others, "the coexistence of twin streams of egoism and altruism which often merge for a space without losing their distinctness, and are traceable to a common origin in the simplest forms of life. . . . There are two divergent lines of emotional and practical activity — hunger, self-regarding egoism, on the one hand; love, other-regarding altruism, on the other. . . . The actual path of progress is represented by action and reaction between the two complementary functions, the mingling becoming more and more intricate." And the diagram our authors give to illustrate their idea is, curiously enough, in the figure of the caduceus, used, too, as you will remember, by Professor William Crookes.

Here we have, then, the theories of three different thinkers as to the basis of ethics; Mr. Kidd placing it altogether outside of human nature and human reason; Professor Geddes finding it in the twin stream of egoism and altruism whose sources are in the nutritive and reproductive functions of the body; and Professor Drummond adding to this the theological conception of the assistance of a personal God. He says, however, as I have already stated, that the first essential of a working religion is that it shall be congruous with man; its second, that it shall be congruous with nature. Strangely enough, this theologian seems to entirely overlook the fact that in the spiritual oneness of man and nature should we seek the true basis of ethics, an idea faintly shadowed forth in the "ideal unity" which stands at the top of Professor Geddes's diagram.

The Theosophist would maintain that the problems continually confronting the evolutionist will only be solved when the triple nature of man's evolution is fully recognized, and he is treated as a being unfolding in three directions, the physical, the psychical or mental, and the spiritual. To look for the origin of soul-functions among the organs of the body is like trying to trace the source of a mountain streamlet to a salt-marsh. Those animal instincts called altruistic reach out a very little way and in a very few directions, and even these would be classed by the Theosophist as belonging to that "animal soul" which birds and beasts share with human beings. Side by side, then, with the evolution of the body must run the evolution of the soul, and as the spiritual is always the same, and only its medium develops, it may be figured as the staff of the caduceus around which the twin serpents wreath their coils. The sensations of the body arise in the body and govern its acts; the emotions of the soul, the thoughts of the mind, belong to the other side of the double nature; but both, as well as all the universe, live and move and have their being in the great ocean of Spirit.

To become convinced that we are all descended from a common ancestral form can never make a very deep impression upon our hearts; a brotherhood based upon so remote and so purely physical a relationship will hardly affect the behavior of man to man. But once get rid of the heresy of the belief in the separateness of soul or *self* from the One Universal, infinite Self, and the command to love thy brother as thyself seems to appeal to the heart of all, and we have a basis of ethics, not founded on the transient and illusory side of man's nature, but on the true and the real. If mankind is one great organism, as we believe it to be, built up of countless individual lives as our bodies are built up of countless individual cells, how evident it becomes that the welfare of one is the welfare of all, and that an injury to the least of these must have its reactionary effect upon the whole system. This idea is beautifully set forth in Mr. Herbert Coryn's admirable essay on *Prāṇa*. "Before evolution began," he says, "one soul . . . shot itself out into the rays we call men, a duality in consciousness of the material and the spiritual. All men follow diverse paths, and go through diverse paths and rough places, that this soul *in them* may perfect itself in all experiences. . . . Humanity is one Self. At the beginning it was one; it now seems many, but at the end, when the minds of men are tuned together (a process already indicated by the growing sensitivity of many to the unspoken thoughts and feelings of others), humanity will be one vast organism in perfect harmony, and every unit, still thinking itself a unit, will yet feel with every other, giving, nevertheless, its individual color to all it takes into its consciousness. . . . Except by assuming the reality of this one life in us all, there is no possible means of accounting for sympathy with pain. . . . Every feeling of sympathy," concludes Mr. Coryn, "is absolute proof of one life-spirit in men. . . . And this is not a mere metaphysical idea, but it is the only guide of life worth having."

If we take, then, our unity in Spirit as an actual and living fact, we shall find an ethical system based upon it to be equally congruous with nature and man, thus fulfilling Professor Drummond's ideal of "a working religion." For even the man who from the dictates of "an enlightened self-interest" endeavors to fill his part in the world to the best of his ability, contributes something to the elevation of the race. For that depends, of course, upon the perfecting of the individual, and every effort, however small, in the direction of right raises the general average of humanity. Such a person works only upon the lower planes, but the impulse towards the higher will gradually impel him onwards, till in some succeeding incarnation he shall work from the plane of soul rather than from that of body.

Nor should the sympathy that springs from our true unity cause us only to feel with another's pain; it should make us also rejoice in another's happiness. Their joy should be our joy as well as their sorrow our sorrow, and if we can only think of all mankind as one, then the thought of the many parts of that great Unit that are happy and prosperous and free from pain should do something to cheer us when we are lonely or sad or suffering. Some of us are having

a good time; let us fix our mind on those that rejoice, and not on a temporary ache in a little finger. Jonathan Edwards thought that part of the happiness of the saints in heaven was made up of their contemplation of the miseries of the damned. Our “working religion” would teach that could the souls in hell bring themselves to realize the happiness of the souls in heaven, they would be no longer among the damned, but the flames that beset them would turn to fragrant roses, wet with the dews of Paradise.

The basis for ethics, then, given by Theosophy, is the idea of universal brotherhood founded upon the conviction of our spiritual unity, and therefore having its impulse from within rather than from without, the cultivation of right thought, that from it may spring spontaneously right speech and right action, and thus, in a sense far deeper than is dreamed of by the churches, the promise of Jesus shall be fulfilled: “Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven, and all these things shall be added unto you.”

KATHARINE HILLARD.

## THE PRINCIPLE OF DUALITY

As soon as we become conscious of existence we are at once confronted by the principle of duality, in that which is within us and that which is without, or the Me and the Not-me. The infant must gradually learn the idea of separateness, learn to distinguish that which is part of himself from that world beyond him, that his eager clutches cannot grasp. In fact at every moment of his life he is confronted with those “pairs of opposites” of which the Eastern philosophy tells us that the universe is composed. The Pythagoreans are said to have hated the duad, or the binary as it was also called, because it was to them the origin of differentiation and therefore of contrasts, discord, and the beginning of evil. It was that imperfect state into which the first manifested being fell when first detached from the Source of all Being. It was the point from which the two roads of Good and Evil bifurcated, and all that was double-faced or false the Pythagoreans called “binary,” because to them *One* was alone Good, and Harmony, because from one alone no discord can proceed. And as the Monad was one and an odd number, the ancients called the odd numbers the only perfect ones, and considered them all as masculine and perfect, while even numbers were regarded as imperfect and were given only to the *terrestrial* and *infernal* deities. So that Virgil in his eighth eclogue asserts: “Unequal numbers please the Gods.” (*The Secret Doctrine*, II:602)

But if we put aside these conceptions of the Greek and Latin races and go back in thought to the origin of all things, we cannot get away from the conviction that with the commencement of manifestation duality must begin. The moment we try to imagine the dawn of the universe we formulate the conception of *life*, and life is inconceivable without motion, which is change, either of place or condition — is the action of attraction and repulsion, of the out-breathing and the in-breathing of the “Great Breath.” Evil is the shadow of Good as Darkness is the shadow of Light, and everywhere throughout creation the opposite poles of positive and negative maintain the balances of universal law, and regulate the order of the heavenly bodies, or round a dewdrop on a blade of grass.

But as time went on and the earlier spiritual teachings came to be overlaid with grosser and more material ideas, the two equal and coordinate aspects of the Divine, that we call ordinarily Spirit and Matter, began to be considered as Good and Evil, and represented not complementary but antagonistic forces. Instead of the beautiful symbol of the Greek Caduceus bringing to men’s minds the thought of the twin serpents of evolution encircling the Tree of Life, it had for them only the significance of everlasting struggle, of never-ending discord.

And this antagonism of forces that alone can set the universe in motion and preserve it in life, took the form in ancient Persia of the opposition of Deity and Devil, who were originally one in nature as in name. The exaltation of Ormuzd, the Spirit of Good, says Mr. George William Cox, in his *The Mythology of the Aryan Nations* (1870), "carried the greatness of Ahriman (the Spirit of Evil) {Angra Mainyu, Destructive (or Hostile) Spirit} to a pitch which made him the creator and the sovereign of an evil universe at war with the Kosmos of the Spirit of Light. . . . It was a dualism which divided the world between two opposing self-existent deities, while it professedly left to men the power of choosing whom they should obey."

With this Persian dualism the Jews came into contact during their captivity in Babylon, and the author of evil, the tempter, soon began to appear in strong opposition to the beneficent Father and God.

But Mr. Cox points out that while the Jewish mind readily absorbed this idea of the conflicting hierarchies, the one heavenly, the other diabolical, it nevertheless drew no sharp distinction between spirit and matter and had little definite idea of either the fact or the conditions of a life after death. It was left for Christianity to couple a distinct assurance of personal immortality with a profound belief in the devil and all his angels. Upon this rock did the early Christian fathers build their Church, for if we eliminate from their system of faith, the element of diabolical power, the whole fabric falls to pieces.

But when we go back to the original teachings of the *Avesta*, with its Zand (commentaries), that even as early as the days of the Babylonian captivity had become so corrupted, we find the principles of Good and Evil but the spiritual equivalents of Light and Darkness, Pain and Happiness; and as these were supposed to be exactly balanced against each other, so are their spiritual correlations. "Those old Spirits who are twins," says the *Avesta*, with Zand, "made known what is good and what evil in thoughts, words, and deeds. Those who are good distinguish between the two; not so those who are evildoers."

If we turn to the pages of *The Secret Doctrine* we shall find all these ideas amplified and set forth with all that wealth of illustration for which that book is so remarkable, and on I:416, we seem to find the kernel of the whole thing in these words: "In human nature evil denotes only the polarity of matter and spirit, which principles are one *per se*, inasmuch as they are rooted in the Absolute. In Kosmos the equilibrium must be preserved. The operations of the two contraries produce harmony, like the centripetal and centrifugal forces which are necessary to each other — mutually interdependent — in order that both shall live. If one is arrested, the other will immediately become self-destructive."

But the principle of duality is not only shown in all the "pairs of opposites" that make up the universe, but also in the rhythmic changes of its periods of activity and repose. This Law of periodicity, of flux and reflux, of ebb and flow, is absolutely universal, and therefore governs not only the sweep of the stars through the heavens, the changes of the surface of the earth, the physical

phenomena of health and disease, of animal and of human life, but is also the foundation of what we have learned to call the law of action and reaction in the thought of man. Every real student of literature and art, as well as of philosophy and religion, will recognize this principle as the cause of all the changes in painting and in poetry that have so diversified their character even within the last three or four hundred years {now four to five hundred years}. Take the Elizabethan era for instance, when our poetry reached its climax of perfection, for then physical life and physical luxury, the worship of beauty as it appeared to all the senses, had stimulated the emotional nature to its utmost, and passionate strength and perfect music were the outcome of this stimulus. Then the ebb came, passionate strength degenerated into license and vice, the Puritan reaction towards virtue and the severest restraint began, and beauty became a term of reproach. The Restoration set the pendulum swinging towards license again, but feebly, for the abandonment to passion is not strength but weakness. Then came the artificial era of Pope and his fellows, when nature was tabooed and everything was done by rule. After the artificial came the natural came back again, and the wave of reaction set in motion by Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the influences of the French Revolution gave us William Wordsworth and the Lake School, with its range from the simplicity of grandeur and nobility to the simplicity of childishness. Another reaction, and the worship of beauty in form and color — especially color — began with the Pre-Raphaelite painters and poets, and Algernon Charles Swinburne and Dante Gabriel Rosetti swept us away in a flood of bright tints and soft melody, while Alfred, Lord Tennyson expressed the triumph of artistic feeling and Robert Browning the reaction against it. Now the influx of poetry that came into the world with the poets born mostly in the first quarter of our century, has died out: nearly all the great singers are dead; and the reaction gives us the triumph of form, dainty lyrics that pride themselves on the accurate observance of rule and on keeping the exact measure of the *triolet*, the *ballade*, the *rondeau*.

And we might go through the same sort of analysis in every department of thought, for everywhere through the universe the principle of “action and reaction” prevails. Old Geoffrey Chaucer realized this great truth when he wrote some five hundred years ago {now some 600 years ago}, those wise words:

Hearken this counsel for thy secureness:  
Upon thy glad day ever have in mind  
The unknown woe of harm that comes behind.

Not that we should always be looking forward to a possible misfortune, but that we should realize that there is nothing stable in this world where everything is most literally in a state of change and transition. “Let him that standeth take heed lest he fall,” for it is on our “glad day,” when everything

looks bright to us, when our powers seem strongest, our position most secure, that we are nearest to “the unseen woe of harm that comes behind.”

And of course the reverse of the picture is equally true, and the darkest hour of night precedes the hour of dawn. Dark hours must come to all of us, when our bodily strength fails and our mental powers are clouded, when all relation to the spiritual world above us seems cut off, and we drift like idle weeds upon a midnight sea. But even then the tide is turning, and if we only keep our hearts faithful to the right, the sun will shine, for us again and the faint light of dawn broaden into the perfect day.

KATHARINE HILLARD.

## THE LESSONS OF A NOBLE LIFE

[READ AT THE CONVENTION ON APRIL 27TH, 1896, BY REQUEST.]

It is always a difficult task to form a just conception of people of our own time, and the task increases in difficulty the nearer we stand to our subject. It is so hard to put aside the personal likes and dislikes, to take into due account the obstacles to a complete success, or the real meaning of a seeming defeat, to be undazzled by a brilliant exterior, or unrepelled by a forbidding one. If we want to realize the height and grandeur of a mountain, we must not sit down at its base; we must go far off across the interval and look at it from a distance if we expect to realize the majesty of its towering peak and the vastness of the dark woods that clothe its sides. And if it be always difficult, in fact almost impossible, to estimate the true proportions of the human soul that has its earthly lot cast side by side with our own, whom we have known for years coming and going about the daily business of life, much like the rest of the world, how altogether impossible is it, when behind this everyday character stands the representative of a great spiritual force, charged with a special work to do among his fellow men. To be entrusted with such a task is a great honor, but rather an overwhelming one, and I must ask your indulgence in advance for the inevitable shortcomings that you will find in its execution.

Those of you who have read the recent papers in the *Irish Theosophist* on William Q. Judge, are familiar with the main outlines of his life, and for those who have not had access to one of the best of our magazines, it will be enough to sum up briefly the few facts there are to tell about his outward existence. He was born in Dublin, April 13th, 1851, and at the age of seven, a noteworthy point in a child's life, which should mark the complete union of the mind with the physical body, he had an illness so severe that he was thought for a few moments to have passed away. Suddenly the pulses throbbed anew in the delicate frame, and the child returned to life, so to speak, with what seemed to those about him a new character, with both artistic and mystical tendencies most strongly marked. His father brought his little family (who were early left motherless) to America in 1864, and settled in New York. William soon began to study law, and having attained his majority, and become a citizen of the United States, he was admitted to the New York bar in May, 1872. Two years later he was married, and for many years worked steadily at his profession, in which he distinguished himself by his thoroughness and unwavering persistence. It was in the practice of his profession that he went to Chagres, where he contracted the terrible malaria that completely undermined his physical constitution, and brought about his early death on the 21st of March, 1896.

That is the brief outline of his *physical* life, seen from the standpoint of the outer world. But those who knew Mr. Judge best, who fought side by side with him in the battle for truth and freedom, know that the inner life, the real life, must be sketched in very different terms. The real history of Theosophy in this last quarter of a century is just beginning to display itself to our startled eyes, and while heretofore we have been working like the weaver of a Gobelin tapestry (who sees only the wrong side of his pattern, with its confused medley of colors) we are now allowed to step to the other side of the loom and realize the wonderful symmetry of the design that existed from the beginning, a design wherein every thread, every stitch had its ordained place, and fell into ordered lines even though we could see nothing but confusion.

Students of Theosophy know that all force — from the power that holds the sun in its place to that which makes two grains of sand cohere — moves in cycles, and that with every final quarter of a century, a new impulse comes from those Elder Brothers of the race who guard our spiritual welfare. In some way mankind has to be shaken out of its torpor, and made ready for a new era of life and wisdom. With us, here in America, the new school of spiritualism, with its rapping and materializing mediums, had begun to rouse the sluggish curiosity of the world, and make men open their eyes to the possibility of things as yet undreamed of, the reality of things untested in any laboratory, unweighed in any balances. Then came the setting of the stage for the new drama. Mme. Blavatsky was ordered in 1874 to go from Europe to an obscure little farmhouse in Vermont, where "spiritual manifestations" so-called, were going on, that she might meet Colonel Henry Steel Olcott, who was to serve as an instrument in the cause. Col. Olcott wrote a book upon the incidents occurring in the Eddy homestead, and the book fell into the hands of Mr. Judge, who was seeking for information on what was now beginning to be thought the subject of the day, and he wrote to Col. Olcott, to ask if he knew of a good medium. Col. Olcott replied that he did not but that his friend Mme. Blavatsky was very desirous of making Mr. Judge's acquaintance.

Thus was the first link of the chain forged that bound together so closely three entities seemingly so distinct. The phenomena that were so liberally exhibited at that time, were necessary to rouse curiosity and to tempt investigation. As soon as their purpose was served, they were withdrawn. Very soon after Mr. Judge's first meeting with H.P.B., a few people were assembled at her rooms on the 7th September, 1875, to hear a paper on Egyptian architecture by Mr. George Henry Felt. Then and there Mr. Judge was asked by H.P.B. to "found a society" for the study of occultism. Mr. Judge called the few friends present to order; nominated Col. Olcott as permanent chairman, and was himself appointed secretary. The next evening the same people met again, thirteen names were added to those of the three founders, a committee was appointed to draft a constitution and bylaws, and the first regular meeting of the Theosophical Society was held on October 30th, 1875, when its officers were duly elected, and Mott Memorial Hall chosen as its place of meeting. There, on

November 17th, 1875, was held what may be called its first official meeting, and that date was afterwards given as that of the founding of the Society, although it was really started with that little gathering in Mme. Blavatsky's rooms on the 7th of September.

In June, 1878, Mr. (Dr.) John Storer Cobb, its first recording secretary, went to London to establish the Theosophical Society in Great Britain, and in December of the same year, Col. Olcott and Mme. Blavatsky were appointed to visit India, as a Committee of the T. S., spending two weeks in England on their way thither. General Abner Doubleday was elected president *pro tem* in Col. Olcott's absence.

The seed had been planted here, and the gardener chosen who should watch over its growth. Under what adverse conditions, it is difficult for those to realize who have come in when the hardest of the work was done. The cutting down of ancient and thorny prejudices, the draining of swamps of indifference and conventionality, the breaking up of the hard clay of ignorance, had to be done by the undaunted courage and perseverance of H.P.B., who suffered all that the pioneers of Truth must always suffer, and nobly was she seconded by W. Q. Judge, who proved himself worthy of the trust confided to him, and under whose fostering care the little band of 16 or 18 had increased in 1895 to *thousands*. And could anything point more clearly to the real value of Mr. Judge's work, and to their appreciation of that work and their confidence in their leader, than the fact that at the crisis of last year, out of several thousand members, only ninety could be found after some six months' search, to sign a memorial against him? And of this small minority, scarcely half a dozen were active members of the Society.

And Mr. Judge's work, pursued under the most trying complications of physical suffering, was doubly difficult because, with the rush of enthusiasm that marks the neophyte in the search for truth, comes also the risk of exaggeration, of superstition, of a blind worship of and clinging to their leader. With H.P.B.'s departure from this life, those who had loved her were in danger of loving her unwisely, of setting up the personality instead of the teaching as the thing to be held dear, and through that indiscriminate attachment, of making of her sayings a dogmatic creed, and establishing a priesthood and a pope. In their gratitude for freedom they were on the point of forging new fetters for themselves; in their enthusiasm for the new light she had thrown upon life and religion, they were trying to set up a fetish and to pin their faith upon their leader, instead of working out their own salvation. And this excess of zeal the Chief (as we loved to call him) set himself most strenuously to repress. As a good gardener cuts away the rank, luxuriant shoots from his vines, so did he protest constantly and most vehemently against personal worship or dependence, against dogma of any kind, against superstition in any form.

For to the mystical element in the personality of Mr. Judge, was united the shrewdness of the practiced lawyer, the organizing faculty of a great leader, and that admirable common sense, which is so *uncommon* a thing with enthusiasts.

It was this unusual element of common sense that made him so valuable as the director of an organization embodying necessarily so many conflicting and inharmonious elements, and caused him always to lay so much stress upon the observance of small daily duties, and constantly to repress any tendency to extravagance in the thought or the action of his followers, either towards himself or others. In his teaching was embodied most emphatically that received by the prophet Ezekiel when the Voice said to him: "Stand upon thy feet, and I will speak to thee." It was the upright and self-dependent attitude that the Chief insisted upon, and he emphatically discouraged anything that savored of weakness, of want of self reliance, or of what H.P.B. was so fond of calling "flap-doodle and gush," and he turned a face of stern resistance to those who expected to reach the heights he had climbed by clinging to his garments. But when one came to him who really needed aid, no one could be more ready to stretch out a helping hand, to respond with a bright smile of encouragement, to say just the word that was necessary, and no more.

He was the best of friends, for he held you firmly, yet apart. He realized the beautiful description Ralph Waldo Emerson gives of the ideal friend, in whom meet the two most essential elements of friendship, tenderness and truth. "I am arrived at last," says Emerson, "in the presence of a man so real and equal . . . that I may deal with him with the simplicity and wholeness with which one chemical atom meets another . . . To a great heart he will still be a stranger in a thousand particulars, that he may come near in the holiest ground."

And upon that "holiest ground" of devotion to the highest aim, of desire alone for the welfare of others, the Chief was always to be approached. And blended with the undaunted courage, the keen insight, the swift judgment, the endless patience, that made his personality so powerful, were the warm affections, the ready wit, the almost boyish gayety that made it so lovable. And by these two chords, reverence and love, he bound together the hearts of his pupils so closely and so firmly that they draw but the nearer to each other, now that his personal presence is no longer with them. The barriers of the physical once broken down, the spiritual energy, the liberated will, set free from their prison have flown straight to every soul working along the same lines, and filled them not only with strength but with gladness.

If there were one characteristic the Chief possessed in preeminence, it was certainly "one-pointedness," the power of fixing every faculty upon the desired goal, that goal for him, being the establishment of the T. S. upon an independent and steadfast footing. With the accomplishment of that object, the work of his life as Wm. Q. Judge was finished, and he gladly passed out of a physical body that only the most unswerving will could have held together for so long. Only those who knew him best, could rightly estimate the enormous amount of work he accomplished under the most unfavorable circumstances. Not only illness, but slander and every evil force continually assailed him, and the quick sensitiveness that made him so ready to respond to affection and sympathy,

made treachery, ingratitude, and calumny all the more powerful to wound and oppress.

But all this concerns the personal element only, and in the case of the Chief we had to deal with higher forces. As with H.P.B., one felt in him the presence of a power behind the visible semblance, and became conscious that he was a representative of the Masters, a vehicle for other individualities who made themselves perceptible in various ways. H.P.B. wrote of him that he had been a part of herself and of the Great Lodge "for aeons past," and that he was one of those tried Egos who have been assisted several times to reincarnate immediately, without passing into the rest of Devachan, that he might, as a well-trained instrument, continue the work of the Lodge among us. Nor will that work cease with the passing away of the Chief we loved and trusted. We love and trust him still and we know that he is with us in a more real sense than when encumbered by the flesh, and where he is, we may be sure he is at work, and for our good. For we know that H.P.B. spoke the truth when she wrote that "pure divine love is not merely the blossom of a human heart, but has its roots in eternity. . . . Love beyond the grave has a magic and divine potency which reacts upon the living. Love is a strong shield, and is not limited by space and time." When H.P.B. herself left us the whole Society trembled for a moment under the blow, and then rallied with a firmer front than ever. Each member seemed to feel bound to do all that he or she could, to make up for the loss of our beloved Teacher, and as she herself once said, in the name of the Lodge: "Those who do all that they can, and the best they know how do is enough for us."

And when the Chief with whom we were so much more intimate had left us, it seemed for a moment as though we were indeed left desolate. But only for a moment, and then came the reaction. From all over the country have come flocking in not only pledges of renewed devotion to the cause, offers of help and work of every kind, but assurances of the consciousness of the Chief's continued presence with us, and of his relief and happiness at being freed at last from the physical body that had been so long a painful burden.

Before this wave of glad reaction had time to pass away, we received the news that we were indeed not left without a leader but that the Chief himself had named his successor, and had made every arrangement for the continuance of his work on this plane. The name of the person selected was to remain a secret for a year, that the confusion naturally ensuing upon all the new arrangements might have time to subside, and perfect working order be established. In the meantime the whole Society is shaken out of the lethargy of routine, and every one of the members, like the fingers on the hand, feels the throb of energy from the central Heart. With this accession of enthusiasm there is but one danger, that we should be looking continually for signs and portents and that we should "despise the day of small things." Intense excitement must inevitably be followed by a reaction, and in such periods of mental and spiritual exhaustion will come doubt, distrust, and fear, fear for one's self and for the

Society. Then is the time to turn our eyes resolutely upon the polestar of Duty. The sun has set, the moon has gone, the darkness closes around us, but in the midnight sky still shines that tiny radiance, and guides our footsteps in the right way. In George Herbert's words {from "The Elixir"}:

The trivial round, the common task,  
Will furnish all we ought to ask —  
Room to deny ourselves, a road  
To bring us daily nearer God.

One of the Chief's last messages to us said: "They must aim to develop themselves in daily life in small duties." We cannot all wear the conqueror's crown of wild olive or the martyr's palm, but we can all do the small duties of life thoroughly well, and the small duties require the exercise of the same virtues as the great ones. A child does not learn to walk by climbing a mountain, but by taking one step at a time upon a level floor; a bird does not begin to fly by soaring into the heavens, but by short flights from twig to twig.

In a beautiful lecture that our Brother Claude Falls Wright delivered at Chickering Hall a little while ago (April 12, 1895), he spoke of the spiritual messengers that have come from time to time to enlighten the world. In all countries, in all religions, there have been such messengers, and by them the torch of truth has been carried forward from generation to generation, and so the link that binds us one to another and all to the great Source of Truth has been kept unbroken. If some of our Christian brethren would but read their Bibles with more attention to the spirit than the letter, they would see that Jesus spoke of his repeated incarnations for the service of mankind. In the 10th chapter of the Gospel of John he said to the Pharisees who were questioning him: "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd. Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This charge have I received from my Father."

And this power belongs to all the Masters of Wisdom, the great souls who come to teach the world. Spiritual Messengers they are indeed, but every one who bears witness to the truth is also a spiritual messenger. We never can afford to turn a deaf ear to the words of any, for we know not from whose lips may fall the word that shall set us free. That was a beautiful story of Rhoecus {from the poem of the same name by James Russell Lowell}, who could not recognize in the bee that buzzed about his head the messenger of the Dryad, and so lost her love.

For no matter from whose hand, child or slave, or prince, we take the draught that refreshes us, that person is to us a spiritual messenger. If a primrose by the river's brim could give the poet-soul thoughts too deep for tears, surely

we may find on all our paths, ready to serve us if we will, the bearers of the truth. And no matter how insignificant we may be ourselves, we are all spiritual messengers if we but pass on to another the cup that has given us strength.

How often we have drunk of the cup held out to us by the Chief who has just left us, and though we shall receive it no more from the visible messenger, we cannot for a moment doubt that that spiritual energy is still with us to inspire us to more untiring activity, and to minister to us in our need. And one draught of that spiritual wisdom that it was the Chief's privilege to give us, is to be found in the little book so well named, *Letters That Have Helped Me*. "Keep up the aspiration and the search," he says there to a desponding pupil, "but do not maintain the attitude of despair, or the slightest repining. . . . Is not the Self bright, bodiless, and free — and art thou not That? The daily waking life is but a penance and the trial of the body, so that it too may thereby acquire the right condition. . . . Rise, then, from this despondency and seize the sword of Knowledge. With it, and with Love, the universe is conquerable. . . . In all inner experiences there are tides as in the ocean. . . . Anon the gods descend and then they return to heaven. . . . If we feel that after all we are not yet 'Great Souls' who participate in the totality of those 'Souls who wait upon the Gods,' it need not cast us down; we are waiting our hour in hope. Let us wait patiently, in the silence which follows all effort, knowing that thus Nature works, for in her periods of obscuration she does naught where that obscuration lies, while doubtless she and we, too, are then at work in other spheres."

KATHARINE HILLARD.

## THE LONELY SENTINEL

Once upon a time an army was sent into the field. Far away from any city was its encampment, in the midst of a rolling country, surrounded by high and partly wooded hills. The army was commanded by a general greatly beloved by all the troops, who were always eager to go into service under him.

Some distance from the camp itself, with its long rows of tents, its busy campfires, its picketed horses, and its glittering cannon, its noise and bustle of incessant movement, was posted, upon a high point commanding quite an extent of country, a solitary sentinel. He had but to pace up and down his allotted beat, and to demand the password from any who should approach, meantime watching lest anything that threatened danger should be descried upon the long white dusty road that stretched so far into the distance.

There he paced, solitary and silent, hour after hour, and day after day. The sentinels relieved each other only at long intervals, and their tents were apart from the main camp, so that of what went on there even in his hours of rest the sentinel knew but little. From his lofty perch he could see the busy aides-de-camp coming and going, with orders from the commander-in-chief, he could see the forage wagons driving in with their load of provisions, and the mess-cooks stirring up the fires and preparing the soldiers' meals. Once in a while he could descry the figure of the beloved general, as he moved from one part of the camp to another on a tour of inspection, or as he rode towards the city, surrounded by his officers. In the camp, all was busy, active life, each man seemed to have his own special work, and to do it in consort with his fellows, and the lonely sentinel who gazed down upon them almost fancied he could hear the merry jests that passed from man to man, or the hot discussions on some point of military interest.

But on the hillside, where he paced back and forth, there was a deadly stillness, broken by no human voice. Only the grasshoppers chirred in the short grass, and the birds sang in the woods above, no one came near him, no friend toiled up the hill to talk with him, no enemy approached for him to challenge, and hour after hour, and day after day passed in the same leaden quiet.

At last the lonely sentinel began to murmur, and to say to himself, "Not for this inactive life did I enlist, but for a soldier's duty with my fellow-soldiers; to follow our general into the fight, to storm a fortification, or to capture a battery, not to rot in inglorious ease on the sunny side of a hill. There is nothing here that I can do for my general or my country, this is mere idleness, and I am the most useless member of a useless expedition. Oh, that for once I might go down into the field, and meet the enemy face to face and man to man! No one

cares whether I live or die, and as I can do nothing to win fame and honor like my fellows down below there, I had much better die."

But while the lonely sentinel was thus murmuring, the general suddenly rode up softly behind him across the yielding grass, and the startled soldier wheeled quickly with a shamefaced expression, and saluted. The general looked down upon him, as he sat in the saddle, somewhat sadly and held out to him a little red book.

"These are the orders," said the general. "Open the book and read what you see there." The sentinel took the book reverently, for he knew that it came from the commander-in-chief; and his heart leaped within him, as he thought, "Now I shall surely have something given me to do, something that will call out all my powers, and give me a chance to show of what I am made."

He opened the book as he was bidden, and his eyes rested on these words: *It is better to do one's own duty, even though it be devoid of excellence, than to perform another's duty well.* As he read them his head sank upon his breast, and a flush rose to his cheek, as he felt the keen, quiet gaze of the general resting upon him.

"Open the book and read again," said the general. The sentinel obeyed and read: *For those who, thinking of me as identical with all, constantly worship me, I bear the burden of the responsibility of their happiness.*

"Art thou satisfied?" asked the general, with a smile, as he took the little book and turned away, and the sentinel answered, as well as his shame would allow: "I am satisfied."

And although he was once more alone, and none of his fellows came near him, and the birds and insects sang on as before, and he had nothing to do save to pace up and down his accustomed path, yet the whole world seemed transfigured in his eyes, his egotism fell from him like a garment and in the depths of his soul resounded evermore the words of that poet made forever lonely by his blindness: *They also serve who only stand and wait.*

KATHARINE HILLARD.

## THEOSOPHY IN THE APOCRYPHA (1)

### I — ESDRAS

The word *Apocrypha* means hidden, or secret, *i.e.*, esoteric, and is applied to fourteen books originally published with the Old Testament, but now omitted, as they are not recognized as canonical by the English Church. The Roman Catholic Church admits most of them, the Greek Church admits them all. They are too little studied by theosophists, for they are full of wisdom and beauty, and rightly bear the name of the secret or esoteric teaching, and they need no endorsement of church or state to those who are familiar with them.

The most important, to us at least, are the two books of Esdras (identified with Ezra and a continuation of the books of Ezra and Nehemiah in the Old Testament), the Wisdom of Solomon and Ecclesiasticus. From the two latter Dante drank deep draughts of inspiration, and his descriptions of Beatrice are full of quotations from the Wisdom of Solomon. I shall not try to unravel the meanings of the seven wonderful visions of Esdras in this brief paper, but only endeavor to point out a few striking instances of the theosophical ideas in these books.

The Wisdom of Solomon was said by the Fathers to have been written by Philo, called Judaeus, but this point is much disputed. Philo was a Pythagorean and Platonist, and his teachings were those of Theosophy as to the doctrine of the Absolute; he wrote of the Logos as a synthesis of the creative forces of Nature, and taught the dual nature of man and reincarnation, and his writings are at least in accordance with the books above mentioned, even if he wrote none of them.

The first book of Esdras is chiefly historical, like Ezra and Nehemiah, but Esdras II is apocalyptic and full of beautiful and significant passages. Not to mention the vision of Chapter 2, the idea of primitive man as an unreasoning animal is distinctly set forth in verse 5 of Chapter 3, which says:

“Thou gavest a body unto Adam *without soul*, which was the workmanship of thy hands, and didst breathe into him the breath of life, and he was made living before thee. And unto him thou gavest commandment to *love thy way* [nothing said here of anything more than an observance of natural law], which he transgressed, and immediately thou appointedst death in him and in his generations.”

In Chapter 4 we have the beautiful parable of the forests and the sea, and in verses 28-30, comes what might be a description of the *Kali-yuga*.

“The evil is sown, but the destruction thereof is not yet come. If therefore that which is sown be not turned upside down, and if the place where the evil

is sown pass not away, then cannot it come that is sown with good. For the grain of evil seed hath been sown in the heart of Adam from the beginning.”

We cannot have reconstruction without destruction, and the nature itself must suffer change before the better harvest can be planted. Here we have clearly suggested too, the dual nature of man, and the doctrine of Karma. Unless the grain be uprooted, the necessary harvest must follow the sowing, and in the first of men was implanted the capacity for sin, as well as the capacity for right-doing.

It would take too long to go through the whole book, but it is an interesting fact that Esdras refers to the gradual decrease of stature in the races.

“Ye are of less stature than those that were before you,” he says, “and so are they that come after you less than ye.”<sup>1</sup> And he refers in Chapter 7 to that primitive state of innocence when “the entrances of the elder world were wide and sure, and brought immortal fruit,” but when mankind had fallen into sin, “then were the entrances of this world made narrow, full of sorrow and travail: they are but few and evil, full of perils and very painful.”

In the same chapter the prophet refers to the *pralaya* of seven “days”:

“And the world shall be turned into the old silence, seven days, like as in the former judgments [indicating former periods of repose]. And after seven days, the world that yet awaketh not, shall be raised up, and that shall die that is corrupt. And the earth shall restore those that are asleep in her, and so shall the dust those that dwell in silence, and the secret places shall deliver those souls that were committed unto them.” So is it said in the *Sacred Ślokas* {the *Stanzas*}：“The thread of radiance which is imperishable and dissolves only in *Nirvāna*, reemerges from it in its integrity on the day when the Great Law calls all things back into action.”<sup>2</sup>

Then Esdras, moved by the thought of all the sin and suffering that must be in the world, before the promised glory should return, asks the old question, “Why do we live at all?”

“It had been better not to have given the earth unto Adam, or else when it was given him, to have restrained him from sinning.”

And the Voice that was like “the sound of many waters,” that spoke to him in the visions of the night, answered him with the doctrine of the Cycle of Necessity.

“This is the condition of the battle, which man that is born upon the earth shall fight; that if he be overcome, he shall suffer as thou hast said; but if he get the victory, he shall receive the thing that I say.” “Therefore, O Arjuna, resolve to fight,” says Kṛṣṇa.

When Esdras had prepared himself by prayer and fasting for spiritual illumination, a full cup was reached to him, “which was full as it were with water, but the color of it was like fire. And I took it and drank; and when I had drunk of it, my heart uttered understanding, and wisdom grew in my breast, for my spirit strengthened my memory.”

Of the two hundred and four books that the five swift scribes wrote at his dictation, he was told to publish the first openly, but to keep the seventy last, “that thou mayst deliver them only to such as be wise among the people. For in them is the spring of understanding, the fountain of wisdom, and the stream of knowledge.”

“I shall light a candle of understanding in thy heart,” said the Voice, “which shall not be put out till the things be performed which thou shalt begin to write.”

KATHARINE HILLARD.

NOTES

1. Esdras II (5:54-55). The Wisdom of Solomon (14:6), speaks of “the old time, when the proud giants perished.”

2. *The Secret Doctrine* (II:80).

## THEOSOPHY IN THE APOCRYPHA (2)

### II — THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON

The first verses of the Wisdom of Solomon suggest the occult law which teaches the necessity of a proper state of mind in the would-be recipient of divine truth, and shows that of all adverse conditions, the worst is doubt. “Seek the Lord in simplicity (or singleness) of heart,” says the writer, “for he sheweth himself unto such as do not distrust him.” And then, after several chapters that remind one, sometimes of Proverbs and sometimes of the Pauline Epistles, King Solomon, the supposed writer, describes how, although of human birth and rearing, he called upon God, and how the spirit of wisdom came to him, and raised him to a higher plane. Having preferred her to scepters and thrones, he found that all good things follow in her train.

Thus God gave him certain knowledge of the things that are, to know how the world was made, and the operation of the elements; the beginning, ending, and midst of the times (the law of cycles); the alterations of the turning of the sun, and the change of seasons; the circuits of years, and the positions of stars; the natures of living creatures, and the furies of wild beasts; the violence of winds and the reasonings of men; the diversities of plants, and the virtues of roots; and all such things as are either secret or manifest.

“If a man desire much experience,” says Solomon, “wisdom knoweth things of old, and conjectureth what is to come; she knoweth the subtilties of speech, and can expound dark sentences; she foreseeth signs and wonders, and the events of seasons and times. Moreover by means of her I shall obtain immortality, and leave behind me an everlasting memorial to them that come after me.”

And lest we should mistake the true nature of this wisdom, and confound her with mere occult knowledge of material things, he gives us that magnificent description of her, as “the worker of all things, present with God when he made the world, having all power, overseeing all things, and going through all understanding, pure, and most subtle spirits. For wisdom is more moving than any motion; she passeth and goeth through all things by reason of her pureness. For she is the breath of the power of God, and a pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty; therefore can no defiled thing fall into her. For she is the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of his goodness.”

“And being but one, she can do all things, and remaining in herself she maketh all things new; and in all ages, entering into holy souls, she maketh them friends of God, and prophets. For she is more beautiful than the sun, and

above all the order of stars; being compared with the light, she is found before it."

This Wisdom is that spiritual faculty which some have called Intuition, and some *Buddhi*, and her light is that spoken of by St. John, that glory which lit up the celestial city, so that there was no need there of the sun, neither of the moon.

It is at the end of the next chapter, the 8th, that Solomon makes such a clear statement, not only of the fact of reincarnation, but of the law which guides it, when he says: "Being good, I came into a body undefiled." He seems to take the idea so much for granted, that he neither explains it nor dwells upon it, but simply mentions it as one would mention any recognized law of nature.

And in chapter 11 he asserts another fact of which no occultist could entertain a doubt: "Thou hast ordered all things in measure and number and weight." Certainly the Divine Spirit as conceived by this writer was very different from the "jealous God" of the Hebrews, for he goes on to say:

"Thou lovest all the things that are, and abhorrest nothing which thou hast made; for never wouldst thou have made anything if thou hadst hated it. And how could anything have endured if it had not been thy will, or been preserved, if not called by thee? But thou sparest all: for they are thine, O Lord, *thou lover of souls.*" Surely here we have a foundation-stone for the rule of universal brotherhood.

In the 17th chapter there is a description of the sufferings of the Egyptians from the plague of darkness, which is as superb in its lofty and far-reaching imaginativeness, as the description of Wisdom herself, but it has nothing to do with the present subject, except as it represents the punishment of the guilty as entirely within themselves, and made heavy by their own remorse. "For the whole world shined with clear light, and none were hindered in their labor: Over them only was spread an heavy night, an image of that darkness which should afterwards receive them: but yet *were they unto themselves* more grievous than the darkness."

*Ecclesiasticus* is also called "the Wisdom of Jesus the son of Sirach," and purports to be a collection of wise sayings made by Jesus the father of Sirach and containing also many of his own, which was handed down to the grandson and by him "compiled all orderly into one volume."

Those who wish to study the origin and character of all these books from an historical and critical point of view, will find much to interest them in the articles in the *Encyclopediæ Britannica* on the "Apocrypha," "Esdras," "*Ecclesiasticus*," etc. These questions I have preferred not to go into here, but simply to quote a few passages from the text, which are of value as they stand, and appeal to that authority which is not of the scribes.

The book called *Ecclesiasticus* is by no means of as lofty a character as the Wisdom of Solomon, it is more like Proverbs, and is concerned largely with ordinary ethics, and even drops occasionally into questions of deportment and manners at table. Jesus the son of Sirach says that it also contains "dark

sentences and parables," and it certainly contains a caution as to humility in study, that may be useful to us all.

"Seek not out the things that are too hard for thee," says the writer, "neither search the things that are above thy strength. But what is commanded thee, think thereupon," (I omit inserted words) "for they are not needful for thee — the things that are in secret. Be not curious in unnecessary matters; for more things are showed unto thee than men understand."

In these three verses what a sermon is preached to those theosophists who are ever seeking for the mysterious, who are constantly looking for signs and wonders, and yet neglect the study of the simple ethics of life, and the true nature of their own minds! More things are indeed shown unto them than most men understand, and still they put these aside, and strive after marvels.

Humility is one of the essentials in the acquirement of wisdom that are laid down in the *Bhagavad Gītā*, and Jesus the son of Sirach says: "Mysteries are revealed unto the meek." And again he warns us of the endless nature of the search after wisdom: "The first man knew her not perfectly, no more shall the last find her out. For her thoughts are more than the sea, and her counsels profounder than the great deep."

Neither should we pay any attention to light and idle dreams, says this wise man: "Whoso regardeth dreams is like him that catcheth at a shadow, and followeth after the wind." He evidently understood the nature of ordinary dreams, for he compares them to reflections in a mirror, but he was able to distinguish between them and the voice of the Higher Self, for he continues: "If they be not sent from the Most High in thy visitation, set not thy heart upon them, for dreams have deceived many."

One might make many more of these quotations, but the object of this paper was simply to direct attention to the many treasures hidden in these scriptures that are too seldom read, for in very truth, "more things are shown unto men than they understand."

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## THE SEARCH FOR WISDOM (1 & 2)

### I — BY DOING SERVICE

In the fourth chapter of the *Bhagavad Gītā*, after saying that every action without exception is comprehended in spiritual knowledge, Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna how to gain this spiritual wisdom. “Seek this wisdom,” he says, “by doing service, by strong search, by questions, and by humility; the wise who see the truth will communicate it unto thee, and knowing this, thou shalt never again fall into error.”

We all read this many times, but it will bear more pondering than in the rush of our hasty lives we are apt to bestow upon it. “The way to the blessed life,” to use Johann Gottlieb Fichte’s phrase, is here most clearly and perfectly set forth, and the steps are fourfold, like the steps of the Self. The first step is that one which is of all the most important, and it is therefore given precedence in the list, for this is not a matter of time and space, but of individual consciousness, and individual necessities. All the steps are necessary to perfect acquirement of the spiritual wisdom, and to some the second lesson may seem to be more easily learned, while others find the last one the least difficult, but to all mankind the first step is most necessary. “By doing service.”

Jesus said that by doing the will of the Father, we should know of the doctrine, that is, we should gain a knowledge of the teachings that were given to the disciples, not to the world at large. But there is one thing to be remembered always; that this service is to be rendered in little things, to those nearest us, in all the ordinary duties and ways of life. “Despise not the day of small things,” and do not feel that doing service means rushing into the slums of a city, to the neglect of home duties, or girding one’s loins for battle with some distant foe, when the real enemy lurks within. It is so hard to realize that a kind word, a loving glance, may mean the happiness of a whole day to some neglected member of our household, and that the gleam of sunshine that has brightened that life will radiate into other hearts, carrying its blessing with it.

People so often ask: “What can *I* do for Theosophy? I have no talent for speaking or writing, no money to give, no influence to exert; what is there for me to do?” Is there no one that crosses your path for whom you can do little deeds of kindness now and then? An errand done, a book lent, a flower given, a visit paid, a loving word spoken, will often weigh more in the eternal balances than many of what the world calls “heroic deeds.” If you are so utterly alone that you have no opportunities for such service (which is hard to believe), then make of your own heart such a source of loving kindness, that your atmosphere will be filled with a sweet and gracious sunshine of good will, in which all who meet you may bask and give thanks. It is impossible, if we have a strong will

to do service, that we should not find many opportunities to express it, and they will grow with the exercise of our desire.

Nor should we fail to remember that it is thus we are to *begin* to acquire wisdom. Earnest souls, attracted by the light that suddenly gleams across their path, try to begin at once to grapple with the most difficult problems of philosophy and occult knowledge, and want to know all about the loss of the soul, or the formation of the *māyāvi-rūpa*, or the characteristics of the Seventh Race, before they have thoroughly mastered the ABC of the matter. “Do the will of the Father, and ye *shall* know of the doctrine,” but do not expect to begin at the top of the ladder. Many a would-be nurse, filled with a glorious enthusiasm for the service of suffering humanity, enters the hospital with the idea of rendering distinguished assistance to the doctors from the very first, and is sometimes utterly disgusted, when she finds that for weeks, and perhaps months, she has nothing nobler to do than the scouring of pots and pans, and the washing of floors and clothing.

“By doing service,” not necessarily the service we delight in, but often quite the reverse; so that we shrink from the wearisome, the trivial task, and long to do something more worthy of our powers, or what we *think* our powers. For often it is by our own opinion of ourselves that we measure the work we think we are capable of doing, instead of realizing that when we are fit for a greater place, those who know will surely put us there. In the meantime, let us stand in our lot, and do what we can to make it beautiful, and a center of love and joy for all who come in contact with us. Let us try to be like James Russell Lowell’s ideal, {in “The Vision of Sir Launfal,”} who

doeth little kindnesses  
That most leave undone or despise;  
For naught that sets one heart at peace,  
Or giveth happiness or ease,  
Is low-esteemed in her eyes.

## II — BY STRONG SEARCH

The second thing necessary to the gaining of spiritual wisdom is *strong search*. This search may be pursued, of course, on both the intellectual and spiritual planes, for man must be made perfect in both ways. Let us take the intellectual first. Certainly strong search on the mental plane does not mean the cursory reading of a few books, or a little scattered and interrupted thought, but an earnest and steadfast pursuit of our aim through months and years, and perhaps, many lives, made up of months and years. Sometimes a student says, “I wish I could find out something definite about the *Elements* (let us say), but their order is so confusing, and I cannot understand *The Secret Doctrine*.”

One is tempted to ask, "Did you ever really try?" There are eighty places, at least, in *The Secret Doctrine*, where the word *element* occurs, besides all the separate references to *Fire*, *Air*, *Water*, etc. Take up the book and turn it over leaf by leaf, keeping a notebook by you, and whenever you see the word *Element*, make a careful note of volume and page. Then take each of the five elements in turn, and do the same for them. When you have gone through both volumes carefully in that way, turn back to the beginning of the first, and copy out in your notebook every item of information you have found. Then read them over very carefully, and where you think you have found conflicting statements, read the context again, and see if you cannot find, or think out, an explanation of the seeming contradiction. Carry the dark saying about with you in your memory, think of it at intervals during both night and day, and some time or other the solution will surely flash upon you.

When you have collected all these notes, then write a paper on the subject, not necessarily to be read or published, but simply to see how much you can tell another person about what you have learned. For we do not really understand a thing until we can explain it to some one else; and that is why we learn so much by teaching; we are obliged to clarify and formulate our ideas in order to communicate them to others.

Lord Dufferin {Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood}, who has just retired from active diplomatic service at the age of seventy, has always been known as a remarkably ready and brilliant speaker, perhaps the most admired orator among the English diplomatists. He gained this power by "strong search." When the necessity for his speaking first arose, he would write out his ideas on the subject given him, and having finished his paper, tear it up without rereading it, and write another. And this process he repeated ten and twelve times for each speech, so that he not only became thoroughly familiar with his subject, but was saved all danger of hesitation and waiting for a word, because he had formulated his ideas in so many ways that he was sure to remember some one of them. And by dint of this most laborious and tiresome method, Lord Dufferin became the easy, fluent, and brilliant speaker that every one loved to hear.

This is only one example of many that might be cited but it is a recent and a very striking one. For here there was not even some great scientific discovery involved, with its intense interest and possible enormous profit to the discoverer and to the world at large, but the simple acquirement of an individual accomplishment for social purposes. But Lord Dufferin carried out Robert Browning's idea when he said:

Let a man contend to the uttermost  
For his life's set prize, be it what it will.

Let the search be *strong*, whatever we may be seeking, and then we shall at least not add weakness and vacillation to our other sins.

“The kingdom of heaven is taken by violence,” we are told, which is but another way of saying that spiritual wisdom is gained by strong search. But how few of us realize what this means! “The kingdom of heaven is within you,” and this strong search is to be pursued upon the inner planes, *spiritual* as well as intellectual.

We must learn to analyze our own nature, to explore its depths and pluck out its hidden sins, to fix the will steadily upon some point that *must* be gained, to concentrate every energy towards that end, to keep up a slow, gradual, never-relaxing push of every faculty in the one direction, day after day and year after year, to strive after the goal by study, by meditation, by aspiration, by the purification of every part of our threefold nature. And this goal is ever shifted as the runner approaches it, and still before him gleam the gates of gold, and still his eager feet press on.

And surely this consciousness of endless aspiration and attainment was the thought in Walt Whitman’s mind when he wrote those magnificent lines:

This day before dawn I ascended a hill and looked at the crowded heaven,  
And I said to my Spirit, “*When we become the enfolders of those orbs, and the  
pleasure and knowledge of everything in them, shall we be filled and  
satisfied then?*”  
And my Spirit said: “*No, we but level that lift to pass and continue beyond.*”

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(*To be continued.*)

## THE SEARCH FOR WISDOM (3 & 4)

### III — BY QUESTIONS

At first sight it would seem that this third method of seeking wisdom is superfluous, and might as well have been omitted, for are not “questions” included in the idea of “strong search”? But there is at least one thing suggested in this clause which does not come in the former one, and that is, the help of others and the appeal to “those who know.” While doing all we can for the service of our fellows, while seeking with, all our might for the truth, we must put questions, to ourselves, to our brothers, to those wiser than either. “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.”

Nor need these questions rise out of that atmosphere of doubt which is so repellent to the bright beams of the sun of truth. What is “a working hypothesis” but a question? What is every experiment in a better way of living but a question? We formulate a theory, for instance, of our relations to our fellows, of what is justice, what is true charity, what is mere indulgence in the selfish pleasure we take in giving, irrespective of the real needs of the recipient of our careless bounty. Suddenly a question darts through the mind:

Am I doing the best thing possible for my brother and for myself? Is it not easier for me to do this thing than to seek some form of help which would give me infinitely more trouble and do him more good? Is there no admixture of self-satisfaction, of vanity, of indolence in what I do? Should I be absolutely and entirely content if no mortal being ever knew or suspected that I did this good thing? Have I not a secret hope lurking at the bottom of my heart that some one will find it out, and that my merit will be acknowledged?

Are not these, and many more, questions which might be useful to us in probing our motives while conducting that self-examination which should not be allowed to become morbid, but nevertheless, should be constant and sincere?

We must also question our fellows, for often we shall thus gain help whence we least expect it. Sometimes a student who is still at his alphabet, has nevertheless had a vision of the truth that you who are far beyond him in mere learning, have not yet attained, sometimes he will give you a word he does not fully understand himself, but which will nevertheless, give you the open sesame to the secret doors of wisdom.

Having questioned your own soul, and probed it to the core, having put yourself in the attitude of a learner at the feet of all you meet, for you have no brother so poor but that he may give you something, then come the questions that you wish to ask of “those who know.” But they alone can tell when you are

ready for the answers. The responses may be slow, but they are sure, and when the time is ripe and your soul ready, they will surely come to you. You may need the courage of the martyr and the patience of the saint before you reach your end, but then their reward shall be yours, when at last you have achieved. Surely knowing this, you can say with Walt Whitman, the most theosophic of poets:

Whether I come to my own today, or in ten thousand or ten million years,  
I can cheerfully take it now, or with equal cheerfulness I can wait.  
My foothold is tenon'd and mortised in granite;  
I laugh at what you call dissolution,  
And I know the amplitude of time.

#### IV — BY HUMILITY

Having sought this wisdom by doing service, by strong search, and by questions, there yet remains the crowning grace, humility. This seems to us at first a very passive thing, and yet it is a power of the soul. “Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven,” says the first of the Beatitudes. It is not a promise for the future, it is their present possession.

The ordinary idea of humility is a conscious resignation of something to which we consider ourselves entitled, and we take our pride with us to the lower seat in the synagogue which we have selected. The climax of this feeling was in the chieftain’s assertion “Where the McGregor sits, is the head of the table.” This was the supreme exaltation of the personality, the assertion of its superiority to place by virtue of its own supremacy.

So long as I am conscious of myself as something quite different from my brother, my attitude towards him will be apt to savor of condescension, it is only when all distinction of *me* and *thee* is obliterated, when our spiritual oneness is really recognized, that the perfume of true humility steals from the flower of the soul. And what is this conviction of spiritual unity but “the kingdom of heaven,” which is the portion of the “poor in spirit”?

Humility is the fountainhead and source of contentment and serenity. When we have learned to rest in the conviction that we have no rights, and are satisfied to do the duty that lies nearest to our hand, nor long for the more glorious task of another, how peaceful life becomes, and how all its turmoil sinks into nothingness as the angry waves subside beneath a film of oil!

“Be humble, if thou wouldst attain to Wisdom,” says *The Voice of the Silence*; “be humbler still when Wisdom thou hast mastered. For great is he who is the slayer of desire. Still greater he in whom the Self Divine hath slain the very knowledge of desire.”

This humility then is not abject self-abasement, but the repose of him who has conquered self, and lives for the good of others. He has learned the great

lesson that “the power the disciple shall desire is that which shall make him appear as nothing in the eyes of men,” and whatever trivial duty may come to him to be done, he cheerfully performs it, and by that gracious acceptance “makes the action fine.” And who can tell upon how slender a thread hangs the mighty chain of cause and effect that sways his destiny?

The scale of magnitude is not the same to divine eyes as to ours, and when we most feel our littleness we may loom largest to celestial vision. Humility is that trust in wider intelligence, in greater love than ours, that keeps us steadfast in our own place, doing service in the best way that we can, secure that by that course alone, aided by questions and strong search, we shall attain to spiritual wisdom, for the wise, who see the truth, will communicate it unto us, and knowing this, we shall never again fall into error.

KATHARINE HILLARD.

## THEOSOPHY AND THE POETS

### I — DANTE

When one is asked to write a series of articles on the Theosophy to be found in the writings of the greatest poets of the world, a certain dilemma immediately presents itself. Either we mean by Theosophy its purely mystical and moral teachings, the ideas of spiritual unity, of universal brotherhood, of absolute justice, of unselfishness and devotion to others — in which case we are at once told by the critics that “these doctrines belong to all religions worthy of the name, and they cannot rightly be labeled *Theosophy*” — or else we mean such special tenets as the doctrines of reincarnation and karma, of the astral body and the sevenfold nature of man, and, at least under these headings, we find little or nothing upon these subjects in the poets.

But there are few dilemmas that are absolutely insurmountable, and the way out of this one is to look at the spirit rather than the letter. “For the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.”

In the first place, then, we should answer our critics by saying that Theosophy does not claim to be a new religion with an imposing body of new doctrines, but simply, and in its widest sense, to be what James Russell Lowell has called it when he speaks of Dante’s Beatrice as “personifying that *Theosophy* which enables man to see God and to be mystically united with Him even in the flesh.” In this sense the word is used by all writers upon mysticism, and it is, of course, especially in this sense that we find Theosophy in the greatest of our poets from Dante down to Walt Whitman. And in the second place, in its more distinctive and narrower sense, it is the claim of Theosophy to demonstrate the original unity of all religions, and to show that “the Divine Wisdom” was the same in all ages, and in all parts of the world. The higher our mount of vision, the less difference will appear between the summits of the little hills far below us; the eye takes in great masses, not petty details, and the higher the genius of the poet, the more clearly he sees the important things of the soul, and the nearer he will be to the uplifted minds of all ages. “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” You cannot help that simple statement by any attempt at amplification or adornment; there is the greatest of all mysteries, the goal of spiritual life stated in a few short words — but you can write volumes about the ceremonials of the church.

In Professor Charles Eliot Norton’s essay upon the *New Life* of Dante, he has spoken of the great Italian as essentially a mystic, and says that “his mind was of a quality which led him to unite learning with poetry in a manner peculiar to himself. . . . Dante, partaking to the full in the eager spirit of his times, sharing all the ardor of the pursuit of knowledge, and with a spiritual

insight which led him into regions of mystery where no others ventured, naturally associated the knowledge which opened the way for him with the poetic imagination which cast light upon it." This is a very significant remark, and coupled with Lowell's saying that Dante was "the first great poet who ever made a poem wholly out of himself, . . . the first keel that ever ventured into the silent sea of human consciousness to find a new world of poetry," will give an invaluable clue to Dante's double nature. In the same essay from which I have just quoted (see *Among My Books*, J. R. Lowell, 2nd Series), Lowell says: "It is not impossible that Dante, whose love of knowledge was all-embracing, may have got some hint of the doctrine of the Oriental Sufis. With them the first and lowest of the steps that lead upward to perfection is the Law, a strict observance of which is all that is expected of the ordinary man. . . . But the Sufi puts himself under the guidance of some holy man (Virgil in the *Inferno*), whose teaching he receives implicitly, and so arrives at the second step, which is the Path (*Purgatorio*) by which he reaches a point where he is freed from all outward ceremonials and observances, and has risen from an outward to a spiritual worship. The third step is Knowledge (*Paradiso*), endowed by which with supernatural insight, he becomes like the angels about the throne, and has but one farther step to take before he reaches the goal and becomes one with God. The analogies of this system with Dante's are obvious and striking," even more so, says Mr. Lowell, when Virgil bids him farewell, telling him that the inward light is now to be his law.

The fact is that Dante's meanings were manifold. He says himself that all writings may be read and ought to be explained in four principal senses: The literal, the allegorical, the moral, and the mystical, and the last "is when a book is spiritually expounded." This is to him always the most important, and therefore we may feel sure that the more spiritual our interpretation, the closer it will come to Dante's real meaning.

Of Dante's works the principal ones are the *Divine Comedy*, the *Banquet*, and the *New Life*. These, taken in inverse order, form a trilogy, descriptive of the history of a human soul, the poet's own inner experience. The story of the three, very briefly summed up is this: That from Dante's early boyhood (the *New Life* begins with his ninth year) he had felt a strong love for the contemplative life (or study of Divine Wisdom); that amid the distractions of the active life of his maturer years, the pursuits of the world, the cares of the state and the family, the duties of the soldier, the studies of the artist and the scientist (for Dante was all these), the heavenly Beatrice, the "giver of blessings," the Divine beatitude, passed away from him. Then came the consolations of scholastic philosophy, with its false images of good, in whose attractions his whole soul was for a time absorbed, until at last the vision of the higher life as he had seen it when a boy, came back to him, and he returned to the love of Divine Wisdom, who revealed to him first her *eyes* (or intellectual truth), and then her *smile* (spiritual intuition), "through which the inner light of

Wisdom shines as without any veil.” These distinctions correspond very closely to the *eye* and the *heart* doctrine as described in *The Voice of the Silence*.

For any details as to Dante’s idea of Beatrice, as developed through these three books, I must refer you to the original text or to the translations of the *Divine Comedy* by Longfellow, of the *New Life* by Charles Eliot Norton, and to my own translation of the *Banquet*, because it is the only one. The general idea of Beatrice as representing the *Gnosis* was embodied in an article published elsewhere.

Here I have only space to set forth a few of Dante’s ideas on subjects more particularly treated by theosophical writers. One of these is the contemplative, as distinguished from the active life, and this is a topic he loved to dwell upon. In the third chapter of the *Bhagavad Gītā*, Krṣṇa says that in this world there are two modes of devotion: that of those who follow speculation, which is the exercise of the reason in contemplation, and that of devotion in the performance of action. Dante says the same thing, and in almost the same words. The angel at the sepulcher (he tells us in the *Banquet*, 4:22), says to those who have wandered from the true way — that is, to all who have sought for happiness in the *active* life — that it is not there, but it goeth before them into *speculation*, or the *contemplative* life. And this use of the intellect in speculation (by which Dante means not an intellectual exercise, but the absorption of the soul in the contemplation of the Divine), he tells us is the highest Good beyond which there is nothing to aspire to. This he dwells upon again and again, notably in the 27th Canto of the *Purgatory*, where Rachel and Leah are used as the types of the contemplative and active life. The union of the soul with God, Dante says, is like the partaking of the stars in the nature of the sun. And the nobler the soul the more does it retain of this divine effluence. This union may take place before death, but only in souls perfectly endowed by nature. And some are of the opinion, says Unite, that if “all the powers of earth and heaven should cooperate in the production of a soul according to their most favorable disposition, the Deity would descend upon that soul in such fulness that it would be almost another God incarnate.” For Dante believed in the influence of the constellations and in the complex nature of man, which he says is threefold, and consists of the *vegetative*, the *sensitive*, and the *intellectual* natures, while in the *Purgatory* he is careful to explain that these are not three separate entities, but divisions of one being, the *vegetative* answering to the “kāma-prāṇa,” the *sensitive* to “kāma-manas,” and the *intellectual* to “manas” and “buddhi,” for Dante makes a careful distinction between the powers of the highest part of the soul which he calls *Mind*.

Dante’s description of the embodiment of the soul, as given in the *Banquet*, (4:21) and in the *Comedy* (*Purgatorio* 25), is wonderfully like the hints given in *The Secret Doctrine*. We read in the latter (I:223-224), that “Wiessmann shows one infinitesimal cell determining alone and unaided . . . the correct image of the future man in its physical, mental, and psychic characteristics . . . Complete this physical plasm . . . with the spiritual plasm,

so to say, . . . and you have the secret. . . . This inner soul of the physical cell — this ‘spiritual plasm’ that dominates the germinal plasm — is the Key that must open one day the gates of the *terra incognita* of the Biologist.” (I:219)

In the passages of his works above-mentioned, Dante described the germ-cell<sup>1</sup> as carrying with it the virtue (or powers) of the generating soul, and that of the heaven, (or stars) then in the ascendant, united to its own potentialities, and those of the mother. The life within it is at first that of the plant, (the vegetative soul) with this difference “this still goes on, the other has attained,” (*Purgatorio* 25, 54) that is, the plant, unlike the soul, is incapable of further development. Then the embryo becomes like the sea-anemone, that moves and feels, and the sensitive soul develops, and the latent potencies of the germ begin to show themselves in the development of the organs of sense and of action. As soon as the brain has sufficiently developed, says Dante, the divine spark settles there, and the intellectual soul draws all the faculties into itself, and makes of them one being.

So the sun’s heat turns itself into wine,

United to the sap within the vine.

— *Purgatorio* 25, 77.

And when death frees the soul, it leaves the body with its senses mute, but with the spiritual faculties, the memory, the intellect, the will, more active than before. By its own impulse it takes its destined course, and as the air filled with rain shows itself bright with the reflected colors of the rainbow, so the soul, by virtue of its formative power, makes to itself an aerial body, the shadow and resemblance of itself. And like the sparks that follow all the changes of the fire, says Dante, with another beautiful simile, so this new form follows the changes of the spirit, and shows forth all its emotions and desires, and therefore it is called “the shadow.” (This Dante is said to have got from Origen.) And it is these “shades” which he meets in *Purgatory*, answering to the “kāma-loka” of Theosophy.

But it is only in one sense that Dante’s other world is that beyond the gates of death, because as Lowell has pointed out, it is in its first conception “the Spiritual World, whereof we become denizens by birth and citizens by adoption.” Dante believed with St. Paul that to be carnally minded is death. In the *Inferno* (3, 64) he speaks of “these miscreants who never were alive,” and in the *Banquet* he says that “*to live* with man is to *use reason*, . . . and he is dead who does not make himself a disciple, who does not follow the Master. . . . For taking away the highest power of the soul, the reason, there remains no longer a man, but a thing with a sensitive soul only, that is, a brute” (*Banquet*, 4:7). So at the entrance of the *Inferno*, Virgil tells Dante that he will there behold

— the people dolorous,  
Who have foregone the good of intellect,

which is “the Truth, in which all intellects find rest” (*Paradiso*, 28, 108). He speaks more than once of the “second death,” and in a manner that has puzzled the commentators. In the first canto of the *Inferno* we have mentioned

— The ancient spirits disconsolate,  
Who cry out each one for the *second death*;  
And thou shalt see too, those who are content  
Within the fire, for they still hope to come  
Whene’er it may be, to the blessed ones.

I think myself that Dante here refers to the old Platonic idea of the second death that separates the soul from the spirit, roughly speaking, or as the Theosophist would say, sets free the immortal Ego from the degraded lower personality, with its sin-laden memory. These “ancient spirits disconsolate” suffering in “kāma-loka” the torture that their own wickedness has brought upon them, cry out for the death of the animal soul, that the Divine Self within them may cease to suffer. Those spirits whose better nature still bids them hope that their sins are not too great to be purged by the fire, are content to endure its purifying pangs. I think this explanation more in the line of Dante’s thought than that of Lowell, who believes the first death to be that of reputation, the second that of the body.

But Lowell is quite right in saying elsewhere that “the stern Dante thinks none beyond hope save those who are dead in sin, and have made evil their good. . . . But Dante is no harsher than experience, which always exacts the utmost farthing, no more inexorable than conscience, which never forgives nor forgets.” He believed above all things in the freedom of the will, that man is given his choice between good and evil, and must take the consequences of the choice he makes. His idea of punishment was always that which the sin to be punished would naturally bring about, and the guilty soul had always the chance of expiating its guilt, and once more winging its way upwards. And just inside the gates of hell he placed those ignoble souls that were neither good nor bad, but lived solely for themselves.

These had not even any hope of death,  
And their blind life is so debased and low,  
They envious are of every other fate.  
The world has kept no memory of them;  
Mercifulness and justice both disdain them;  
Let us not speak of them, but look, and pass.

Dante was of the same mind as Browning, who considered that the weakness which interfered with the execution of an evil purpose only added to the debasement of the soul. To live to themselves alone was the sin of these men, and there is a beautiful passage in the *Banquet* where Dante says that one

should give his help to another without waiting to be asked, as the rose gives forth her fragrance not only to him who seeks it, but to all who come near her.

Mr. Lowell says that Dante was so impartial that the Romanist can prove his soundness in doctrine, and the anti-Romanist can claim him as the first Protestant, while the Mazzinist and the Imperialist can alike quote him for their purpose. And he even calls Christ "the supreme Love," and uses the names "God" and "Jupiter" and "Jehovah" as equivalents. Outwardly at least he held to all the doctrines of the Roman church of his time, but he certainly believed in the unity of the human race, and their conception of the Divine under different names. The man who boasted that he made "a party of his own," in politics, was capable of a like independence in religion, and Dante's association with the Templars had undoubtedly taught him how to see beneath the letter of the creed the spirit of a universal truth. He who could soar through all the sevenfold spheres and returning, see this globe,

Such that I smiled at its ignoble semblance,

was not a soul to be confined within the limits of any church. He had the spiritual intuition that enabled him to discern the truth, and the intellectual subtlety that helped him to clothe it in a guise that might escape the condemnation of the Church. He says at the end of his first *Canzone* in the *Banquet*, what might be said of nearly all his writings;

Canzone mine, I fear that few they are  
Who all thy meaning deep will understand,  
So dark and difficult thy speech to them.  
Wherefore if peradventure thou shalt go  
To such as seem not to perceive thy worth,  
I pray thee then take comfort to thyself,  
And say to them, my new and dear delight,  
"Behold at least, how very fair I am!"

It would take volumes to expound the *beauty* of his poems, and whole libraries of his commentators' efforts to explain their "dark and difficult meaning" have been in vain. For they have fixed their eyes too often on the letter, and have failed to realize that the poet had risen to those spiritual heights where the little differences of creed sank into nothingness, and where all around him rose the white and shining summits of the eternal Truth, "the Love that moves the sun and all the stars."

#### NOTE

1. Of course he does not use this term, but the scriptural expression, the *seed*, which he calls "the most perfect part of the blood."

## THEOSOPHY IN THE POETS

### II — BROWNING

One would like to inscribe Shakespeare's name after Dante's in our list, but that would be hardly fair to a poet whose genius is so essentially dramatic that we are not at liberty to take any of the opinions uttered by his characters as his own. Moreover, while Dante was essentially a mystic, and born at a time when that element pervaded both the prose and poetry of the age, and when its language was frequently used to cover ideas that the Church would otherwise have smothered at their birth, Shakespeare, on the contrary, lived in a time of frank materialism, when the worship of the body had succeeded to the asceticism of the Middle Ages, and life had become full of luxury and the pleasures of the senses. And while Dante was one of the most subjective of poets, and put himself into every line of his poetry so that you come to know as a personal friend the man who had seen the vision of Heaven and Hell, Shakespeare was so intensely objective that we know little of his personality, of his own idiosyncrasies and convictions. Only in the sonnets does he become autobiographic, but those unfold a tale of misplaced love and of the treachery of a friend, and their scope hardly includes the subject matter of religious ideas and beliefs.

That Shakespeare was acquainted with the doctrine of metempsychosis we know by his reference to it in *Twelfth Night*, but we have no right to believe that he either rejected or shared the opinions of Malvolio. When the Clown professes to think Malvolio mad, he asks him, as a test of his lunacy, "What is the opinion of Pythagoras concerning wild-fowl?" — "That the soul of our grandam might haply inhabit a bird," answers Malvolio. "What thinkest thou of his opinion?" — "I think nobly of the soul and in no way approve his opinion," replies the steward, whereupon he is told that he shall remain in darkness till he hold the opinion of Pythagoras, and fear to kill a woodcock, lest he dispossess the soul of his grandmother.

When we come to Browning, however, we find that many of his ideas can really be called theosophic, there being, in spite of Browning's strongly dramatic faculty, a subjective quality in all his writings. The mode of thought of all his personages is similar, the *expression* of their thought is almost identical, that is, they all use the same turns of speech that we have learned to call Browning-esque. His general tendency is optimistic, and, as Professor Edward Dowden once said, the mainspring of his poetry may be said to be Passion, in contrast to that of Tennyson's, which is Duty. The one thing that Browning cannot pardon is weakness, and he shows an agreement with the theosophic idea that the thought is more important than the act, in his poem of

“The Statue and the Bust”<sup>1</sup> where his lovers fail to accomplish their guilty purpose solely through indecision and want of energy. They lost the counter they had staked as surely as if it had been lawful coin,

And the sin I impute to each frustrate ghost,  
Is the unlit lamp and the ungirt loin,  
Though the end in sight was a crime,

says the poet. This is the moral of much of his poetry, and the strength that he exalts he feels sure is given for noble uses, and not in vain. So in *Paracelsus* he writes:

— Be sure that God  
Ne’er dooms to waste the strength he deigns impart!  
Ask the geier eagle why she stoops at once  
Into the vast and unexplored abyss,  
What full-grown power informs her from the first,  
Why she not marvels, strenuously beating  
The silent, boundless regions of the sky!  
Be sure they sleep not whom God needs!

As for the doctrine of reincarnation, Browning touches upon it several times, in *Paracelsus*, his earliest poem of consequence, and elsewhere. It is *Paracelsus* who says:

— At times I almost dream  
I too have spent a life the sage’s way,  
And tread once more familiar paths.  
Perchance  
I perished in an arrogant self-reliance  
Ages ago; and in that act, a prayer  
For one more chance went up so earnest, so  
Instinct with better light let in by death,  
That life was blotted out — not so completely  
But scattered wrecks enough of it remain,  
Dim memories, as now, when once more seems  
The goal in sight again.

In the poem called “Old Pictures in Florence,” we have the same note touched, in a more uncertain way.

There’s a fancy some lean to and others hate,  
That when this life is ended, begins  
New work for the soul in another state,  
Where it strives and gets weary, loses and wins:  
Where the strong and the weak, this world’s congeries.  
Repeat in large what they practiced in small,

Through life after life in unlimited series;  
Only the scale's to be changed, that's all.

And in his "Christina," the poet, speaking of the supreme moments of existence when a sudden flash of intuition seems to show the true meaning and purpose of life, writes:

Doubt you if in some such moment,  
As she fixed me, she felt clearly,  
Ages past the soul existed,  
Here an age 'tis resting merely,  
And hence fleets again for ages.

its sole end in this life being to unite itself with some kindred soul. Again in his own person, the poet expresses in the poem called "La Saisiaz" what he says indeed in many other places, the conviction that this life alone can in no sense satisfy the demands of man's soul, that no conception of Infinite Love and Power can stand side by side with a belief in our mortality.

Only grant a second life; I acquiesce  
In this present life as failure, count misfortune's worst assaults  
Triumph not defeat, assured that loss so much the more exalts  
Gain about to be. . . .  
Only grant my soul may carry high through death her cup unspilled.

And over and over again in his poems Browning declares his feeling that no process of reasoning is required to convince us that "mind" and "soul" are two things. Mind he compares to an engineer (in the poem called "With Charles Avison") laying a bridge stone by stone with careful measuring and adjustment of each to each. "So works Mind," says the poet, and with facts, more or less,

Builds up our solid knowledge: all the same,  
Underneath rolls what Mind may hide, not tame,  
An element which works beyond our guess,  
Soul, the unsounded sea.

All we can really know in this life, he says, are the changes in our own consciousness, all else is, after all, mere conjecture and surmise, and this knowledge can never be obtained from without, but must be sought within. This is the teaching of Paracelsus in Browning's poem of that name, and he saw no reason in after life to abjure the conviction of his youth.

There is an inmost center in us all,  
Where truth abides in fulness; and around  
Wall upon wall, the gross flesh hemms it in.  
This perfect, clear perception — which is truth.

.... And to KNOW

Rather consists in opening out a way  
Whence the imprisoned splendor may escape,  
Than in effecting entry for a light  
Supposed to be without.

Taken altogether, this poem of *Paracelsus* written in the full tide of Browning's poetic power, and before he had acquired all the mannerisms that make much of his later writing so difficult, and so repellent, is full of fine passages that will repay the searcher for theosophic poetry. Such is the magnificent description in Part V of the evolution of the universe, culminating in man. It is too long to quote here, but how fine are the closing lines describing man as the seal put on life,

— man once despaired, imprints forever,  
His presence on all lifeless things. ....  
But in completed man begins anew  
A tendency to God. Prognostics told  
Man's near approach; so in man's self arise  
August anticipations, symbols, types  
Of a dim splendor ever on before.  
In that eternal circle life pursues.  
For men . . . begin to grow too great  
For narrow creeds of right and wrong, which fade  
Before the unmeasured thirst for good: while peace  
Rises within them ever more and more.  
*Such men are even now upon the earth,*  
*Serene amid the half-formed creatures round*  
Who should be saved by them, and joined with them.

The lines italicized might have been written by a Disciple of the Masters. That Browning has been in some measure a student of occultism, his many references, not only to the works of Paracelsus, but to those of Cornelius Agrippa, and to many another "quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore," amply testify. He stoutly refused to join in his wife's devotion to spiritualism, and his "Sludge the Medium," is a terrific attack upon its professors and their arguments. Nevertheless he wrote a wonderful poem called "Mesmerism," which shows how perfectly he understood the method of what we now prefer to call "hypnotism," and "suggestion," and in his very last book he has four curious poems called "Bad Dreams," which do not amount to much except for this touch:

Sleep leaves a door on hinge  
Whence soul, ere our flesh suspect,  
Is off and away.

But after all, putting aside all questions of belief, the best thing about Browning is his splendid courage, the quality of which stirs other souls like the sound of a silver trumpet, and rouses all their latent fire. "Do, and nowise dream!" he says, and this resolute bravery and fortitude was the outcome of what is generally called his optimism, but is really his absolute trust in the Divine goodness and power. The last poem of his last book, published on the very day he died, shows the secret of his confident attitude. "It looks almost like bragging to say this," he said to his sister, when he read her the proof, shortly before his death, "but it's the simple truth, and as it's true it shall stand." So he called himself

One who never turned his back, but marched breast forward,  
Never doubted clouds would break.  
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,  
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,  
Sleep to wake.

It is this strong conviction of the ultimate victory of good, this heroic defiance of misfortune and sorrow, together with his warm heart and his love for all mankind that has so endeared him to the multitude of readers who have known how to sift his precious grains of wheat from out of the bushels of chaff beneath which it seemed his pleasure in later days to conceal them. Except in his last book of all, "Asolando," where there is more of the lyric quality than Browning had displayed for many years. But generally speaking, his best poetry was written before 1869.

Nothing can be as it has been before;  
Better, so call it, only not the same.  
To draw one beauty into our heart's core,  
And keep it changeless! such our claim;  
So answered — Nevermore!

Simple? Why this is the old woe o' the world;  
Tune to whose rise and fall we live and die.  
Rise with it then! Rejoice that man is hurled  
From change to change unceasingly,  
His soul's wings never furled!

This idea of incessant change, ever tending towards the perfecting of man's soul, is the cornerstone of Browning's religion; "my own hope is," he says {in "Rabbi Ben Ezra"},

— a sun will pierce  
The thickest cloud earth ever stretched;  
That after Last, returns the First,  
Though a wide compass round be fetched;

That what began best can't end worst,  
Nor what God blessed once, prove accurst.

“Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand sure,” he says elsewhere.  
He fixed thee 'mid this dance  
Of plastic circumstance,  
This Present, thou forsooth, wouldst fain arrest;  
Machinery just meant  
To give thy soul its bent.  
Try thee and turn thee forth, sufficiently impressed.

Browning was an accomplished musician, and many are the analogies he draws from the laws of harmony. There is nowhere, among all his poems relating to music, any one more beautiful than that called “Abt Vogler.” The musician has been extemporizing upon the instrument he himself invented, and it saddens him at first to think that nothing will remain of the beautiful palace of music he has reared, and then comes this magnificent outburst, with which I will conclude this brief sketch of Browning’s philosophy of religion.

Therefore to whom turn I but to thee, the ineffable Name?  
Builder and maker thou, of houses not made with hands!  
What, have fear of change from thee who art ever the same?  
Doubt that thy power can fill the heart that thy power expands?  
There shall never be one lost good! What was, shall live as before;  
The evil is null, is naught, is silence implying sound;  
What was good shall be good, with, for evil so much good more;  
On the earth the broken arcs; in the heaven a perfect round.

All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good shall exist;  
Not its semblance, but itself; no beauty, nor good, nor power  
Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives for the melodist,  
When eternity affirms the conception of an hour.  
The high that proved too high, the heroic for earth too hard,  
The passion that left the ground to lose itself in the sky,  
Are music sent up to God by the lover and the bard,  
Enough that he heard it once; we shall hear it by and by.

And what is our failure here but a triumph’s evidence  
For the fulness of the days? Have we withered or agonized?  
Why else was the pause prolonged but that singing might issue thence?  
Why rushed the discords in but that harmony should be prized?  
Sorrow is hard to bear, and doubt is slow to clear,  
Each sufferer says his say, his scheme of the weal and woe:  
But God has a few of us whom he whispers in the ear;  
The rest may reason and welcome: 'tis we musicians know.

KATHARINE HILLARD.

NOTE

1. And in “Saul”: — “ ’Tis not what man Does which exalts him, but what man Would do!”

## THE SEPTENARY CYCLES OF EVOLUTION (1)

### THE SEVEN ROUNDS AND THE SEVEN RACES A STUDY FROM *THE SECRET DOCTRINE*<sup>1</sup>

Many persons find the history of evolution, as presented in *The Secret Doctrine*, very difficult to follow, on account of the many digressions and illustrations which enrich, but encumber, the direct line of narration. Beginners in the study of Theosophy, often find the Rounds and Races very confusing, because they plunge, so to speak, into the middle of things, instead of getting a clear idea of the first steps in the labyrinth, and having firm hold of a clue that is to guide them to the end.

That clue will be found in the remembrance of a few general laws, and the careful study of two important diagrams in *The Secret Doctrine*, one representing the *Rounds*, or cycles of evolution,<sup>2</sup> and the other a diagram of the *Fifth Root-Race*.<sup>3</sup> As the whole book is an exposition of the *Stanzas* given in the beginning, it is unnecessary to dwell upon the question of *their* importance to the more advanced student.

Some of the general points to be remembered are:

I. That all evolution, in this solar system, at least, is septenary, and that, therefore,

II. The rates of vibration, the conditions of matter, and the states of consciousness, are also septenary.

III. That man, who is a septenary being, is spoken of roughly as composed of body, soul, and spirit, and must carry out his evolution on these triple lines.

IV. That the purpose of what is called the “Cycle of Necessity” (*i.e.*, the reason why we live) is the acquirement of self-consciousness, or Mind, by the journey of the Monad or Unit of Life, from the spiritual state (or the Divine Unity), through all the conditions of matter and consciousness, back to its starting point, having gained by the way, individuality and experience. Because there can be no *individualized* existence for Spirit, apart from a union with Matter, through which it manifests. The process of development then, consists in the *involution*, or infolding, of Spirit into Matter, and the *evolution* or *unfolding* of Matter into Spirit again.

V. A *Manvantara*, or complete cycle of evolution consists of seven *Rounds*, or minor cycles, in which the Monad (or Unit of Life) functions in the seven states of consciousness and seven conditions of matter before mentioned, and in each *Round* there are seven Races, called *Root-Races*, as from them spring all the rest. Each Root-Race is divided into seven *Sub-Races*, and each

of these again into seven *Family-Races*, and out of these spring numberless Nations.

*The Secret Doctrine* concerns itself principally with our present cycle of development, called the *Fourth Round*, which is the most material of all, being at the bottom of the arc of evolution. The present predominant Aryo-European "Family" race, belongs, we are told, to the 5th Sub-race of the 5th Root-Race, and man is therefore past the lowest point of matter, and on the ascent towards Spirit.

*The Secret Doctrine*, while treating principally of the Fourth Round, nevertheless gives many glimpses of the remoter past, and some hints as to the future. This is not the place (nor would it be possible for other reasons) to go into the question of authority or historical evidence, *that* is fully treated in the book itself. We are given to understand that "the whole history of the world is recorded in the Zodiac,"<sup>4</sup> and that the Purāṇas give accurate, but allegorical, accounts of "the seven creations,"<sup>5</sup> as they call the processes of evolution during the seven Sub-races of the First Root-Race of mankind. Now we are told again and again that there is the closest analogy between all these various cycles, and that not only "every *Round* repeats on a *higher scale* the evolutionary work of the preceding Round,"<sup>6</sup> but that "there is a perfect analogy between the 'great Round' (the Manvantara), each of the seven Rounds, and each of the seven great Races,"<sup>7</sup> and that "the Sub-races also, guided by Karmic law or destiny, repeat unconsciously the first steps of their respective mother-races."<sup>8</sup> For this reason, the hints that are given here and there of the processes of evolution in other Rounds and Races, will help us to understand our own, and *vice versa*.

To begin with some general statements: Every new cycle of cosmic activity, brings with it a renewal of forms, types, and species, which are all becoming perfected and materialized with the environment. As the globe changes from a soft mist of radiant matter to the solid earth, so everything in and on it grows denser, harder, and consequently smaller, as the present reptiles and ferns are very much smaller than even those of the Secondary Period of geology. This period of course belongs to our own cycle, wherein the mineral Kingdom has reached its densest point, but the previous cycle or Round, which was on the astral plane, furnished the forms of the primeval Root-types of the highest mammalia.<sup>9</sup> These types of the Third Round repeat themselves in the Third (or Lemurian) Race of this Round.

"The midway point of evolution" is that stage where the *astral* prototypes definitely begin to pass into the physical, and thus become subject to the differentiating agencies now operating around us.<sup>10</sup>

For esoteric science has long ago formulated an answer to the biological problem now agitating the world, and while agreeing in the main with August Weismann's theory of "the eternal cell," differs from him in acknowledging the effect of external influences upon the germ.<sup>11</sup>

The present contention of biologists is over the question whether to agree with Weismann, who maintains that every possibility of future variation is contained in the potentialities of the ever-dividing original cell, or with Oscar Hertwig and others, who agree with the occult theory in considering such variations as largely the result of external agencies.<sup>12</sup>

Physical causation, that is, the action of these agencies of natural selection, etc., began as soon as “the midway point” just mentioned was passed, at the middle of the Third Root-Race. The forms of men and mammalia previous to the separation of the sexes, were woven out of astral matter, and possessed a structure utterly unlike that of our present organisms, which eat, drink, digest, etc. The organs of the physical body were almost entirely woven out of the astral after the seven Root-types began to pass into the physical during the midway halt before mentioned, and then the laws of evolution as known to modern science began their work, on the individual and the race as well as on the cell.<sup>13</sup> Before this, the astral shadows of the lunar ancestors were the formative powers in the races. Then the higher Ego, the *nous* or mind, takes hold.<sup>14</sup> That is, the perfected men of the last *great* cycle of evolution, which took place on the Moon, having become Spiritual Intelligences, and the incipient humanity of the present cycle, gradually build the physical body of man out of astral matter which passes into the grosser physical condition, and as soon as it has become a perfect instrument, with a fully developed brain and organs of sex, then the “Solar Ancestors,” the “Mind-born Sons,” enter the human tabernacle, and endow it with *mind*. From that time on, the now responsible Entity is given the direction of its own destiny, and can make or mar it as it will.

“The most developed Monads (the lunar) reach the human germ-stage in the First Round; become terrestrial, though very ethereal human beings towards the end of the Third Round, remaining on the globe during its ‘obscurcation period’<sup>15</sup> (as the seed for the future mankind), and thus become the pioneers of Humanity at the beginning of this, the Fourth Round.”<sup>16</sup>

The “Seven Creations” of the Purāṇas, we are told, allegorize the seven evolutionary changes, or what we may call the *sub-races of the First Root-Race of Mankind*, man having been on earth in some form, from the beginning of this Round.

In any case, the scaffolding, so to speak, of the future human being, is but faintly outlined at first; the forces are gathered and set in motion, the most ethereal luminous shadows represent the coming form, and only by slow degrees and by processes enduring through unknown ages, does that radiant cloud which is to be the body of man, gradually increase in density and shapeliness, and decrease therefore in size. “As the solid Earth began by being a ball of liquid fire, of fiery dust, and its protoplasmic phantom, so did man.”<sup>17</sup>

“Man, or rather his Monad,” we read again,<sup>18</sup> “passes through all the forms and kingdoms during the First Round, and through *all the human shapes* during the two following Rounds.” That is, the Monadic Essence that is to become

man, which possessed all the divine possibilities folded within it, as the future oak sleeps in the germ of the acorn, embodied itself in the mineral, the vegetable, and the animal kingdoms, devoid of self-consciousness and therefore of individual existence, till it reached the human-germ stage at the end of the First Round, to pass through “*all* the human shapes” (there must therefore have been many), “during the Second and Third Rounds. Arrived on our earth at the beginning of the Fourth Round, MAN is the first form that appears thereon,” preceding the animals (as in the second account of Genesis, which refers to this cycle of evolution). But even the mineral and vegetable kingdoms which preceded man in this Round, “have to develop and continue their further evolution through his agency.” Because, “since the Monad has passed through the mineral, vegetable, and animal worlds, in every degree of the three states of matter (except the last degree of the third, or solid state, which it reached only at the ‘midpoint of evolution’), it is but logical and natural that at the beginning of the Fourth Round Man should be the first to appear; and also that his frame should be of the most tenuous matter that is compatible with objectivity.”<sup>19</sup> Or, to put the idea more briefly, during the First Round, animal atoms were gradually “drawn into a cohesive human physical form, while in the Fourth Round the reverse occurs,”<sup>20</sup> “Man grows more physical, by reabsorbing into his system that which he had given out, . . . and the stronger physical man became, the more powerful were his emanations, . . . so that from the drops of vital energy which he scattered far and wide, were produced the first mammal-forms.”<sup>21</sup>

During the first two Rounds, or cycles of Evolution then, the materials, so to speak, for the future edifice are gathered together, and the scaffolding set up; in the third the formative process is completed, and the Mind is installed in its new dwelling-place, of which it takes possession and straightway begins to transform and transmute into something less material and more spiritual. The Fourth, our present Round, “is the sphere of final evolutionary adjustments, where the balance is struck which determines the future course of the Monad during the remainder of its incarnations in this cycle.”<sup>22</sup> “During the three Rounds to come, (the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh), Humanity, like the globe on which it lives, will be ever tending to assume its primeval form, that of a Dhyan Chohanic host. Man tends to become a God, and then GOD, like every other atom in the Universe.”<sup>23</sup> For “every Round brings about a new development and even an entire change in the mental, psychic, spiritual, and physical constitution of man, all these principles evolving on an ever-ascending scale.”<sup>24</sup>

And just as the soft bones of the child harden and consolidate as it grows to manhood, so the physical body changes with the Races, from a luminous shadow to a solid material form, the Earth changing with it, from a cloud of radiant mist to a solid globe, bearing all the children of men upon its surface. But as mind has been given dominion over matter, man’s influence is to change not only his own body, but his earthly environment, as he grows more spiritual. In the alembic of his frame the physical atoms are transmuted to something

finer and finer, as he grows less material, and “the degree of materiality of the Earth changes *pari passu* with that of its inhabitants.”<sup>25</sup>

Man and his environment reached their densest and most material point in the middle of the Lemuro-Atlantean Race, or in the Fourth Sub-Race of the Fourth Root-Race. Our present humanity forms the Fifth Sub-Race of the Fifth Root-Race, and we have therefore taken many steps towards our dematerialization.<sup>26</sup> But we must be careful not to confound this “densest point of matter” with the “midway point of evolution.”

KATHARINE HILLARD.

(*To be continued.*)

#### NOTES

1. *The Secret Doctrine, the Synthesis of Science, Religion and Philosophy.* By H. P. Blavatsky.
2. I:200.
3. II:434.
4. II:431.
5. II:254.
6. I:187.
7. II:615.
8. II:768.
9. II:730.
10. II:736.
11. II:738.
12. I:219. But there is a “*spiritual potency* in the physical cell that *guides* the development of the embryo.”
13. II:736.
14. II:110.
15. The period of rest between two cycles. {A *pralaya.*}
16. I:182.
17. I:191.
18. II:159.
19. II:180.
20. I:455.
21. II:169.
22. I:182.
23. I:159.
24. I:162.
25. II:68.
26. II:250.

## THE SEPTENARY CYCLES OF EVOLUTION (2)

### THE SEVEN ROUNDS AND THE SEVEN RACES

A STUDY FROM *THE SECRET DOCTRINE*<sup>1</sup>

(Continued.)

#### THE FIRST ROUND

Each cycle of Evolution develops one of the compound Elements as now recognized, and as we go on, we see in each the dawn, so to speak, of the next Element. We are now in the Fourth cycle or Round, and we know Fire, Air, Water, and Earth, and we are beginning to study the nature of the fifth element, Ether, the characteristic element of the next cycle. The First Round developed but one element, *Fire*, and with it a nature and humanity in what may be called “one-dimensional space.”<sup>2</sup> “The globe was *fiery*, *cool*, and *radiant* as its ethereal men and animals during the first Round.”<sup>3</sup>

The mention of *cool* fire indicates that this primeval “fire” is not what we now understand by the term. It was in fact, *Ākāśa*, or Aether in its purest form. And there are two “fires” spoken of in occult science, the first, the purely formless and invisible Fire concealed in the Central Spiritual Sun, which is (metaphysically) spoken of as *triple*; the second, the Fire of the manifested Kosmos, which is septenary.<sup>4</sup> The first belongs to the spiritual plane; the septenary Fire to our own, in some of its seven forms at least. The particles of this primeval type of light and heat, (or “Aether in its purest form”) on the plane of manifested being, are “fiery lives,” which live and have their being at the expense of every other life that they consume. Therefore they are named the “*Devourers*.”<sup>5</sup> But they are also the *Builder’s*, for this “devouring” means “a differentiation of the fire-atoms by a peculiar process of segmentation, through which process they become life-germs, which aggregate according to the laws of cohesion and affinity. Then the life-germs produce lives of another kind which work on the structure of our globes.”<sup>6</sup> “From the One Life, formless and uncreated, proceeds the Universe of lives,” says the *Commentary*. The genesis of life appears to be this: First, the cold, luminous fire;<sup>7</sup> second, the beginning of atomic vibration, producing motion and therefore heat, and third a segmentation of the particles of the fire-mist. Fourth, these segments become life germs, polarized cells, of some sort, because they are subject to the laws of cohesion and affinity. And fifth, from these life-germs, which are probably still on the astral plane, come the life-germs of the mineral kingdom, to form the structure of the earth. It was only towards the end of the First Round that the simple Essence of the first Element became the *fire* we now know.<sup>8</sup> “Terrene products, animate and inanimate, including mankind, are falsely called creation

and creatures; they are the development (or evolution) of the discrete (or differentiated elements.)”<sup>9</sup>

Into this fire-mist world, came the first of the three great classes of monads, the most developed Entities from the Moon, therefore called the Lunar Ancestors, “whose function it is to pass in the first Round through the whole triple cycle of the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms, in their most ethereal, filmy, and rudimentary forms, in order to clothe themselves in and assimilate the nature of the newly formed chain” (of globes).<sup>10</sup>

As already stated, they have passed through the filmy shadows of the lower kingdoms in the first globes of the Round, and have reached the human-germ stage with the seventh and last, and they are to lead and represent the human element during the Second Round.<sup>11</sup> Man in the First Round and First Race was an ethereal being, a Lunar *Dhyāni*, non-intelligent, but super-spiritual.<sup>12</sup> . . . In truth, during this Round, man was no *man*, but only his prototype or dimensionless image from the astral regions.<sup>13</sup> He was sexless, and like the animal and vegetable, he developed monstrous bodies correspondential with his surroundings.<sup>14</sup>

We may tabulate the evolution of the life-germs thus:

1. FIRE,<sup>15</sup> or pure *Ākāśa*, composed of
2. FIERY LIVES. — They differentiate the fire-particles into the
3. FIRE-ATOMS. They become the
4. LIFE-GERMS. Which produce the mineral essence afterwards solidified.
5. Mineral Life, in their earliest, most ethereal stages.
6. Vegetable Life, in their earliest, most ethereal stages.
7. Animal Life, in their earliest, most ethereal stages.

## THE SECOND ROUND

The second cycle of evolution brought forth and developed two Elements — Fire and Air, and its humanity (if we can give the name to beings living under conditions unknown to men), was adapted to this condition of Nature.<sup>16</sup> But we must remember that none of the so-called Elements were in the first three Rounds as they are now,<sup>17</sup> and so it is said that this *Air* may have been simply *Nitrogen*, “the breath of the Supporters of the Heavenly Dome,” as the Muslim mystics call it.<sup>18</sup> And again: “The Second Round brings into manifestation the second Element; AIR, that element, the purity of which would ensure continuous life to him who would use it. There have been two occultists only in Europe who have discovered and even partially applied it in practice, though its composition has always been known among the highest Eastern Initiates. The ozone of the modern chemists is poison compared with the real universal solvent which could never be thought of unless it existed in Nature.”<sup>19</sup> And again; by Nitrogen as we call it, is meant the *noumenon* of that which becomes nitrogen on earth, and “serves as a sponge to carry in itself the breath of LIFE,

pure air, which, if separated *alchemically* would yield the Spirit of Life and its Elixir.”<sup>20</sup>

“Man’s process of development changes entirely with the Second Round,” says a Teacher.<sup>21</sup> And like man, “Earth — hitherto a foetus in the matrix of space — began its real existence; it had developed *individual* sentient life, its second principle;”<sup>22</sup> the “first shadowy outline of self-hood.”<sup>23</sup> At this stage the second hierarchy of the Manus appear, the Dhyān Chohans who are the origin of Form. It is still the Lunar Ancestors who lead and represent the human element, a much more exact phrase than *man* for beings still living under conditions unknown to men. This humanity, if the term be allowed, was still gigantic and ethereal, but growing firmer and more condensed in body, and more like physical man. “Yet still less intelligent than spiritual, for mind is a slower and more difficult evolution than that of the physical form.”<sup>24</sup>

### THE THIRD ROUND

We have now reached the third cycle of evolution, and even yet can hardly talk of *man*, for during the earlier stages of this Round, vague and general terms are still used to designate humanity. “The *centers of consciousness* of the Third Round,” we read,<sup>25</sup> “destined to develop into humanity as we know it, arrived at a perception of the third Element, WATER.” *Water*, as a synonym of the *Great Deep*, or the Eternal Mother, also signifies astral Matter, and the third Globe on the astral plane. “For all we know, (we read further on) this WATER was simply that primordial fluid, which was required, according to Moses, to make a living soul.” And the *Commentary* speaks of the *watery* condition of the Globe during the Third Round. In all the old religions *water* is shown to be the origin of all forms, and this is why Thales, the great natural philosopher, maintained that *water* was the principle of all things in nature. This primordial substance is said to contain within itself, not only all the elements of man’s physical being, but even “the breath of life” itself, in a latent state, ready to be awakened.<sup>26</sup>

In this Round, then, not only the globe, but everything upon it, was in an astral condition, the densest point that matter had yet reached. The third Round astral prototypes were the shadowy sketches, as it were, of the future forms. “The fish evolved into an amphibian, a frog, in the shadows of ponds, and man passed through all his metamorphoses on this globe in the Third Round” (in astral forms) “as he did in the present, his Fourth Cycle” (in physical forms).<sup>27</sup> “All the forms which now people the earth are so many variations on (the seven) *basic* types originally thrown off by the MAN of the Third and Fourth Rounds,”<sup>28</sup> and one of the most interesting diagrams is in *The Secret Doctrine* (II:736), which gives, as the “unknown root” of science, “one of the seven primeval physico-astral and bi-sexual root-types.” Some of these astral forms of the last Round have consolidated with the Earth itself, and appear to us as hard fossil shapes. “The zoological relics found in the Laurentian, Cambrian,

and Silurian systems (of the Primordial Epoch) *are relics of the Third Round*. Such are the fern-forests, fishes, first reptiles, etc., which at first astral, like the rest, consolidated and materialized step by step with the new vegetation of this Round.”<sup>29</sup> But when the prototypes have once passed from the astral into the physical, an indefinite amount of modification ensues.

Man has now (towards the end of the Round) a perfectly concrete, compacted body, at first the form of a giant ape, and is now more intelligent, or rather cunning, than spiritual. For on the downward arc he has now reached a point where the dawn of the human mind begins to overpower the spiritual element in his nature. The veils of matter are growing thicker over the ray of the Divine within his soul. Still he becomes a more *rational* being, his stature decreases, and his body improves in texture, though he is yet more of an ape than a god.<sup>30</sup> But by the end of the Round, the Lunar Ancestors were already human in their divine nature, and were thus called upon to become the creators of the forms destined to serve as tabernacles for the less progressed Monads, whose turn it was to incarnate.<sup>31</sup> These “Forms” are called the *Sons of Passive Yoga*, because produced unconsciously, in a state of meditation.<sup>32</sup> The *Sons of Will and Yoga* owed their being to the exercise of conscious Will, and were a later development.

The diapason of type is run through in brief in the present process of human foetal growth, which epitomizes not only the general characteristics of the Fourth, but also of the Third Round, terrestrial life. Occultists are thus at no loss to account for the birth of children with an actual caudal appendage, or for the fact that the tail of the human embryo is, at one period, double the length of the nascent legs. The potentiality of every organ useful to animal life is locked up in Man — the microcosm of the Macrocosm, and what Darwinists call “reversion to ancestral features,” leads us further back in the processes of evolution than Haeckel or Darwin ever dreamed of going, for of course they were confined to the geological and biological history of the present cycle.

KATHARINE HILLARD.

(*To be continued.*)

#### NOTES

1. *The Secret Doctrine, the Synthesis of Science, Religion and Philosophy*. By H. P. Blavatsky.
2. I:250.
3. I:252.
4. II:241.
5. I:250.
6. I:259.
7. I:140. “The One Element in its second stage.”
8. I:259.
9. II:242.
10. I:174.

11. I:174.
12. I:188.
13. I:175.
14. I:188.
15. I:626. "The Spirit which is invisible Flame, which never burns, but sets on fire all that it touches, and gives it life and generation."
16. I:125.
17. I:142.
18. I:254.
19. I:260, 144.
20. I:626.
21. I:159.
22. I:260.
23. I:453.
24. I:188.
25. I:252-3.
26. I:345.
27. II:257.
28. II:683.
29. II:712.
30. I:188. All this is almost exactly repeated in the Third Root-Race of the Fourth Round.
31. II:115.
32. I:165, 207, 275.

## THE SEPTENARY CYCLES OF EVOLUTION (3)

### THE SEVEN ROUNDS AND THE SEVEN RACES

A STUDY FROM *THE SECRET DOCTRINE*<sup>1</sup>

(Continued.)

#### THE FOURTH ROUND

As this is the cycle of evolution to whose second half the present humanity belongs, it is of course described more fully than any of the others. We have now got beyond stages and steps in the development of a nascent humanity, and have to deal with the seven well defined Root-Races of the Round, described more or less perfectly as they are more or less material, for in each Round the experience of the former cycle is repeated on a new basis, and the early Races resemble in character the earlier Rounds.

With this cycle, we reach the solid state of matter and the centers of consciousness of the Fourth Round have added *earth* as a state of matter to their stock, as well as the other three elements *in their present condition*, for none of them as we have already heard, were in the three preceding Rounds as they are now.<sup>2</sup> “The Fourth Round transformed the gaseous fluids and plastic form of our globe into the hard, crusted, grossly material sphere we are living on. ‘*Bhūmi*’ (the Earth) has reached her fourth principle.”<sup>3</sup> That is the principle called *Kāma* in theosophical parlance, which is *desire* in the soul of man, *cohesion* in the kingdoms of nature. It is what Jacob Boehme called “the astrin-gent quality,” or the principle of all contractive force, which produces hardness, and solidity, the grossest and densest condition of matter. But it is not molecular matter itself, least of all the human body, which is the grossest of all our principles, but this informing force, the middle principle, the real animal center, because from it spring the animal passions and desires. But as everything in nature has its two sides, this principle is the motive power that keeps the universe going, for without desire in some form we should have universal stagnation, and in its highest aspect it is aspiration, and leads the soul towards the Divine. And as man develops with the globe on which he lives, it is only in the Fourth Round, the middle-point of the life allotted to our earth, that he completely develops in himself this corresponding Fourth principle, which forms the fitting vehicle for the Fifth principle, which is *Mind*. And as there are no sudden transitions in Nature, but all conditions and states of consciousness shade into one another, so the blending of the Animal Soul, (or the emotional nature) with the Intellectual Soul (or mind), forms what is called *Kāma-Manas*, or the lower mind, sometimes spoken of as the *human* Soul, as it partakes of

the human and of the divine elements. It is the special characteristic of this last half-cycle, and with the next, we shall develop the Higher Mind.

“Intellect has had an enormous development in this Fourth Round,” says a Teacher, “and the world is teeming with the results of intellectual activity and spiritual decrease.” “From the time of the Fourth Race, the hitherto dumb races acquire our present human speech, language is perfected, and knowledge increases. At the half-way point of the Fourth Race, which is, of course, the half-way point of the Round, humanity passed the axial point of the minor (Manvantaric) cycle.”<sup>4</sup>

We have seen that the differentiation of the primordial germ of life (in the fifth globe of the first Round, or the fifth Creation) has to precede the evolution of the Third Hierarchy of the Forces of Nature before those (so-called) “gods” can become embodied in their first ethereal form, and for the same reason animal creation has to *precede divine MAN* on earth. This is why the fifth Creation called that of “the sacred animals,” precedes the sixth, that of “the divinities.” In the First Round the animal atoms are drawn into a cohesive, human, physical form. In the Fourth Round the reverse occurs, and the human atoms thrown off during the life of man, are drawn into animal forms according to magnetic conditions developed during life. This is the real meaning of *metempsychosis*,<sup>5</sup> as explained in H.P.B.’s article on the “Transmigration of Life-atoms,” in *Five Years of Theosophy*. “By his own evil acts, a man may condemn every atom of his lower principles to become attracted by and drawn into the bodies of lower animals by virtue of the magnetic affinity thus created by his passions.” For in the Fourth Round, *man* is the dominant note, and from its very beginning, “all in nature tends to become Man. Man is the *alpha* and the *omega* of the objective creation.”<sup>6</sup> And from its initial period, the human kingdom branched off in several directions. “Man was the first and highest (*mammalian*) animal that appeared in this creation,” says the *Commentary*. “Then came still huger animals; and last of all the dumb man who walks on all fours.”<sup>7</sup> The form of the gigantic Ape-man of the previous Round, was reproduced in this one by human bestiality, and transfigured into the parent form in the modern anthropoid.<sup>8</sup> This topic will be more fully treated under the head of *Races*, as it is properly a sub-division of the main subject, *human evolution*.

## THE FIFTH ROUND

We are now only in the Fifth Sub-Race of the Aryan, or Fifth Root-Race of the Fourth cycle of evolution, and therefore the next cycle, or Fifth Round, may certainly be spoken of as the “remote future,” and it is no wonder that few glimpses can be given us of conditions of existence so far ahead of our own. For this Aryan Race, which is now in its Dark Age, will continue to be in it for 427,000 years longer<sup>9</sup>, and then there are two sub-Races, and two Root-Races, each with its seven Sub-Races, to follow before the Fourth Round comes to an

end. But owing to the often mentioned law of the overlapping of cycles, we find that the characteristic Element and the characteristic "Principle" of the coming Round are already beginning to be foreshadowed in the present one. For we are already endowed with *Mind*, (the Fifth Principle) which is to be fully developed in the next cycle, and are diligently trying to get at the nature of Ether, which is to be the Fifth Element. It is in the Fifth Round that the full development of *Mind* as a direct ray from the Universal Consciousness will be finally reached, a ray unimpeded by matter.<sup>10</sup> For as we are told elsewhere,<sup>11</sup> with the next Element added to our resources in the next Round, *permeability* will become so manifest a characteristic of matter, that its densest forms will seem like a thick fog and no more. This condition of things is admirably illustrated by a Roentgen-ray photograph of a booted foot, where you see the leather, the nails, the stocking, the flesh and the bones like layers of fog of different densities, but perfectly defined form.

This fifth, semi-material element Ether, will become visible in the air, we are told, towards the end of the Fifth cycle.<sup>12</sup> It will then be as familiar to man as air is now, and those higher senses whose growth and development it subserves, will, during that Fifth Round, become susceptible of a complete expansion.<sup>13</sup> This is not the Ether of our scientists, *that* is but a higher form of *physical* matter, one of its seven sub-divisions, while the Fifth Element is a subdivision of *astral* matter, called Ākāśa in its highest form. It is the medium which conveys the vibrations of *thought*, as air conveys the vibrations of sound, and therefore is said to "correspond" to the human mind. Cosmically, it is defined by occult science as "a radiant, cool, diathermanous, plastic matter, creative in its physical nature, correlative in its grossest aspects and portions, immutable in its higher principles. In the former condition it is called the Sub-Root; and in conjunction with radiant heat, it recalls 'dead worlds to life.' In its higher aspect, it is the Soul of the World; in its lower — the DESTROYER."<sup>14</sup> But *all* the elements, even this mysterious Ākāśa, are but *conditional* modifications and aspects of the ONE and only Element, which is the *Source* of them all.<sup>15</sup> "To put it plainly," we read elsewhere, "Ether is the Astral Light, one of the lower principles of what we call *Primordial Substance*, or Ākāśa." And this Primordial Substance is the vehicle or medium of Divine Thought. "In modern language, the latter would be better named *Cosmic Ideation*<sup>16</sup> — *Spirit*; the former, *Cosmic Substance* — *Matter*. These, the *Alpha* and *Omega* of Being are but the two *facets* of the one Absolute Existence,"<sup>17</sup> Ether, or the Astral Light, is the vehicle of every possible phenomenon, whether physical, mental, or psychic.<sup>18</sup> And every one of the seven Cosmical Elements each, with their 49 sub-divisions (343 in all, with about 70 of which chemistry is acquainted {in 2026 science recognizes 94 naturally occurring, plus 24 synthetic}) is, at one and the same time Life and Death, Health and Disease, Action and Reaction.<sup>19</sup> For occult science shows, as our modern chemistry begins to teach, that everything has its good side and its bad, may be healing agent or a deadly poison, and furthermore, that the principle we call *Life*, underlies and is active

in what we call *Death*.<sup>20</sup> And so lunar magnetism generates life, preserves and kills it.<sup>21</sup>

KATHARINE HILLARD.

(Continued.)

NOTES

1. *The Secret Doctrine, the Synthesis of Science, Religion and Philosophy*. By H. P. Blavatsky.
2. I:253.
3. I:260.
4. I:189.
5. I:455.
6. II:170.
7. II:288.
8. II:730.
9. II:147.
10. II:301.
11. I:257.
12. I:12.
13. I:257.
14. I:13.
15. I:326.
16. Cosmic Ideation being the origin of human Thought.
17. I:13.
18. I:330.
19. I:347.
20. I:261.
21. I:398.

## THE SEPTENARY CYCLES OF EVOLUTION (4)

### THE SEVEN ROUNDS AND THE SEVEN RACES

A STUDY FROM *THE SECRET DOCTRINE*<sup>1</sup>

(Continued.)

### THE SIXTH AND SEVENTH ROUNDS

All that can be said of periods so remote, and conditions of existence so utterly different from the present, is necessarily very general, and the last two Rounds are usually spoken of together. To begin with, we are told that the sixth and seventh Elements are, as yet, absolutely beyond the range of human perception. They will, however, appear as presentiments (presentiments?) during the Sixth and Seventh Races (of this Round), and will become known in the Sixth and Seventh Rounds respectively.<sup>2</sup> The elements now known have arrived at their state of permanency in this Fifth Race of the Fourth Round. They have a short period of rest before they are propelled once more on their upward spiritual evolution; when the “living fire of Orcus” (Darkness) will dissociate the most irresolvable and scatter them into the primordial *One* again.<sup>3</sup> “The Earth will reach her true ultimate form — inversely in this to man — her body shell, only after the Seventh Round, toward the end of the Manvantara (or great cycle).<sup>4</sup> Before the Earth reaches her Seventh Round her mother Moon will have dissolved into thin air.”<sup>5</sup> And when the next great cycle, or Manvantara, begins, the Earth will become the “mother Moon” of a new world. On I:172, there is a diagram of the Moon in her 7th Round, and the Earth-chain *to be*, which may be compared with the diagram on I:200, same volume.

The “Lunar Ancestors” (or Pitrs) have to become “Men” in order that their Monads may reach a higher plane of activity and self-consciousness, the plane of the “Sons of Mind,” (or the *Solar* Ancestors). In the same way the human Monads (or Egos) of our Seventh Round, will become the “Terrene Ancestors” of a new world (or “planetary chain”), and will create those who will become their superiors.<sup>6</sup> That is, each condition of matter and state of consciousness known as “one globe” of the seven-fold Earth-chain, has received its primitive impulse from a similar condition and state in the Moon. This impulse from the Moon-chain has started the corresponding center of nascent force in the Earth-chain from the *laya*, or passive, into the active state, only upon a higher plane. So the Beings, our former selves, who built up the astral body of man from their own substance, “the subtler, finer form around which Nature builds physical man,” have to go through all human physical experiences in order to develop self-conscious Mind, and become intellectual as well as spiritual entities. Now we can only see with our physical eyes that which is physical, so that all *visible*

planets must exhibit to us only their physical form. We see the dead body of the Moon, for instance, which has not yet dissolved. When we reach the astral plane, in the 5th Round, we shall perceive her astral body with our astral eyes, but we cannot see it now with our physical eyes, even though it exists.

“Those Monads still occupying animal forms after the middle turning-point of the Fourth Round, will not become men at all during this Manvantara. They will reach to the verge of humanity only at the close of the Seventh Round, to be, in their turn, ushered into a new chain — after *pralaya*<sup>7</sup> — by older pioneers, the ‘Seed-Humanity’ for the next great cycle.”<sup>8</sup> This corresponds with the statement that our “ancestors” reached the “human germ stage” only at the close of the minor cycle of the First Root-Race. And furthermore we are told that “the next great Manvantara will witness the men of our own life-cycle becoming the instructors and guides of a mankind whose Monads may be still imprisoned — semi-conscious — in the most intellectual of the animal kingdom, while their lower principles will be animating, perhaps, the highest specimens of the vegetable world.”<sup>9</sup>

This is why it is said that “the ‘Door’ into the human Kingdom closes at the middle of the Fourth Round”; because “the Monads, which had not reached the human stage at this point, would find themselves so far behind humanity in general that they could reach the human stage only at the close of the Seventh and last Round”<sup>10</sup> as before stated.

The only exceptions to this rule are “the dumb races,” whose Monads are already within the human stage, as these half-animals are later than, and on one side descended from, man, their last descendants again, being the anthropoid and other apes.<sup>11</sup> These, the highest mammals after man, are destined to die out during our present (Fifth) Race, when their Monads will be liberated, and pass into the astral human forms (or highest elementals) of the sixth and seventh Races, and then into the lowest human forms of the next (Fifth) Round.<sup>12</sup> The apes generally will be extinct before the seventh Race develops.<sup>13</sup>

But man, as we have already said, tends first to become a god, that is a divine being, and then God; to be absorbed into the Infinite ocean of the Divine Consciousness, with which his spirit shall be identified. But it is said in the *Sacred Ślokas*: “The thread of radiance which is imperishable, and dissolves only in Nirvāṇa, reemerges from it in its integrity on the day when the Great Law calls all things back into action.”<sup>14</sup>

KATHARINE HILLARD.

#### NOTES

1. *The Secret Doctrine, the Synthesis of Science, Religion and Philosophy*. By H. P. Blavatsky.
2. I:12.
3. I:543.
4. I:260.
5. I:155.

- 6.:I:180.
- 7. Period of rest and inactivity between two cycles of activity.
- 8. I:182.
- 9. I:267.
- 10. I:173.
- 11. I:183.
- 12. I:184.
- 13. II:263.
- 14. II:80.

## THE CONSTITUTION OF MAN

After a gallant fight for life, the Pope lay dead. Not even the tap of the Cardinal's silver hammer and the thrice repeated calling of his name, could bring forth any response from that still form, so life-like in death, so death-like in life. There lay the body of the man, a cast-off garment, never to be worn again, but to all appearance the same as yesterday. What had left it? In the answer to this question, we must recognize the fact that man is not a simple but a complex being. For evidently the machine was all there, but something had gone out of it, that wonderful force, that mysterious energy, that we call *Life*. The body still held together, the network of blood-vessels and nerves was still intact, but motion had ceased; that process which is everywhere synonymous with life, was suspended, and the great balances had paused for an instant before that other form of life which we call decay, should begin. We have already recognized two "principles" then, the body, and the life.

But if we have ever thought much about the building up of our mortal frame, we must have realized that, like every other structure, it is built upon a model. Only being a living structure, it has a living model. The great apartments and stores that tower along our streets, must have a model for the minutest detail of their giant frames, only in their case, their creator works from without instead of from within his structure, and his models are fashioned first in his imagination before he puts them upon paper, and then has them embodied in steel and stone.

But when the tiny germ that is to blossom into a human being, first thrills with the mighty impulse we call life, it builds its future habitation upon the model it carries within itself, and cell by cell the two develop, the inner and the outer, the body and the astral form it copies. The astral body is not a separate shape coiled up in some part of our anatomy, but a body of finer matter than the outer one, and interpenetrating it in every minutest part. So that when we hear people talking so glibly of "going out in their astral," as if it were a waterproof cloak or a pair of boots, one wonders if they realize the mighty work it is to disentangle that form, cell by cell, from its grosser envelope. With the death of that grosser envelope, it is no longer held to the body, save for a brief period of readjustment, but gradually fades away and dissolves into its original elements, as the physical body does.

But there is another part of the man that we recognize as belonging to the body — at all events not a part of his spiritual nature, and that is his appetites, passions, desires, the sum of all that we share with the animals, and is therefore often called "the animal soul." We know how much we owe of pain or pleasure to our physical body, how many things we can trace to our physical inheritance,

and yet these things are not part of the body itself, but part of that animal nature, as we call it, that we have to fight and conquer, if we can, making it our slave and not our master. Nor are we to despise this part of our nature, for the desire that can wreck our being if it is allowed to rule, is part of the same desire which is the motive power of the universe, the Will of God himself.

But in the dead Pope lying there so quietly, there was in life a trained mind, a great intellect, the power to write as well as to rule. We have taken no account of this in our analysis, so far we have not yet considered what are the differences between the passions and emotions of man and his mental constitution. The Pope was an ascetic;— he certainly ruled supreme over his animal soul — and he was also a scholar and a poet. Surely that part of him that composed Latin hymns and wrote encyclicals for the guidance of his flock, had nothing to do with his calm affection for his brothers and nephews, or with his bodily aches and pains. We must recognize then, another division in that complex being, man — his intellectual nature. But all these divisions are like the band of color in the rainbow, we recognize the different shades, but no one can tell where one color leaves off and another begins, they melt into each other, separate and yet the same. Therefore, when we think of the Pope as the religious poet, we see the mind, the intellectual nature, gradually merging into the spiritual nature, which is certainly quite distinct from the mental. And the aspiration to the Divine, the mark of the spiritual nature, is one far down in the scale of color, so to speak, with the desires of the animal soul, the longing of the lover to be with his beloved, having its highest expression in the longing of the saint for union with his God.

And in that union with Him in whom we live and move and have our being, we shall reach the stature of the perfect man, when that Spirit now brooding over us, shall be one with our spirit and we shall live in the full glory of our highest nature.

And so we have counted up seven principal aspects or elements, in the constitution of man; (1) the physical body; (2) the vital force; (3) the astral body; (4) the animal soul; (5) the intellectual soul or mind; (6) the spiritual soul; (7) the Spirit, the Ray of the Divine, which shines more or less brightly in each one of us, but shall, in the course of ages, becomes the brightness of the perfect day.

KATHARINE HILLARD.

## THE MORALIST AND THE MYSTIC

(CONFUCIUS AND LAO-TZU)

It is a curious fact that the teachings of all the great sages come to us not directly — except in fragments — but through the medium of some beloved disciple who has stored up for us the winged words that fell from the Master's lips. And it is also a fact that even in China, man could not live on ethics alone, and side by side, therefore, with the careful precepts of Confucius, we find the spiritual and mystical teachings of Lao-tzu, who was fortunate in having a disciple arise 200 years after him, so full of spirituality, poetry and humor as Chuang-tzu {Zhuāngzǐ}, and so capable of giving to the Chinese nation, and through it to the Western world, that philosophy of inaction, which, based upon Buddhism, has cropped up in Quietism and Quakerism and in many other religions. Confucius (Kong-fu-tzu) {Kǒng Fūzǐ} came into the world about 550 B.C., at a period in Chinese history of general degeneracy and misrule. These bad conditions were attributed to three causes: firstly, to five centuries of feeble rulers and constant internecine warfare; secondly, to polygamy and the degraded condition of women, and thirdly, to the absence of any definite religion, or strong religious belief. There was no better lineage in China than that of Confucius, but he was born and brought up in poverty, and thereby learned many useful lessons. When he was only five years old, he was observed to be playing at sacrifices and postures of ceremony, and to the day of his death, rites and ceremonies, and the due ordering of daily life, were the be-all and the end-all of his teaching. In his nineteenth year, according to custom, he was married, and in his twenty-second year he began to teach. A school of earnest disciples soon gathered around him, but he would keep no pupil who did not show both capacity and industry. "When I have presented one corner of a subject," said Confucius, "if the pupil cannot of himself make out the other three, I do not repeat my lesson."

In the year 517 B.C. Confucius visited the capital of the Kingdom of Lu {Lǔ Guó}, where he met Lao-tzu {Lǎozǐ}, who was then about eighty-four, some fifty years older than Confucius. According to Chuang-tzu, the two philosophers had a spirited battle of wits, wherein Confucius was completely vanquished, and returning from his visit, did not speak for three days. "A disciple," says Chuang-tzu, "asked, Master when you saw Lao-tzu, in what direction did you admonish him?" "I saw a dragon," replied Confucius. (A dragon in Chinese mythology represents Divine Wisdom.) "A dragon riding upon the clouds of heaven, and nourishing the two Principles of Creation. My

mouth was agape; I could not shut it. How then do you think I was going to admonish Lao-tzu?"

In his fifty-second year Confucius was made chief magistrate of the city of Chung-tu {Zhōngdū}, where he instituted marvelous reforms in morals and manners, and for two or three years at least, seemed to have brought about a return of the Golden Age. He taught emphatically that the ruler must be first of all a good man, but he did nothing to improve the condition of women, and said nothing of religion, of the soul, or of immortality. Man as he is, and his duties to society, were all with which this great moralist concerned himself. "True wisdom," he said, "was to give one's self earnestly to the duties due to others, and while respecting spiritual beings, to keep aloof from them." Nevertheless, he was most particular in observing all the rites and ceremonies belonging to the worship of ancestors and other departed spirits, though he said to a disciple, "If you cannot serve men, how can you serve ghosts?"

When Confucius, by the exercise of great discretion and tact, according to the law of that "Golden Mean" upon which he always laid so much stress, had reformed the city entrusted to his charge, the chief rulers of the state were alarmed at the exhibition of so much power, and sent into the town a large company of beautiful women, trained in music and dancing, and a troop of fine horses.

It seems to be a singular, but well-known fact, that men always degenerate when brought into too close association with that noble animal the horse, and perhaps it was the degrading influence of the horses, rather than that of the beautiful women, which corrupted the morals of the inhabitants of Chung-tu. At all events, let us give them the benefit of the doubt. Through the one or the other, the lessons of the Master were soon forgotten, and in despair at the change, Confucius, in his fifty-sixth year, set out upon a long period of wandering, only returning to Lu after an absence of thirteen years. His wife had died long before, and soon after his return, his son and his two best-loved disciples passed away. Early in the year 478 B.C., he also died, a disappointed and embittered man, with no hope of another life, no trust in a Divine Spirit to comfort him. But, as has happened in so many instances, the news of his death sent a thrill through the heart of the nation, and the man who had been so long neglected while alive, was almost worshipped when dead, nor has the lapse of twenty centuries diminished the reverence and admiration of his countrymen.

Two hundred and seventy-five years after the death of Confucius, the dynasty of Chow (Zhōu) finally perished at the hands of the first historic Emperor of the Dynasty of Ts'in {Qín Shǐ Huángdì}, who tried to blot out the memory of the sage by burying alive many of his scholars, and burning all the old books (save one) from which Confucius had drawn his rules and examples. Fortunately this ignorant tyrant did not live long, and the next dynasty found its strength in honoring the great moralist, and in striving to recover something from the wreck of the ancient books. Like most of the old philosophers, Confucius left no important work of his own, it is through the writings of others

that fragments of his teachings have come down to us. He always said that he was a “transmitter, not a maker,” that he was not born with wisdom, but acquired it by study. His first under taking was to gather up and bring to the knowledge of men the records of antiquity, that the influence of their teachings might arrest the disorders of the Kingdom.

The most interesting book that he compiled was the *Shi-King* {*Shījīng*}, or *Book of Ancient Poems*, covering a period of some seventeen centuries before the Christian era. It is said to be the most interesting book of ancient poetry in the world, and Confucius used to say that no one was fit for conversation who did not know the *Shi*.

Of the other ancient books none was more prized by him than the *Yih-King* {*Yī Jīng*, known today as the *I Ching*}, or the *Book of Changes*, which was begun by Fuh-hsi {Fuxi} thirty centuries before Christ. This has come down to us entire, as it was spared from the flames lit by the first Emperor of the Ts'in dynasty {Qín Shǐ Huángdi}, because it was used for divination. It consists of sixty-four hexagrams, made up of long and short parallel lines in varied combinations, accompanied by a text in sixty-four short essays, enigmatically and symbolically expressed, on themes mostly of a moral, social and political character. Chinese scholars say that every sentence in the book is an enigma. Confucius was a contemporary of Pythagoras, and the Greek philosopher's theory of numbers, contains many resemblances to the teachings of the *Yih-King*.

The one book that Confucius claimed as his own, is called *Spring and Autumn*, and is intended to be an historical summary, but is so meagre and incorrect, according to Herbert Allen Giles, as to be worthless. The first and greatest doctrine given by Confucius was the so-called “Golden Rule,” which he gave several times in the negative form, *i.e.*, “What you do not like done to yourself, do not do to others.”

It is possible that Confucius and Lao-tzu were nearer each other than their respective philosophies seemed to be, as represented by their disciples and followers. The *Tao*, the Path, or the Way, Confucius found in pure ethics and the work and ceremonial of everyday life, entirely without the spiritual or religious element; Lao-tzu found it in the contemplative and mystical life, the purely ideal and religious existence. When Lao-tzu met Confucius, Lao-tzu was about eighty-four, and he is said to have lived 160 years, on account of the quiet and peaceful nature of his existence. His name signifies “the Venerable Philosopher,” and the traditions of his marvelous birth and death, were very probably made to fit the title. The *Tao-Teh-King* {*Dào Dé Jīng*}, so long accepted as the principle work of Lao-tzu, is a short treatise, not half the length of St. Mark's Gospel, and does not compare as an exponent of Taoism, with the writings of Chuang-tzu, who was born about 200 years after Lao-tzu. He was a man of varied learning, deep poetic feeling, and a lively sense of humor, an invaluable possession for a philosopher. Confucius taught that duty to one's neighbor comprised the whole duty of man; charity, justice, sincerity, fortitude,

are the pillars of his ethics. He knew, or at least he taught, nothing of a God, of a soul, of an unseen world, and declared, in fact that the Unknowable had better be left out of the question. Chuang-tzu, following the teachings of his master, Lao-tzu, embodied the natural reaction of the spiritual nature of man against a purely ethical system, and maintained that the religious life was the true life, the things of the Spirit, the only realities.

Taoism {Daoism}, the religion founded by Lao-tzu, is but another name for Mysticism or Quietism, having, however, a metaphysical and intellectual basis corresponding to that of Buddhism. The Tao can be translated as the *Path*, or the *Way*; the latter seems the better word, because it carries the double sense of *Path* and *Method*. Christ said: "I am the *Way*, the *Truth*, and the *Life*." So the Buddhists say, "He who searches for the *Path* with an earnest and truth-loving mind, will surely find it, he who finds it will walk in it; and he who walks in it with humble feet and uncomplaining heart, will at last surely reach the golden shore of the Great Deliverance, and will lave his toil-worn feet in the Ocean of Bliss."

And Kṛṣṇa says: "Without moving, O holder of the bow, is the traveling in this road!"

A few days ago a friend in England sent me a little book translated from the Dutch of Henry Borel, "a fantasy founded on the philosophy of Lao-tzu," the author calls it. He says that "Tao" may mean many things, and that Lao-tzu himself used it in two quite different ways in one sentence. Wells Williams has phrased it thus: "The Tao which can be expressed, is not the eternal Tao."

"Lao-tzu wrote at the beginning of his book the sign Tao," says Borel. "But what he actually meant — the Highest, the One — can have no name, can never be expressed in any sound. . . . There exists an absolute Reality — without beginning, without end — which we cannot comprehend, and which, therefore, must be to us as nothing. . . . What we imagine to be real is not real, and yet emanates from the Real, for the Real is the Whole. . . . Both Being and Not-Being are accordingly Tao. But above all never forget that 'Tao' is merely a sound uttered by a human being, and that *the idea is essentially inexpressible*."

There is, perhaps, no better definition of the perfect Tao, than that given by Chuang-tzu to the Yellow Emperor. It must be remembered, however, that in Chuang-tzu the philosopher was lined, as the French say, with the poet and the humorist, and that his style is as uneven as the thoughts that it embodies. The Yellow Emperor sought the Sage that he might learn the control of the good influences of heaven and earth, and of the active and passive principles in nature, in order, as he said, to secure harvests and feed his people, and incidentally to learn how to prolong his own life. "The essence of perfect Tao is profoundly mysterious," said the Sage. "See nothing, hear nothing; let your soul be wrapped in quiet, and your body will begin to take proper form. Let there be absolute repose and absolute purity; do not weary your body nor disturb your vitality — and you will live forever, and all the rest will prosper of itself. The Self is eternal, yet all men think it mortal; the Self is infinite, yet all men think

it finite. Nowadays all living things spring from the dust, and to the dust return. But I will lead you through the portals of Eternity into the domain of Infinity. My light is the light of sun and moon. My life is the life of heaven and earth. I know not who comes nor who goes. Men may all die, but I endure forever."

Borel and Giles both give Chuang-tzu's story of the Yellow Emperor {Huángdì}, as told by the Sage to his pupil to elucidate the doctrine of inaction. "The Yellow Emperor was once journeying round the north of the Red Sea, and he climbed to the summit of the Kuenlün Mountains {Kūnlún Shān}. On his return to the southward he lost his magic pearl. He employed Intelligence to find it, but in vain. He employed Sight to find it, but in vain. And he employed Speech to find it, also in vain. At last he employed Nothing, and Nothing recovered it. How extraordinary!" exclaimed the Yellow Emperor, "that Nothing should be able to recover it!" "Dost thou understand me, young man?" asked the Sage. "I think the pearl was his soul," answered the pupil, "and that Knowledge, Sight, and Speech do but cloud the soul rather than illumine it; and that it was only in the peace of perfect quietude that his soul's consciousness was restored to the Yellow Emperor. Is it so, Master?" "Quite right," answered the Sage; "thou hast *felt* it as it is."

Nor was Lao-tzu oblivious to the value of more worldly ideas, and especially the worth of the principle of adaptability, which originating in a conviction of the unity of all things with the Supreme evolved into the lesson of knowing how to treat one's fellows. This was called by the Taoists "the principle of putting one's self into subjective relation with externals," or, in less philosophic phrase, the principle of *adaptability*. One of Chuang-tzu's delightful fables illustrates this idea: "To wear out one's intellect in an obstinate adherence to the individuality of things," he said, "not recognizing the fact that all things are *One*. This is called 'Three in the Morning.' "

"What is *Three in the Morning*?" asked Tzu Yu {Zi You}.

"A Keeper of Monkeys," replied the wise man, "said with regard to their rations of chestnuts that each monkey was to have three in the morning and four at night. But at this the monkeys were very angry, so the Keeper said they might have four in the morning and three at night, with which arrangement they were well pleased. The actual number of chestnuts remained the same, but there was an adaptation to the likes and dislikes of the monkeys."

Nor was Chuang-tzu less clever in illustrating the idea of personal suitability, in his story of the famous beauty, Hsi Shih {Xī Shī}. "When she was distressed in mind, she knitted her brows. An ugly woman of the village, seeing how beautiful Hsi Shih looked, went home and having worked herself up into a fit frame of mind, knitted *her* brows. The result was that the rich people of the place barred their doors and would not come out, while the poor people took their wives and children and departed else where. That woman saw the beauty of knitted brows, but she did not see that it depended upon the beauty of the individual."

Chuang-tzu was as fond of illustrating the principles of Quietism by an amusing story, as by the lofty sayings he addressed to the Yellow Emperor. Witness the fable of the Spirit of the Clouds and the Vital Principle.

The Spirit of the Clouds when passing through the expanse of air happened to fall in with the Vital Principle. The latter was slapping his ribs and hopping about; whereupon the Spirit of the Clouds said: "Who are you, old man, and what are you doing here?"

"Strolling!" replied the Vital Principle, without stopping.

"I want to *know* something," continued the Spirit of the Clouds.

"Ah!" uttered the Vital Principle, in a tone of disapprobation.

"The relationship of heaven and earth is out of harmony," said the Spirit of the Clouds; "the six influences do not combine, and the four seasons are no longer regular. I desire to blend the six influences so as to nourish all living beings. What am I to do?"

"I do not know!" cried the Vital Principle, shaking his head, while still slapping his ribs and hopping about; "I do not know!"

So the Spirit of the Clouds did not press his question; but three years later he again fell in with the Vital Principle. The Spirit of the Clouds was overjoyed, and hurrying up, said: "Has your Holiness forgotten me?" He then prostrated himself, and desired to be allowed to interrogate the Vital Principle, but the latter said: "I wander on without knowing what I want. I roam about without knowing where I am going. I stroll in this ecstatic manner, simply awaiting events. What should I know?"

"I too roam about," answered the Spirit of the Clouds, "but the people depend upon my movements, and under these circumstances I would gladly receive some advice."

"That the scheme of empire is in confusion," said the Vital Principle, "that the conditions of life are violated, that the will of God does not triumph, that all nature is disorganized — this, alas! is the fault of *government*."

"True," replied the Spirit of the Clouds, "but what am I to do?"

"It is here," cried the Vital Principle, "that the poison lurks! Go back!" (to the natural condition of growth without effort.)

"It is not often," urged the Spirit of the Clouds, "that I meet with your Holiness; I would gladly receive some advice."

"Feed then your people," said the Vital Principle, "with your heart (that is, by the influence of your own perfection). Rest in inaction, and the world will be good of itself. Cast your slough. Spit forth intelligence. Ignore all differences. Become one with the Infinite. Release your mind. Free your soul. Be vacuous. Be Nothing!"

"Your Holiness," said the Spirit of the Clouds, as he prostrated himself and took leave, "has informed me with power and filled me with mysteries. What I had long sought, I have now found."

When Confucius visited Lao-tzu, he had a great deal to say about charity and duty to one's neighbor. Lao-tzu believed that "he who knows what God is,

and who knows what Man is, has attained. Knowing what Man is, he rests in the knowledge of the Known, waiting for the knowledge of the Unknown.” Therefore when Confucius insisted on expounding his twelve canons of morality, Lao-tzu said: “The chaff from winnowing will blind a man’s eyes so that he cannot tell the points of the compass. And just in the same way this talk of charity and duty to one’s neighbor drives me nearly crazy. As the wind bloweth where it listeth, so let Virtue establish itself. Wherefore such undue energy, as though searching for a fugitive with a big drum?”

How closely Walt Whitman followed Lao-tzu when he wished to live with the animals, “they are so placid and self-contained.” “They do not sweat and whine about their condition; they do not lie awake in the dark and weep for their sins; they do not make me sick discussing their duty to God. Not one is dissatisfied, not one is demented with the mania of owning things. Not one is respectable or industrious over the whole earth.” And his own poise was as firm as that of the Sage when he said: “Whether I come to my own today, or in ten thousand or ten million years, I can cheerfully take it now, or with equal cheerfulness I can wait. My foothold is tenoned and mortised in granite. I laugh at what you call dissolution; and I know the amplitude of time.”

When it was a question of the great Realities, the foothold of Chuang-tzu was as firm as the poet’s, but from another point of view he could realize the dream-like nature of our surroundings and our lives.

“Once upon a time,” said Chuang-tzu, “I dreamed I was a butterfly, fluttering hither and thither, to all intents and purposes a butterfly. I was conscious only of following my fancies as a butterfly, and was unconscious of my individuality as a man. Suddenly I awoke, and there I lay, myself again. Now I do not know whether I was then a man dreaming I was a butterfly, or whether I am now a butterfly dreaming I am a man.” . . . “By and by comes the Great Awakening, and then we find out that life is really a long dream.”

The fatalism of all the Eastern nations runs through the philosophy of Chuang-tzu, and as Omar Khayam treats of the pots that the potter moulds as he will for various uses, so the Chinese philosopher compares the universe to a smelting pot, and God to the smelter. “I shall go whithersoever I am sent,” he says, “to wake unconscious of the past. The Master came, because it was his time to be born; he went, because it was his time to die.”

Elsewhere Chuang-tzu tries to explain what he means by inaction, or repose. “To him who apprehends God,” he says, “his actions will be unconscious, the actions of repose. The repose of the Sage is not what the world calls repose. His repose is the result of his mental attitude. All creation could not disturb his equilibrium; hence his repose. When water is still, it is like a mirror; and if water thus derives lucidity from stillness, how much more the faculties of the mind. The mind of the Sage being in repose becomes the mirror of the universe, the speculum {living mirror} of all creation.

“Repose, tranquility, stillness, inaction, these are the source of all things. These are the ultimate perfection of *Tao*. Therefore those of old who

apprehended *Tao* first apprehended God. *Tao* came next, and then charity and duty to one's neighbor, and then the functions of public life."

"The *Tao* of the pure and simple," said Lao-tzu, "consists in preserving spirituality. He who preserves his spirituality and loses it not, becomes one with that spirituality. And through that unity the spirit operates freely and comes into due relationship with the Divine. He who clearly apprehends the scheme of existence does not rejoice over life, nor repine at death; for he knows that terms are not final. (Life and death being but links in an endless chain.) . . . When bright blades cross, to look on death as on life — this is the courage of the hero. To know that failure is fate and that success is opportunity, and to remain fearless in great danger — this is the courage of the Sage."

And as to happiness, it consists in being at peace with all things, and unmoved by pleasure or pain. "When Chuang-tzu's wife died, Hui Tzu {Huì Shī} went to condole with him. He found the widower sitting on the ground singing, with his legs spread out at a right angle, and beating time on a bowl." "Not to shed a tear over your wife's corpse," exclaimed Hui Tzu, "this would be bad enough. But to drum on a bowl and sing — surely this is going too far." "Not at all," replied Chuang-tzu. "When she died, I could not help being affected by her death. Soon, however, I remembered that she had already existed in a previous state before birth, without form or even substance; that while in that unconditioned condition, substance was added to spirit; that this substance then assumed form; and the next stage was birth. And now, by virtue of a further change, she is dead, passing from one phase to another like the sequence of spring, summer, autumn, and winter. And while she thus sleeps calmly in the Great House (the Universe) for me to go about weeping and wailing would be to proclaim myself ignorant of these natural laws. Therefore I refrain."

It is an interesting thing that almost immediately after this analysis of endless life, Chuang-tzu gives us his ideas of death, as it were, in the character of Hamlet, soliloquizing over Yorick's skull. These constant resemblances to modern thought in the philosophy of a man who lived more than five hundred years before the beginning of our era, are by no means its least interesting characteristic.

Nor was Chuang-tzu careless of the needs of the body. "Although it is not enough to nourish the body," he said, "it must still be done. For if one is to neglect the physical frame, better far to retire at once from the world, for by renouncing the world, one gets rid of the cares of the world; the physical body suffers no wear and tear, the vitality is left unharmed. And he whose physical frame is perfect, and whose vitality is in its original purity — he is one with God. . . . Joy, anger, sorrow, happiness, find no place in that man's breast," said the Master, "for to him all creation is *One*. And all things being thus united in *One*, his body and limbs are but as dust of the earth, and life and death, beginning and end, are but as night and day, and cannot destroy his peace. How much less such trifles as gain or loss, misfortune or good fortune?" "There is

nothing on earth that does not rise and fall, but it never perishes altogether. Apparently destroyed, yet really existing; the material gone, the immaterial left — such is the law of creation, which passeth all understanding. This is called the Root, whence a glimpse may be obtained of God. . . . Birth is not a beginning, death is not an end. There is existence without limitation; there is continuity without a starting point. Existence without limitation is *Space*. Continuity without a starting point is *Time*. There is birth, there is death, there is issuing forth, there is entering in. That through which one passes in and out, without seeing its form, that is the Portal of God."

But one might go on all the afternoon and not exhaust the treasury of thought stored up by this Sage of antiquity, whose philosophy seems so singularly to suggest the wise men of all the ages since he sought the *Tao*. Professor William James says somewhere {*The Varieties of Religious Experience*, Lecture 16: *Mysticism*} : "There is about mystical utterances an eternal unanimity which ought to make a critic stop and think. Perpetually telling of the unity of Man with God, their speech antedates languages, and they do not grow old."

When the time came for Chuang-tzu to pass once more through the Portals of God, his disciples expressed a wish to give him a splendid funeral. But the Sage said: "With Heaven and Earth for my coffin and shell; with the sun, moon and stars as my burial regalia, and with all creation to escort me to the grave — are not my funeral paraphernalia ready to hand?"

Ralph Waldo Emerson, the great mystic of our own day, declares that revelation is of the present, as well as of the past:

The word unto the prophet spoken,  
Was writ on tablets yet unbroken;  
The word by seers or sibyls told  
In groves of oak or fanes of gold,  
Still floats upon the morning wind,  
Still whispers to the willing mind.  
One accent of the Holy Ghost  
The heedless world hath never lost.

KATHERINE HILLARD.

*January 18, 1905.*

## THE SCIENTIST AND THE BISHOP

In *The Hibbert Journal* for April 1904, a very pretty quarrel began between Sir Oliver Lodge, of Birmingham, and the Bishop of Rochester, the Right Reverend Edward Stuart Talbot, whose articles are signed "Edward Roffen." Sir Oliver Lodge began with a desire to modify some of the formal statements of theology, recognizing the fact that in all such statements there is generally some element of truth more or less distorted and obscure, which might be made more apparent and more acceptable by a different mode of expression. He begins by attacking the doctrine of the Atonement although, as he admits that the fall of man and the redemption by blood "in a measure go together," it would seem more logical to begin with original sin. He quotes from Professor Gilbert Murray's translations of "Euripides" the statement that a curious relic of previous superstition remained firmly imbedded in Orphism, a belief in the sacrifice of Dionysus himself, and the purification of man by his blood, and he shows how close to the same pagan doctrine came the hymns of the Christian Church celebrating the efficacy of the blood of Jesus in washing away the sins of men. "As a matter of fact," says Sir Oliver, "the higher man of today is not worrying about his sins at all, still less about their punishment. He is more concerned with finding out his right work in the world and how he can best do it, and as to 'original sin,' as a matter of fact it is non-existent, and no one but a monk could have invented it. We have been helped now and then on our way upwards by bright and shining individual examples — *true incarnations of diviner spirits than our own*<sup>1</sup> notably by one supremely bright Spirit who blazed out nineteen hundred years ago, and was speedily murdered. Human only on one side, the orthodox fable must have been — 'only half man say some, only quarter man say others.' . . . So the hope of a higher humanity is to be taken from us, in order that man's sins may be superhumanly atoned for, and an angry God illogically appeased. And as to the inherited taint of original sin, says Sir Oliver (referring to the fact that the Catholic Church found it necessary to postulate a miraculous birth for the Virgin as well as for her son), what is the virtue of semi-parentage? "If for a Divine incarnation we admit human parentage at all, we may as well admit it altogether. If a taint is conveyed by bodily inheritance, that taint appertains to motherhood as well as fatherhood, and the only way to avoid the imaginary stain is to postulate a being sprung like Pallas from the brain of Zeus, *a pure embodiment of thought*. . . . It seems to me going too far to deny that a divine spirit can enter into any body except one that has been produced in an exceptional way. Whatever the mysterious phrase Son of God means, and it probably means something mighty and true, it cannot mean that."

The vicarious expiation, the judicial punishment of the innocent, and the appeasement of an angry God, are surely now recognizable as {preliterate man's} inventions. And so likewise, says Sir Oliver, the superior virtue of a one-sided human origin for any redeemer of mankind, seems un worthy of this period of spiritual awakening.

The truths underlying the great mysteries of the appearance and work of Christ, Sir Oliver considers to be three: I. *Incarnation with Pre-existence*. II. Revelation or Discovery. III. Continuity and persistent Influence. He claims that the utterance of science on these heads is at least not negative. Spiritual existence "before all worlds" is a legitimate creed.

No science maintains that *the whole of our personality is incarnate here and now; it is in fact, beginning to suspect the existence of a larger transcendental individuality, with which men of genius are in touch more than ordinary men. We may all be partial incarnations of a larger self.*

Granting the advent of as lofty a Spirit as we can conceive, perfectly human on the bodily side, with all that that implies, and perfectly Divine on the spiritual side, whatever that may mean; what sort of result may be expected to follow? The immediate consequences of course we know, but what in the long run would be the permanent consequences? Surely a discovery of the truer nature of God; the beginning of a real at-one-ment between man and God.

But this is not to contradict the recognition of the majesty and sacredness of Law, and the necessary suffering that must follow any infraction of that law, whether voluntary or unconscious. Nor does it ignore the perception of something in the Universe which not only makes for righteousness, but which loves and sympathizes in the process. That love is the quickening force of the spiritual world; we are no aliens in a stranger universe governed by an outside God; we are parts of a developing whole, all enfolded in an embracing and interpenetrating love, *and this sense of union with Divinity, is what science will some day tell us is the inner meaning of the Redemption of Man.*

So far, and as nearly as possible in his own words, very much condensed, I have followed the lines of Sir Oliver Lodge's paper in *The Hibbert Journal*. In the next number (July 1904) appeared the answer of the Bishop of Rochester, very tolerant, considering all that his opponent had said (much of which I have been unable to quote), but still fully equal to the situation, and not above providing a refuge "in the sanctuary" when the conflict grew too hot.

The Bishop begins by assuring us that Sir Oliver Lodge welcomed his attack, and with a gentle hint that there is a certain amateurishness in his opponent's thought and expression, as in that of all men of science when they venture upon theological ground, he plunges into the fray. He gives Sir Oliver due credit for all his admissions as to the nature of the Divine, and other points upon which they could agree, and then, moved by the question of the Atonement, confessed that he thinks Sir Oliver has dealt hardly with theology

in two ways. He has credited her with what is not really hers, and he has refused on insufficient ground what she rightly maintains. The Bishop asserts that his opponent is wrong in considering that the Atonement implies the propitiation of an angry God, and the infliction of punishment upon the innocent that anger may cease against the guilty. All such ideas the Bishop asserts, were cleared away by the purified religion of Israel long before the Christian era, although he is obliged to admit — in a footnote — that the element of caprice “reentered with the terrific doctrine of election, in the Calvinistic sense.” All ideas of caprice, of bad temper, of anger, are now gone, but “the wrath is there in all its awfulness, and goes on through the Bible.”

It is very shocking, perhaps, but one cannot help being reminded here of the famous Cheshire Cat, who could entirely disappear, leaving only the grin behind. The angry God drops out of the Bishop’s theology, but the wrath remains. The all-forgiving finds a way for that forgiveness in which it should not clash with other moral necessities, that is, should not cancel the results of sin. Christian thought, contemplating the Death of Christ, says the Bishop (always spelling Death in the above connection with a big *D*), has realized with intense conviction, how the Lord, though He could not be punished, did enter into, and identify him self with, and bear, the whole of the suffering and misery, even (as it seems) to the sense of separation from God, which are in men the “punishment of sin.” Having summed up thus clearly the doctrines of the Church, it seems to have suddenly struck the Bishop that to the reasoning mind, there are therein sundry irreconcilable propositions, and he dexterously slides out of the whole thing by asserting that “There are depths here which are matters rather for the meditation of the sanctuary than for controversial discussion,” which is a neat and ingenious method of ending a dispute upon dogmas.

He thinks that Sir Oliver “has rejected an element or elements in the truth of the Atonement which his reverent spirit and his method of spiritual induction may lead him later to recognize as a legitimate and necessary part of theological interpretation, and of the power of the Cross over life.” And he concludes by giving us to understand that he has used the word “amateurish” in connection with Sir Oliver’s remarks, in a strictly *Pickwickian* sense, although naturally the Bishop uses a more sacerdotal expression.

In October Sir Oliver had another innings, and this time he begins with “Sin,” which is the extremely concise title of his paper. He begins by saying that the most valuable criticism of his former article asserted (1) that an evolutionary treatment of sin minimizes unduly the sense of sinfulness; (2) that he appeared to deny the wrath of the Holy One against sin; (3) that he was heretical as to the relation between the humanity and the Divinity of Christ, and (4) that he failed to realize the true significance of the doctrine of the Atonement.

He clears the ground by defending both the right and the ability of serious thinkers, albeit laymen, to criticize the doctrines and the exegesis of the clergy. He thinks it possible for the clergy to overestimate the crudity and ignorance of the laity, and that it is not wise to assume too invincible an ignorance on the part of habitual worshipers. He would unobtrusively remark that such expressions as righteous vengeance, angry Father, wrathful Lamb (all of which the Bishop used), do not seem satisfactory forms to represent what the Bishop himself calls "a stately and austere conception of order." And he objects to the Bishop's frequent refuge in "mystery," saying that it may be a help to the spirit of worship, but it is certainly not a help to the intelligence, and that he disagrees with the Bishop's statement that the mystery connected with the Death of Christ "helps to satisfy the mind" that it was a Divine work, as having too much the air of the old *credo incredible* type {I believe because it is incredible}. "I would rather urge," says Sir Oliver, "that on the intellectual side we should cultivate faith in the intelligibility of the universe, and on the religious side should regard every true work without exception as Divine," which quite leaves the Bishop without any chance to take refuge "in the meditation of the sanctuary."

As to the Immaculate Conception, one must admit, thinks Sir Oliver, that if a Virgin Birth is necessary for the purpose of cutting off the entail of original sin, it only half accomplishes that purpose, and the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin is a necessary and logical completion to that of her Son. But if inheritance of sinfulness could be arbitrarily checked after one generation, why not after another?

As to the question of Divine Wrath, Sir Oliver cannot think it likely that a Deity operating through a process of evolution can feel wrath at the blind efforts of his creatures struggling upward in the mire. The fierce wrath of Christ was against hypocrites and pharisees, not against ordinary human failings. But he wishes to explain that when in his April article he appeared to suggest that Christ's body was human, his spirit divine, it was making an untenable distinction between the vehicle and the manifestation. He wished to urge that among the results of the thorough incarnation of a truly Divine Spirit would be the beginning of a real atonement between man and God, but further than that he did not intend to go. As to affirming that Christ was either God or was not God, there are few complex propositions of which so simple a positive or negative affirmative can be made. There are those who say that Christ was very God in the absolute sense; and subjectively they may be right. It is a statement, not of what they conceive of Christ, but of what they mean of God. One cannot define or explain the known in terms of the unknown. The real effect of the life and death of Christ, was in that stimulus which the spectacle of any noble, self-sacrificing human action must always give. All religions worthy of the name are based upon some heroic and self-sacrificing life, upon some man with clearer vision than his fellows, one who is in closer touch and sympathy with the Divine.

And Christ showed how the sting might be taken out of all suffering by meeting it with a spirit of undaunted faith. The power of sin lay in the presence of an evil and rebellious disposition. Rid of that, and though pains and sorrows would come as before, they could be faced in a spirit, not of submission only, but of undying love and hope and almost joy. Nor does our essayist wish to confine this attitude of contempt for mere physical well-being to Christians alone, nor do Buddhism, Brahmanism, Mohammedanism, or Confucianism, exhaust the category of religions more or less efficient in this particular. It is a part of the truth of God, and is limited to no age or creed. "And in countries which by superficial outsiders are said to have no religious faith it is to be found. The Japanese soldier throws away his individual life by the thousand, in order that his nation may take a noble place in the world and begin its destined work of civilizing Asia; . . . He must be dominated by a living faith in perhaps he knows not what. He may not be able to express it, but his faith may be none the less efficient for lacking the outward precision of an Athanasian formula {the most rigorous type of doctrinal exactness}."

Sir Oliver's conclusion seems to be that we have finally, and through the sacrifice of Christ, learned that sin is something foreign to the universe; that the sin of the creature involves suffering in the Creator; the whole of existence is so bound together that disease in one part means pain throughout. This is the element of truth in the vicariousness of suffering, and in the extension of suffering to the Highest; but it is not vicariously penal, nor is it propitiatory. And as for forgiveness, it removes no penalty; it may even increase pain, though only of a regenerative kind; it leaves material consequences unaltered, but it may achieve spiritual reform.

After all, in reading these essays of a great scientist, who is trying so hard to find some fragments of the truth among the Church doctrines, it seems a pity that he does not accept more than he does from the teaching of the older religions. The old legend of Viśvakarmān, the Creator, who is said to sacrifice *himself to himself*, is one of the earliest forms of the atonement, and the fact that as the "Artificer of the Gods" he was also called "the Carpenter," links him closely with Jesus of Nazareth. The Ray of the Divine that becomes flesh in every one of us, and is crucified upon the cross of our lower nature, is the Christ that through this sacrifice brings about our at-one-ment with the Divine. "My Father that is in Heaven and I are one," says the Christian Scripture, and the old fish-symbol of Divinity was made amphibious, to denote that it could manifest on both the material and the spiritual planes. The Monad of every living being is a distinct, individual Spirit, one with the Universal Spirit, whose vehicle, the Spiritual Soul, is part and parcel of the Angelic Essence; and it is in this that the mystery of the double nature of the Christos lies. "We may all be partial incarnations of a larger self," says Sir Oliver, and Theosophy affirms that the Higher Self may inspire many beings on this lower plane. There is nothing penal, nothing propitiatory here, only the sacrifice of the Higher Nature to raise

the lower to its own level, as part of the great scheme of evolution. Only when the idea of a personal God comes into theology, does his mighty shadow darken the intellects of men, and the attitude of unconscious faith, unlimited by dogmas and distinctions was what was meant by the saying, “Unless ye become as little children ye shall not enter the Kingdom of Heaven.”

KATHARINE HILLARD.

NOTE

1. I have put in italics the sayings of Sir Oliver that closely resemble the theosophical teachings.

## A STUDY OF LIFE (1)

### I THE ORIGIN OF LIFE

The faith which is born of knowledge, finds its object in an eternal order, bringing forth ceaseless change, through endless time, in endless space; the manifestations of the cosmic energy alternating between phases of potentiality and phases of explication.

— Thomas Henry Huxley, *Essays* (IX:8)

Huxley also says,<sup>1</sup> that in itself it is of little moment whether we express the phenomena of matter in terms of spirit, or those of spirit in terms of matter; matter may be regarded as a form of thought, or thought may be regarded as a property of matter, though for scientific purposes he preferred the materialistic terminology.

But it is not every one who is able to resolve the universe into the sum of his individual states of consciousness on the one hand, and to find the physical basis of life in a speck of protoplasm on the other. To wield with equal swift directness, both the scalpel and the sword of the spirit is not given to many men. “If,” says Huxley again, in the essay just quoted, “vegetable and animal protoplasm is identical and convertible, then I can discover no logical halting ground between this admission and the further concession that all vital action may be said to be the result of the molecular forces of the protoplasm which displays it. And if so, it must be true that my thoughts, and yours about them, are the result of molecular changes in that matter of life which is the source of our other vital phenomena. What is the difference,” he continues, “between the conception of life as the product of a certain disposition of material molecules, and the old notion of an *Archaeus* governing blind matter in every living body? . . . After all, what do we know of ‘matter’ except as a name for the unknown and hypothetical cause of states of our own consciousness? And what else do we know of ‘spirit?’ In other words, ‘matter’ and ‘spirit’ are but names for the imaginary substrata of groups of natural phenomena.”

And yet in another essay, after speaking of the transformations of energy in the phenomenal world, he says: “The phenomena of consciousness, which arise along with certain transformations of energy, cannot be interpolated in the series of these transformations, inasmuch as they are not motions to which the doctrine of conservation of energy applies. And for the same reason, they do not necessitate the using up of energy.” How can this be reconciled with the universality of the law of the correlation of all forces, with the close relation between nervous energy and electrical disturbance, and the statement by

Huxley, himself, that “the forces of living matter are *all of them* correlative with and convertible into those of inorganic nature”? This taken in connection with his other statement that “wherever motion of matter takes place, that motion is effected at the expense of part of the total store of energy,” leaves us with the idea of a gamut of force whose laws stretch down into the inorganic world, but cannot rise above that of living matter, and wherein the phenomena of consciousness are outside of the laws of waste and repair.

“All our knowledge is a knowledge of states of consciousness,” Huxley says, “and, as René Descartes tells us, our knowledge of the soul, taken as the sum of individual states of consciousness, is more intimate and certain than our knowledge of the body.” Another very significant passage is that wherein he speaks of “the doctrine of continuity, too well-established to permit me to suppose that any complex natural phenomenon comes into existence suddenly, and very strong arguments would be needed to prove that such complex phenomena, as those of consciousness, first make their appearance in man. . . . The brutes, although their consciousness may be less intense, and from absence of language they can have no trains of thought, only trains of feeling, yet have a consciousness which more or less distinctly foreshadows our own.”

Does not then “the law of continuity” compel us not to “interpolate,” but to supplement the series of transformations of energy in brain-matter, with a further series of transformations of energy in our states of consciousness, which, it would seem, must be followed by exhaustion of that energy, or by its further transformation into other forms?

Herbert Spencer defined *Life* as “the continuous adjustment of internal to external relations.” But to what is this adjustment confined? A man stands before us in the perfection of physical health; he touches a live wire as he goes about his work, and is instantly killed. An inert form lies before us, that but a moment ago was thrilling with energy. We say that the man is dead.

Let us leave the question of the survival, in some other condition of existence, of that which we call a soul, and look only at the body that we call dead. But within its molecules a change to another form of life has already begun, the cells that tear down, instead of the cells that build up, are at their work of destruction. The tenant has moved out, the house is to be pulled to pieces, and the materials to be used in other ways. “The continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations,” still goes on, but with quite different results. Before death, the myriad cells of the man’s body were busy with the work of construction and organization, now they are equally busy with destruction and *disorganization*, each cell working for itself, instead of the common good. The materials that once composed that human form will soon return to their original elements, and perhaps become absorbed by the trees that shade its resting-place or the grass that covers it. The grass becomes food for flocks and herds, and their flesh in its turn goes to build up the bodies of other men.

And so the great Wheel of Life unceasingly turns, and why should we predicate of its revolutions either a beginning or an end? The biologist says that one speck of living protoplasm is sufficient foundation for the evolution of a universe, any more would be a waste of material in view of the infinite powers of self-division and multiplication inherent in that little speck. But it seems impossible to *begin* with protoplasm. If “to create or annihilate energy is as impossible as to create or annihilate matter,” then energy and matter must be alike without beginning or end.

“The existence of the matter of life depends,” says Huxley, “on the preexistence of certain compounds, that is, carbonic acid, water, and certain nitrogenous bodies. Withdraw any one of these three from the world, and all vital phenomena come to an end. Carbon, hydrogen, oxygen and nitrogen are all lifeless bodies. But brought together under certain conditions, they give rise to the still more complex body, protoplasm; and this protoplasm exhibits the phenomena of life.”<sup>2</sup> Set beside this statement this other one. “All living bodies contain substances of closely similar physical and chemical composition, which constitute the physical basis of life, known as protoplasm. So far as our present knowledge goes, this takes its origin only from preexisting protoplasm.” And this: <sup>3</sup>“Whether not-living matter may pass, or ever has passed under any conditions, into living matter, necessarily remains an open question; all that can be said is, that it does not undergo this metamorphosis under any known conditions.”

We are here confronted with this dilemma. Either the elements above-named, carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen are all lifeless bodies, which by their union generate life (a theory seemingly in direct contradiction to the axiom that all life springs from life), or those elements are *not* “lifeless” but the “cosmic energy” thrills through them also and brings about the conditions “which exhibit the phenomena of life.” It is always from a lower plane that the higher is nourished, but can we dare to say that the very lowest step of the ladder or the highest is the one where life begins? The plant can raise less complex mineral substances to the stage of living protoplasm, while the animal’s highest feat of constructive chemistry, says Professor Huxley, is to convert dead protoplasm into that living matter of life which is appropriate to itself. But can we conceive of such a thing as dead protoplasm, or granted its existence, of the possibility of any “feat of constructive animal chemistry” which shall succeed in converting *dead* protoplasm into living matter?

Huxley’s definition of a germ is short and clear: “a germ is matter *potentially* alive, and having *within itself* the tendency to assume a definite living form.” The latter part of the sentence suggests August Weismann’s theory that all development was provided for in the original structureless cell, a doctrine almost as difficult to swallow as Lord Kelvin’s {William Thomson, 1st Baron Kelvin} explanation that the first germs of life upon earth fell from some meteor, their existence in the meteor being taken for granted. Back of animal life we have plant life; back of plant life, mineral life; back of mineral life, that

of the elements, and back of those so-called elements, whose recognized number is increasing all the time, the probability, to say the least, that there exists a homogeneous primordial element whose many aspects we are slowly learning to recognize.

Professor Crookes and Professor Huxley have both noted the fact that the elements already discovered fall into groups or series, defined in each section by their regularly graduated atomic weight. "In the living world," says Professor Huxley, "facts of this kind mean evolution from a common prototype. It is difficult to imagine that in the non-living world they are devoid of significance. Is it not possible, nay, probable, that they may mean the evolution of our 'elements' from a primary undifferentiated form of matter? Fifty years ago such a suggestion would have been scouted as a revival of the dreams of the alchemists. At present it may be said to be the burning question of physico-chemical science." This was written in 1887, and the question is still unsettled, though we are continually drawing nearer to the conceptions of the alchemists. Resolve the elements into different aspects of the one primary unconditioned form of matter, and it will hardly be possible to separate that form of matter from "cosmic energy," or life.

The distinction between organic and inorganic life is fast being obliterated, as the biologist and the chemist learn to trace back the history of the minuter forms of microscopic existence, and become convinced that from "lifeless bodies" no possible combination can produce life. An interesting article by Professor Wilhelm von Heyn, of Berlin, in a late number of *Harper's Magazine*, on "The Life and Diseases of Metals," speaks with much conviction of mineral growth, as seen in the changes in the cellular, or more properly speaking, the crystalline, structure of metals. In the case of metals, Professor Heyn says that much greater variations of temperature are necessary to produce changes than to release life-processes in plants. By heating a piece of copper its crystals begin to grow by combining to form larger crystals, though the whole piece undergoes no change in form or size. Similar processes are found in other metals, especially in iron. "Iron in general," says Professor Heyn, "is the metal forming the transition between the inorganic and the organic world. The life-processes shown in iron, under varying conditions, are exceedingly manifold. . . . A microscopic pathology of metals has been developed similar to the microscopic pathology employed by Rudolf Ludwig Karl Virchow in the study of human diseases."

Herbert Spencer says that a living thing is distinguished from a dead thing by the multiplicity of the changes at any moment taking place in it, but the remark lacks value unless we know what he means by "a living thing." A speck of living protoplasm could hardly have so many changes taking place in it at any given moment, as the dead body of a higher organism in a state of decomposition. Of course to the general eye there is nothing so indicative of life as motion. If a body move from an inward impulse, our first idea is that it is alive. A man whose watch ran down complained that "his time-bug was

dead." He recognized motion as indicative of life, but he could not distinguish between inherent motion and applied motion, between the movements of an insect and those of a watch dependent upon an outside and mechanical agency. More than forty years ago Huxley asserted that every amount of nervous energy is accompanied by a certain amount of electrical disturbance in the particles of the nerves in which that action is carried on, and Professor Albert Mathews of Chicago gives us today as one of the latest discoveries of science the statement that muscle-contraction is probably in its essence an electrical phenomenon, and we must say the same of the conduction of a nerve-impulse. But this is really nothing new, for we find that Herbert Spencer in the first edition of his *The Principles of Biology* (1864) suggested that the redistributions of matter in general are accompanied by electrical disturbances. And as far back as 1806, Humphrey Davy explicitly stated his belief that chemical and electrical attraction are produced by the same cause, acting in the one case on particles, in the other on masses, and that the same property, under different modifications, is the cause of all the phenomena exhibited by different voltaic combinations. Many experiments have shown that the skin and most of the internal membranes can exhibit opposite electrical conditions. Professor Carlo Matteucci constructed a miniature galvanic battery with slices of muscle from a frog's leg cut in opposite directions, the alternating surfaces forming the positive and negative cells of the battery.

Davy having linked galvanism with chemical affinity on the one hand, and with frictional electricity on the other, Hans Christian Ørsted, the Danish philosopher (and following him, André-Marie Ampère), attached magnetism to the group of correlated forces, and soon afterwards Michael Faraday proved the interconvertibility of electricity and magnetism. He satisfied himself completely of the underlying identity of the various forms of electric energy, and linked together light, chemical affinity, magnetism, and electricity, while he just failed to formulate the law of the correlations and conservation of force. In his essay on "The Electric Theory of Matter," published in *Harper's Magazine* for August 1904, Sir Oliver Lodge says: "Matter appears to be composed of *positive and negative electricity and nothing else*. All its newly discovered as well as all its long-known properties can thus be explained; even the long-standing puzzle of 'cohesion' shows signs of giving way. . . . The physical basis of life still eludes us, and until we are willing to look outside our material environment into another order of things, the full truth concerning life and mind will, I believe, continue to be unrecognizable. But let us always remember that both life and mind have a physical basis, a complete material aspect."

The researches of Professor Jacques Loeb go far to prove that life and electricity are but different aspects of the same force and that "the ultimate cause of muscular action, and it now seems probable of all life-processes, is electricity." But this is not saying that the fact that Professor Loeb has succeeded in arresting for a few days the death of the unfertilized eggs of the

sea-urchin is the same thing as the *creation* of life, as some of his too-ardent admirers have asserted.

In pursuing the search for the principle of Life, then, we find that go as far as we may in the study of its simplest forms, we never get to its *beginning*. Only from living matter comes living matter, and we are forced to conclude with Spencer<sup>4</sup> and Huxley that there is no beginning, that there are cycles of involution and evolution in the universe, periods of latent and periods of active life, "the manifestations of the cosmic energy bringing forth ceaseless change, through endless time, in endless space," but never a moment when life *in some form* does not exist. All forces have been synthesized as modes of motion, and all forms of life may be described in the same terms. Therefore the Vedāntists differed but in phraseology from our modern scientists when they said that all things sensible might be reduced to rates of vibration, and all things supersensible to states of consciousness. And what are vibrations, in the last analysis but changes in our states of consciousness? "In order to be correctly comprehended," says the Eastern school of thought, "life has to be studied in the *entire series* of its manifestations. Life and matter are not natural principles existing independently of each other, but the effects of combinations produced by *eternal motion* in space," and force is said to be simply "matter in one of its highest states."

May we not then consider protoplasm to be the result, not of a combination of lifeless substances, producing life from their union under certain conditions, but as the outcome, under the eternal laws of evolution, of the *latent life* in the elements of which that protoplasm is composed? *And if all forces are but different modes of motion*, it surely may be that all elements can be resolved into the One Element, of which all things are formed, "the effects of eternal motion in space," which is our modern vortex theory in another form. That theory may be a dream, as Lord Kelvin, its most distinguished modern formulator, once called it, but it seems likely to be one of those dreams from which we awake to find them true.

To return to the Eastern theories of the origin and nature of life, they seem to resemble most closely in substance, if not in form, the latest theories of modern biologists. But whereas the latter are forced, or consider themselves forced, to begin with that combination of "lifeless" elements which forms "the matter of life," the earlier philosophers maintained that there was no such thing as "dead" matter in the universe; that minerals, as well as plants and animals, possessed life, and that the distinction between inorganic and organic bodies was based upon error. But it is as difficult for us to realize the life of a mineral or a plant as it is to understand other forms of consciousness than ours. One of the Hindu poets in describing the perfected man says: "And he shall know what is passing in the mind of the ant," a knowledge far beyond our present reach.

The Eastern teaching always begins with general and abstract ideas, and comes down to concrete particulars, because we cannot go beyond the realm of physics without getting into metaphysics, and the last analysis of protoplasm

inevitably confronts us with abstract Life or “cosmic Energy,” primordial Matter, and cosmic Consciousness, or Divine Mind. Behind all manifestation, all existence, is the nameless Cause of all being, the eternal, unchangeable THAT. When a new period of what Huxley calls “explication” (or unfolding) begins, cosmic energy working in eternal Space begins to re-mould the dormant universe. With the first manifestation of Force in Matter (the union of the active and passive principles in nature) the new cosmos begins to be. It becomes first, the “Egg of Brahma,” the “eternal cell,” carrying within itself the potentiality under varying conditions of all forms of future development. First, the undifferentiated cell,  $\bigcirc$ ; then the nucleated,  $\odot$ ; then the expansion of the dot into a horizontal line, the passive force  $\ominus$ ; then the active force  $\oplus$ ; and then their union  $\oplus\ominus$ ; the beginning of all life *as we know it*.

(The negative and positive electrons of modern science are represented by the same symbols,  $\ominus\oplus$ .)

The trinity lying at the base of all manifestation is composed of Matter, Force, and Consciousness (or Intelligence), the three synthesized as Spirit, or Life; Matter being the primordial One Element into which Huxley thought all elements might be resolved; Force, comprising all modes of motion, and Consciousness, or directing Intelligence, being a ray of the Universal Spirit. This Universal Life is called in the Eastern philosophy *Ātma*, the Divine Breath, “eternal motion in space;” in the cosmos it is called *Prāṇa*, or the principle of vitality; and *Jīva*, or *Jivātman*, the individual unit of life, is what we call the immortal soul.

As the ray of the Divine becomes more and more closely united with matter, at the beginning of each cycle of evolution, the abstract gradually becomes concrete, the One Element breaks up into many compound elements, and the forces that we recognize begin to mould the world. In his *World-Life*, (48), Professor Alexander Winchell says that it is “the dream of science that all the recognized chemical elements will one day be found to be but modifications of a single material element.” *The Secret Doctrine* (I:452), commenting upon this passage, says: “Occultism adds to this another axiom, that there is neither Spirit nor Matter in reality, but only numberless aspects of the One ever-hidden is (or *Sat*). The homogeneous primordial element is *simple and single only on the terrestrial plane* of consciousness and sensation, since matter after all is nothing else than the sequence of our own states of consciousness, and Spirit an idea of psychic intuition. Even on the next higher plane, that *single element* which is defined on our earth by current science as the ultimate constituent of some kind of matter, would be pronounced in a world of higher spiritual perception — to be something very complex indeed. Our purest water would be found to yield many constituents (besides oxygen and hydrogen) undreamed of by our terrestrial modern chemistry. . . . Surely the elements known to us are not, nor can they be, the *primordial elements*. Those elements had their genesis in the depths of the primordial fire-mist — the masses of incandescent vapor of the *irresolvable* nebulae. . . . The occultist maintains that Spirit and Matter are

two facets of the unknowable *Unity*, the apparently contrasted aspects depending (a) on the various degrees of differentiation of Matter, and (b) on the grades of consciousness attained by man himself." According to this philosophy, Sound, Light, Heat, Cohesion, Electricity, and Magnetism, all but different modes of Motion (in which they are synthesized) work, not as blind forces, but as entities, which, having life have also consciousness or directing intelligence, in some form unknown to us, but none the less real. Consciousness, *as we know it*, is entirely latent in the elemental forces, and in the mineral kingdom, but in the vegetable there is a faint dawn of it, as in the sensitive plant, and the reaching of creepers towards a support, and in the animal kingdom it develops through many grades.

Still, even the consciousness of the dog, for instance, is but a wave of the Universal Consciousness, and not until humanity has reached a certain stage of physical development, does individual self-consciousness begin. When the physical organism has attained perfection, and the brain has developed as well as the body, then at last the Thinker has an instrument fitted to its use, and with the acquirement of speech the "I am I" consciousness begins.

The evolution of man can never be explained, according to the eastern theory, on a purely physical basis; we must take his mental development into account as well. As we have seen, modern biology speaks of the germ as having within itself the tendency to assume a definite living form. August Weismann, not content with "a tendency," would have the elements of *all* future development already provided in the absolutely structureless cell. Oscar Hertwig denies that this is possible, and holds that the development of the germ is assisted and modified by external conditions such as climate and environment. Here he is at one with the eastern philosophers, who trace all animal life in this cycle of manifestation back to seven basic types which formed in the Creative Mind the ground-plan, so to speak, of the animal kingdom. From these basic types have evolved the enormous variety of creatures now existing, the product of living germs acted upon by the forces of nature that we know as heredity, natural selection, sexual selection, physiological selection, isolation, correlation of growth, and adaptation to environment (that is, intelligent as opposed to mechanical causation). And behind all this lies what Jean-Baptiste Lamarck called the "inherent and necessary" law of development, the intelligent impulse of life. The rhythm of life on the earth is sevenfold, but not so in the sun or the other planets. That is why so many vital phenomena, unnecessary to recapitulate here, fall into series of seven, and why Crookes and others have found that the so-called "elements" range themselves in groups of seven, a number connected with the moon, the source and "measurer" of our physical life.

The Purāṇas describe the evolution of the elemental forces and the undifferentiated types of mineral, vegetable, and animal, up to human germs, in a mystical, but none the less unmistakable manner. The filmy and structureless cells, in which the oriental philosopher sees the beginnings of life

in the present cycle of existence, had nothing to fear from any conditions of the earth, which developed with them, under the impulse of what Huxley calls “their tendency to assume a definite living form,” and what the occultist would call the Creative Mind, working through and in the forces of Nature, “in eternal order, through endless time, in endless space.” According to this philosophy, there never was a time when Life did *not* exist. Between “the cycles of explication,” it was in a passive and latent condition, “the one form of existence stretched boundless, infinite, causeless, in dreamless sleep, and Life pulsated, unconscious, in universal space.” Then, with the dawn of the new day, Life once more took on the active form, a vibration that thrilled through infinitude swept along, “touching with its swift wing the whole universe and the germ that dwelleth in darkness, the darkness that breathes over the slumbering waters of Life.”

In our own system, the Sun is the storehouse of vital force, which is the noumenon of electricity; and from its mysterious depths issue the life-currents which thrill through space, as through every living thing on earth. In *The Popular Science Review* (IV:148), Robert Hunt, F.R.S., writing on “The Source of Heat in the Sun,” and referring to “the Nasmyth willow-leaves,” of its photosphere, says: “Whatever they may be, it is evident that they are the immediate sources of solar light and heat. . . . May the pulsing of vital matter in the central Sun of our system be the source of all that life that crowds the earth?” And again (156) Mr. Hunt writes: “But regarding Life — vital force — as a power far more exalted than either light, heat, or electricity, and indeed capable of exerting a controlling power over them all” . . . (all this is pure occultism), “we are certainly disposed to regard with satisfaction that speculation which supposes the photosphere (of the Sun) to be the primary seat of vital power, and to regard with a poetic pleasure that hypothesis which refers the Solar energies to Life.”

Since the foregoing pages were written, a very interesting article, by Sir Oliver Lodge, has appeared in *The North American Review* for May, once more asking the same unanswered riddle, “What is Life?” He does not attempt to answer it, but he implies a belief in “something outside our present categories of matter and energy; as real as they are, but different, and utilizing them for its own purpose.” He recognizes the same cyclic progression of things that Spencer and Huxley noted long ago, and that the Eastern philosophers had taught so many centuries before them. The one point that he is willing to call “certain,” is, that “life possesses the power of vitalizing the complex material aggregates, which exist on this planet, and of utilizing their energies for a time to display itself amid terrestrial surroundings; and then it seems to disappear or evaporate whence it came. It is perpetually arriving and perpetually disappearing.” He shows us that a lump of matter in space can only become a habitable planet when it has grown large enough to retain an atmosphere, and that when the aggregate is as large as, perhaps, a million earths, it acquires the property of radioactivity, and becomes a self-heating and self-luminous body; it has

become, in fact, a central sun, a source of heat and light. He then sketches the process of cell-life and development on earth from structureless protoplasm up to civilized man. Assimilation and reproduction, overshadowed by the possibility of death, are, he says, properties of life of every kind, but the power of locomotion and special senses, overshadowed by the sense of pain, are the sign of a still further development into what we call "animal life." The further development of mind, consciousness, and sense of freedom, overshadowed by the possibility of willful error or sin, is the distinctly human attribute. Here he agrees with Huxley, who said: "Sin came into the world not because of a fall, but because of a rise in the scale of being."

The question then arises whether the complex molecular aggregate, capable of so many interesting processes, generated life and mind, as the planet generated its atmosphere? Sir Oliver Lodge thinks this an erroneous view, and one certainly not proven. Furthermore, all effort to secure spontaneous generation, so far, has been a failure, but even if successful, we should only have reproduced in the laboratory a process that must, in some past age, have occurred on the earth (and that the occultist maintains *did* occur), but under conditions entirely different from those of today.

And the occultist is not afraid to say what, at no very distant day, the scientist will say after him, that the answer to the question "What is Life?" will be expressed in terms of Electricity, which is the "Life" of the universe; "as an abstraction, the One Life, as an objective and evident reality, it shows itself in a septenary scale of manifestation, which begins with the One, Unknowable Causality, and ends as omnipresent Life and Consciousness immanent in every atom of matter." (*The Secret Doctrine*, I:139.)

KATHARINE HILLARD.

#### NOTES

1. *On the Physical Basis of Life*, 1868 Essays, Thomas Henry Huxley, I:164.
2. *On the Physical Basis of Life*, I:114.
3. *On the Physical Basis of Life*, I:117.
4. "Apparently, the universally co-existent forces of attraction and repulsion . . . produce now an immeasurable period during which the attractive forces predominating, cause universal concentration, and then an immeasurable period during which the repulsive forces predominating cause universal diffusion — alternate eras of Evolution and dissolution." (*First Principles*, 482.)

## A STUDY OF LIFE (2)

### II ELECTRICITY AND LIFE

It is hard to believe that the theory of the conservation and correlation of forces was only formulated by modern science a little more than fifty years ago. Faint foreshadowings of the doctrine of heat as a mode of motion appeared much earlier, but such theories were classed for the most part as “unverifiable hypotheses,” and served chiefly to bridge over the gulf between the purely metaphysical speculations of the older philosophers, and the experimental methods of today. It was towards the close of the 18th century that Antoine-Laurent de Lavoisier discovered the great principle of the indestructibility of matter, and made of chemistry an exact science. It was nearly a hundred years later that William Robert Grove and James Prescott Joule of England, Julius Robert von Mayer of Germany, and Édouard Séguin of France announced almost simultaneously the theory now known as the conservation and correlation of all force, the law that any form of force can be changed into any other form, but never altogether dissipated, as matter can be endlessly transformed but never destroyed.

The purpose of this paper is to suggest that the law of the indestructibility and correlations of force in the world of matter must have its logical counterpart in the intellectual and spiritual worlds. For once convinced that no particle of physical energy is ever dissipated or destroyed, but simply changes form, and it becomes difficult not to believe that mental energy is equally persistent.

The fact of the transformation of one force or mode of motion into another has induced the belief that all the different natural agencies are in reality but one, manifesting in various ways, a universal energy associated with matter, of which its phenomena are but differently modified effects. Moreover, evidence seems to be constantly accumulating to prove not only that all forces are modes of motion, but that all motion is a manifestation of *life*. How intimately electricity and nerve-force are connected, was shown by some of the experiments of Carlo Matteucci, who demonstrated that the sensory nerves are affected by the electric current, and, therefore, that some definite polar condition is induced to which electricity is correlated, and that probably this form of electricity is equivalent to what we call “nervous energy,” which is but another name for vital force. We find also that the power of a nerve to produce muscular contraction is weakened or destroyed by the transmission of an electric current in one direction, and increased by sending it in another.

“Star and nerve-tissue are parts of the same system,” said Professor Edward Livingston Youmans, “stellar and nervous forces are correlated. Nay,

more, sensation awakens thought and kindles emotion, so that this wondrous dynamic chain binds into living unity the realms of matter and mind through measureless amplitudes of space and time. . . . How a force existing as motion, light or heat," he says elsewhere, "can become a mode of consciousness, . . . or how it is possible for the forces liberated by chemical changes in the brain to give rise to emotion, these are mysteries impossible to fathom. But they are not profounder mysteries than the transformation of the physical forces into each other."

In a recent paper by Dr. Caleb Williams Saleeby on Professor John Butler Burke's experiments with radium, he says that but three possibilities of the origin of life upon the earth can be conceived: First, that its primal origin was miraculous, a break in the law of continuity (a theory that no scientist could entertain); second, Lord Kelvin's suggestion that the first germs of life were borne to earth on a meteorite (which only changed the *locale* of the problem), and third, the possibility that life had arisen by natural processes from lifeless matter, which Dr. Saleeby calmly asserts is the only possibility that could be seriously entertained. He does not state to what "natural processes" he refers, nor how he explains the "break in the law of continuity" that would be caused by the evolution of life from lifeless matter.

The law of continuity, if carried out to its logical conclusion, would prevent the necessity of seeking for the origin of life, and would involve a fourth theory, that life in some form, latent if not active, had always existed and showed itself, as both Spencer and Huxley conjectured, in alternate eras of evolution and dissolution, activity and repose. This would be in line with that ebb and flow of energy that we see in all things, and would make life but the continuous expression of universal force, "the manifested God in nature."

If motion be identified with life, there can be no such thing as life less or dead matter in the universe. The pebble that we carelessly kick from the path must have within it some portion of that "cosmic energy" of which Huxley speaks, which, in the form of the force we call cohesion, holds the mineral particles together and prevents their falling into dust and being borne away upon the wings of the wind. If we watch a still pool on a cold autumn day we may see the motion of the slender needles of ice as they dart across its surface and fall into ordered lines as if at the noiseless mandate of life within. Or we may study the different substances that spring into visible form out of the solutions in the chemist's laboratory, see "the left-hand" crystals dissolve and disappear, and presently reemerge into shape as "left-hand" crystals again in obedience to unvarying law. Do not the laws of motion even here appear to be also the laws of life?

In a lecture of the current year, Professor Robert Austen, F.R.S., speaks of "certain phases in the life-history of metals," showing that metals and alloys really present close analogies to living organisms, and says that a future generation will speak of the evolution of metals as we do now of that of animals, and that observers will naturally turn to the sun as the field in which this

evolution can best be studied. But this study is not only to be conducted through the spectroscope, but it is to be concerned with all the phenomena of light and heat and electricity, of which the sun is the great reservoir. Dr. William Benjamin Carpenter thought that "solar radiation is the *vis viva* of our whole microcosm," and Mayer, the great German writer on the correlations of force, says (after speaking of light and heat as modes of motion), "Quiescence is darkness and death; motion is light and life."

Huxley defines a germ as "matter potentially alive, and having within itself the tendency to assume a definite living form." There is matter for endless discussion here, especially in the defining of the word *tendency*. It stands here for the formative power of that cosmic energy which is the life-principle of the universe, for one with the life-impulse that forces the germ to grow must be the Intelligent Power that teaches it how to grow. Dr. Carpenter calls this tendency "the directive agency" in the germ, and says that it "rather resembles the control exercised by the master-builder than the force of the workingman he employs," although he nowhere refers to it as an *intelligent* impulse, but leaves us to consider this most important of all the elements of growth as something to be taken for granted. Nevertheless he takes care to point out that no combination of albumen and gelatine, fats and starch, salts and bone-earth, could make a living man without this "constructive agency" inherent in the germ from which his bodily structure is evolved. This constructive power Carpenter considers as belonging to the germ itself, and inherited from its progenitors — surely a foreshadowing of Weismann's "eternal cell." Its parallel in the "inorganic" world would be that fundamental difference in properties which constitute the distinction between one substance and another, and by virtue of which each "behaves" in its own characteristic manner when subjected to new conditions.

There is no better illustration of the conservation and correlation of forces, in the organic world, than the process of germination as exhibited in the seeds of plants, every one of which is a minute chemical laboratory. A seed consists of a partially developed germ and a store of nutriment provided for its first needs. To set the complex processes of growth in motion we must have the two elements that the old philosophers said produced the universe — heat and moisture. Then ensues a succession of chemical changes, which converts insoluble starch into dextrin and sugar, and these combine with the albuminous and oily materials of the seed to form protoplasm, which is converted into various forms of organized tissue by "the vital activity of the germ," to use Dr. Carpenter's phrase for the directing force that makes these changes. But the threefold and fourfold compounds produced by plants, such as chlorophyll, etc., do not come from a direct union of their elements, but the simpler twofold substances have to be decomposed in order to form them, because in this act of decomposition certain chemical forces are set free in that peculiarly active condition known as "nascent energy." Or, as Professor Joseph Le Conte puts it, the simpler compounds, in falling, as it were, to the plane below them, create an amount of force which raises another portion to the next higher plane of

organized tissue. So that we learn to recognize death as but a step to a higher form of life.

The decay continually going on during the life of a plant restores to the so-called "inorganic world" in the form of carbonic acid, water, and ammonia, part of the materials drawn from it, together with a certain amount of heat generated in the process of decay, thus restoring to the lower plane not only the materials but the forces which built up the vegetable fabric.

The same liberation of carbonic acid goes on in the egg as in the seed, the same return of a portion of its substance to a lower condition that force may be set free to raise another portion to a higher state. Everywhere we see the action of the same laws of life and motion, the minerals broken up to feed the plant, the plant making new combinations which nourish the higher animals, and these again restoring to the soil the materials of richer growth. What we call death, then, in the vegetable or the animal world is really but a transformation of life, not an absence of it, and if there is no such thing as death in the lower conditions of being, why should we predicate it of the higher. Light and heat produce food and warmth, food and warmth build up the bodily tissues, and stimulate the nervous system and the power of thought.

The delicate appliances of our modern laboratories measure the amount of wasted tissue accompanying mental labor, as well as that which accompanies physical exertion. But is there not, besides these well-defined changes in the brain and nerve-tissue, an ebb and flow of energy of which we are but too conscious when it diminishes, and which we are in the habit of calling vitality or nervous force? The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table, who was wise and witty in so many ways, said once that it is better to lose a pint of blood from your veins than to have a nerve tapped. "Nobody measures your nervous force as it runs away," he said, "nor bandages your brain and marrow after the operation." Huxley has said that "every amount of nervous action is accompanied by a certain amount of electrical disturbance in the particles of the nerves in which that action is carried on." Three hundred years ago Paracelsus declared that there was a nerve-fluid or vital force equally distributed through all parts of the human body. This "vital force," if one may be allowed to assume its existence, appears to be more directly correlated with electricity and magnetism than with other forms of energy, and can often be reinforced by a galvanic current. Grove's saying that the excitability of a nerve is weakened or destroyed by the transmission of electricity in one direction, but increased by its transmission in the opposite direction, points to a change of polarity in the nerve-cells. This change of polarity must be the result of an altered rate of vibration in the molecules of the cells. The molecules of all substances in nature are throbbing with life, that is, they vibrate at a certain rate, and this rate may be altered by many agents and in many ways, according to the character of the substance, as "the sensitive flame" will respond to the vibrations of certain notes, or may be extinguished altogether by too great a volume of sound. Beyond molecular motion we have atomic energy, and while the molecules of the physical cells

act under the laws of the correlations of physical force, the atoms, which have been called “the souls of the molecules,” are influenced alone by the laws of the mental plane. Professor George Trumbull Ladd, of Yale University, goes so far as to call atoms “super-sensible beings,” and asserts that the phenomena of human consciousness must be regarded as the activities of some other form of Real Being than the moving molecules of the brain. Eastern science has always regarded the atom as an independent entity, and explains that no sooner do two or more atoms unite to form molecules and cells than these cells become endowed with consciousness, not the self-consciousness that we alone recognize, but other forms of various kinds, according to the nature of the cell, which has also freedom to act within the limits of law. Of course each condition of matter and each form of consciousness, as well as every mode of force, is governed by its own special laws of action, and has its own place in the infinitely graded scale of being, a scale, moreover, that leads step by step without a break from the lowest possible form of life to the highest.

For human eyes the upper rounds of the great ladder are lost in the darkness veiling the Absolute and Unknowable, of whom no man may speak. “Light is the first begotten and the first emanation of the Supreme, and Light is Life. Both are Electricity — the life-principle, the electric vivifier of all things. . . . Within its beams lie the beginnings of all physical and chemical action, and of all cosmic and spiritual phenomena. . . . The sun is not the *cause* of either light or heat, but merely the focus, or, as we might say, the lens by which the rays of the primordial light become materialized, are concentrated upon our solar system and produce all the correlations of forces.” (*Isis Unveiled*, I:258.)

The Eastern philosophy recognizes a distinct vital principle independent of the organism, material of course, as *physical force cannot be divorced from matter*, but of a substance existing in a state unknown to science. Life, for this philosophy, is something more than the mere interaction of molecules and atoms. There must be a vital principle, without which no molecular combination could ever have resulted in a living organism.

As we may find all forms of propagation down to the simplest division of the cell still existing upon earth, and as “spontaneous generation” must have existed at some far-away epoch in the history of the world, it is quite possible that our scientific men may yet succeed in detecting it. Only the occult philosopher would maintain that the simplest cell or “radiobe” that would “swim into their ken” under the most powerful of their microscopes, would be a unit of life resulting from the combination of elements and forces that in themselves were a part of the great Ocean of life. And if we can trace the action of electricity in some form or other through all the planes of being up to its correlation with the mightiest of all forces, Thought and Will, must not these also be eternal? If the life-force that started upon its planetary round when the sun’s rays first fell upon a consolidated and cooling earth is still working out its destined mission, how can we admit for the power of Thought, the Will to raise ourselves and all men from a lower to a higher level of achievement, a less

permanent existence? And as we cannot think of the agent as less powerful and persistent than his act, how can we ascribe to the thinking principle in man any thing less than an endless existence, varied it may well be, in outward form, but still intrinsically the same, as the unit of force that begins as a ray of sunlight blossoms into a flower or a fern, to return to earth as coal, and to be transmuted again into the light and heat of household fires, the basis of the physical life of man.

Wherever there is motion there is life, wherever there is life there is consciousness, not as we know it necessarily, but nevertheless, a consciousness whose winding steps lead onward and upward until they are lost in that Divine Life and Thought from which all nature springs. "The mutable cannot know the immutable, nor can that which lives perceive Absolute Life." But when that unit of life which we call a human soul shall have completed its round of existence, then all forms of consciousness will be made part of itself, and in the words of the Eastern poet, "it beholds the things beyond the sea, it hears the language of paradise, it perceives what is passing in the mind of the ant."

KATHARINE HILLARD.

## A STUDY OF LIFE (3)

### III THE RHYTHM OF LIFE

Any study of the correlations of forces, and especially the relations of the vital force with the rest, leads irresistibly to the conviction that life is almost unthinkable without motion, and that it has its rhythmic changes in every form of being, the orderly sequence of these changes making up what may be called cycles of existence. The existence of a human being, from the first sign of unconscious life in the germ-cell, to the last moment of physical life on earth, has been called “the individual cycle of evolution.” Life is not confined to humanity, however, nor to individual existence of any kind, and so we may recognize great waves of vital energy sweeping outward in ever-widening circles, “like water that a pebble stirs.” In a universe whose wonderful symmetry becomes the more astounding with every step in its study, we are taught by degrees that all its balanced movements have their limit, that the rhythm of life is regular, not intermittent, and that each cycle, from the life-time of the smallest fly, born to sport for a day in the sunshine, to the circling of that sun through all the stations of the Zodiac, has its beginning, its middle, and its end.

In the life of man, the alterations of day and night form the most obvious periods, and then the changes of the seasons, and in a more arbitrary way, the cycles of the years and the centuries. These are time-measures, but they are also life-measures, and besides those set down in the calendar, we know that regular periods mark off our lives, and that the vital force has its ebb and flow as well as its tides. Charles Dickens’s description of the death of Barkis {in *David Copperfield*}, who “went out with the tide,” embodies the almost universal belief among seafaring people that life ebbs with the tides. In Charles Darwin’s *The Descent of Man*, he says that our most ancient progenitors apparently consisted of a group of marine animals, and observes further, that “animals living at about the mean high-water, or about the mean low-water mark, pass through a complete series of tidal changes in a fortnight. . . . Now it is a mysterious fact,” he continues, “that in the higher, and now terrestrial vertebrata, many normal and abnormal processes have one or more weeks as their periods, such as the gestation of mammals, the duration of fevers, etc.”

And Dr. Thomas Laycock, in an essay on *The Periodicity of Vital Phenomena*, says: “I think it impossible to come to any less general conclusion than this, that in animals changes occur every 3 1/2, 7, 14, 21, or 28 days, or at some definite number of weeks.” . . . And it is a physician who states that in health the human pulse is more frequent in the morning than in the evening for six days out of seven, and on the seventh day it is slower.

In other departments of science, the same law seems to prevail; the number of colors in the spectrum, and the notes of the musical scale, for example, are strictly analogous to the scale of chemical elements, in which Lazar, Freiherr (Baron) von Hellenbach says that we find a law of periodicity governed by the number seven, an opinion apparently shared by Professor Crookes. The Kabalists said that all things depend from the seventh, and Hippocrates wrote, nearly fifteen hundred years earlier, that the number seven “tended to be the dispenser of *life*, and the source of all its changes. And as the moon changes her phases every seven days, so this number influences all sublunary things.”

In the first chapter of Genesis, (correctly translated) we are told that “God made the sun to measure out the day, and the moon to measure out the night,” and the Psalmist says: “He appointed the moon for seasons.” Far more is meant by the latter sentence than can be realized at a casual glance, for in studying the rhythm of physical life, we are compelled to admit that it is the moon that measures out its periods, and not only controls the tides, but the ebb and flow of animal life as well. Most students of modern languages have wondered why the moon should be masculine in German, while feminine in most of the other tongues of Europe. Max Müller, in his *The Science of Language*, tells us, to explain this discrepancy, that the moon was originally masculine, and was called the “*Measurer*,” as she was the measurer and ruler of time. In India, Chaldea, and among the early Semitic races, the moon was masculine, while the later Hebrews connected Jehovah directly with the moon as a symbol of the reproductive power in nature. Then came the worship of the moon as of either sex (or both), and finally that solar and lunar worship which divided the nations into warring camps, and originating in the dual aspect of the moon, at last terminated in the separate worship of sun or moon, leading to events described long afterwards in the great Indian epic, the *Mahābhārata*. Even the Fathers of the Christian Church — Origen of Alexandria and Clement of Alexandria especially — looked upon the moon as the symbol of Jehovah, the giver of life in the physical world.

Nor was the moon revered only as the Measurer of Time. Through the coincidence of her periods with all those connected with the bearing of children, she was considered to have great power over all physical nature, and the lunar magnetism was believed to generate life, to preserve and to destroy it, as the goddess herself, the *Diva Triformis*, was worshipped as Diana on earth, Hecate in the underworld, and Luna in the heavens.

The idea of physical life is, after all, the most important one in connection with the moon, and the farther back we go into the records of antiquity the more elevated this symbolism appears. It has followed the usual course of all symbols; formulated by lofty minds, perhaps by Divine teachers, and figuring the most abstract truths, these symbols gradually became associated in the popular mind with purely physical phenomena, or were degraded into puerile superstitions like those connected with the left hind leg of a graveyard rabbit.

We seem to have wandered far afield from the idea of the rhythm of life, but it was in the endeavor to show that we may always get back from what seems a purely physical symbol to the most spiritual conceptions of manifested nature. And whatever symbol we may take, the cross, the egg, the serpent, the cow, the moon, we shall find them all leading us back to their final origin in mankind's desire to formulate its conceptions of the origin and mysteries of LIFE.

In studying the rhythm of physical life, we are necessarily confronted at every turn with the sun and moon, if not with the dawn and the purple twilight. The older the world grows, and the wiser its children become, the closer they approach to the knowledge of the great truths that they learned at their mother's knee, as it were, and straightway forgot again. And so this law of the sevenfold rhythm of all physical life is being taught us today once more, by the latest experiments in the study of vibrations and the grouping of the elements. It is, of course, necessarily dependent, in the first place, upon the idea of the two principles that govern the manifested universe, the active and the passive principle, the fatherhood and the motherhood of Nature, a conception to which all the gods and goddesses of every mythology can be traced. Life — active — and that to which life is imparted — passive; the sun representing all the gods, the moon all the goddesses. Hercules, for instance, with his twelve labors, represents the passage of the sun through the twelve signs of the Zodiac.

The great changes in the surface of the earth are ascribed to a decrease in the velocity of her rotation caused primarily by the influence of the moon, and affecting the inclination of the earth's axis, whereby whole continents are submerged, and new lands brought to the surface. These changes are brought about by the alternate agency of fire, in shape of volcanic upheavals, and water, when the bed of the ocean is changed, causing enormous "tidal waves." St. Peter says (*Horace, Epistles*, book II, Epistle 3, line 7): "The world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished; but the heavens and the earth which are now, . . . are reserved unto fire."

To return to man himself, Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr. has noticed certain physical rhythms in the human system. "There is a natural rhythm to a man's walk," he says, "depending on the length of his legs, which beat more or less rapidly as they are longer or shorter, like the pendulums of certain time-keepers." And the genial Autocrat has written elsewhere of "the two great vital movements preeminently distinguished by their rhythmical character, the respiration and the pulse. It is by no means impossible," he says, "that the regular contractions of the heart may have obscure relations with other rhythmical movements more or less synchronous with their own. . . . In these funeral marches which our hearts are beating, we may often keep step to the cardiac systole more nearly than our poet suspected."

The mention of the human heart suggests the great heart of our solar system, the sun, and that life-energy he sends out into every nerve-center of the vast organism. This vital electricity sent out by the sun, has as regular a

circulation as our blood, and the sun contracts with as exact a rhythm each time the life-fluid returns to its source, as the human heart does. Only it takes the solar life-blood about ten years to complete its circuit. This periodic contraction of the sun is the real cause of the sunspots, which, astronomers have ascertained, increase greatly in number *about* every ten years.

All measures of time repeat themselves, but never precisely in the same way. As the sun moves along the ecliptic and the equinoctial points move slowly but regularly in the opposite direction, so that in the course of some two thousand years he has lost one-twelfth part of his whole journey, it is evident that when he has completed the round, he does not return to exactly the same place in the heavens. So with our minor cycles — the hour returns, but not the day; the day comes back, but not the week; the month returns, but not the year. For all progress follows the line of the spiral, and though we apparently retrace the same road week after week and year after year, we never come back to precisely the same relations with time and space, and unless we willfully tend downwards, those relations will always be on a higher plane than before.

And as with individuals, so with nations, each has its own cycle of growth, Assyria {today parts of Iraq, Syria, Turkey, and Iran}, Greece, Rome, and the other great empires, spring, in the first place, from the casual association of a few {preliterate}; by constant striving towards combination and organization these puny tribes gradually develop a more or less perfect civilization, science, literature, and art flourish, and all appliances for bodily comfort and luxury make life a thing of beauty and ease. Then bodily ease and luxury foster the growth of the senses, obscure the life of the spirit; excess of material enjoyment breeds pride, arrogance, ambition, and the lust for foreign conquest abroad; self-indulgence, overgrown wealth, vice of all kinds at home. Disease increases, stalwart vigor declines; workman can no longer accomplish their normal tasks; soldiers are easily fatigued and panic-stricken. Then comes the dread handwriting on the wall: "God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it"; and the nation slowly crumbles away into ruin, and the place thereof knoweth it no more.

But in the course of time, following those laws of Nature which guide all things towards their end, over the ruins of that civilization another rises, grows into strength and beauty, and then declines and falls. The ancient cities of Greece lie in ruined layers above the Troy of Homer, and that rose in towered beauty over the remains of who knows how many more? Of course, the cycle of a nation's life is not always repeated in the same place, but like the banyan-tree, the mother nation sends out her colonizing branches, which strike their own roots into the ground, and develop a new and vigorous life.

This constantly recurring change, this ceaseless ebb and flow of life, by which all things return, but upon a higher level, is based, as are all natural motions, on the laws of action and reaction. Just so much force exerted, just so much recoil felt, just so much energy expended, just so much waste of tissue in the process. It was an old Greek saying that the Gods sell all things, but at a fair

price, and we can no more get anything, whether material or spiritual, for nothing, however much we may juggle with appearances, than we can make anything out of nothing. There are no bargain counters in Nature's shops. We can have anything we choose to ask for in this world, if we will but pay the price for it, but before we lay down the sum, let us stop and ask ourselves the old question, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

When once we realize the full meaning of the law of cycles, of the constant ebb and flow of life and thought, we shall learn to seize the right moment for action, and come in on the crest of the wave. Shakespeare embodied this idea in that speech of Brutus to his friends: (*Julius Caesar*, Act IV, scene III.)

There is a tide in the affairs of men,  
Which taken at the flood leads on to fortune.  
Omitted, all the voyage of their life  
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.  
On such a full sea are we now afloat;  
And we must take the current when it serves,  
Or lose our venture.

But Brutus, with all his ardor, had yet discretion, and knew that both the hour and the man must be at their best for great results to follow, and therefore he counseled his friends to rest before their attack, that the blow might be the stronger. We must learn not only the times but our selves by heart, if we would master the changing conditions of life, and not stand still and see the great procession of humanity sweep past us, because we could not find our place in it.

And as the greater light measures out the day, and the lesser one the night, and we find ourselves gradually losing our vaunted strength, and see the shadows beginning to close in upon us, let us try to learn the lesson that Voltaire {François-Marie Arouet} strove to teach his friend when he wrote:

Who changeth not with changing years,  
He only reaps the woes of age.

For all things have two sides, and compensation is a universal law. If we mourn the slipping away of youth, with its ardent energy, its readiness to encounter all emergencies, its brave confidence in its own powers, its mirth, its brightness, and its delight in life, let us remember on the other hand, that maturer years bring us wider views, more extensive experience, a keener insight, a wiser charity, a soberer and more unerring judgment. Our relations with our fellows are deeper and more numerous, our knowledge of ourselves more accurate. Through our own failures, we have learned charity for others, and as the years slip by, we should not deplore the failing of our physical powers if the soul has but developed as they have diminished, and with a more

circumscribed field of action has come a broader inward vision, and the sweet serenity and peace that belong of right to old age.

A far greater poet than Voltaire, that Dante Aligheri, who studied so deeply the laws of cycles and the rhythm of life says that our life should follow the movement of the arc of a circle, for the strongest desire of everything is to return to its source, which is God. "And the soul returns to God." (Dante says in the *Banquet*) "as to the port whence she set out, when she first entered upon the sea of this life. . . . And as a good sailor, when he nears the harbor, lowers his sails, and gently, and with feeble headway enters it, so should we lower the sails of our worldly occupations, and return to God with all our mind and heart, so that we may enter our haven with all gentleness and peace."

KATHARINE HILLARD.

## A STUDY OF LIFE (4)

### IV GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

In Herbert Spencer's *Principles of Biology* he makes a careful distinction between *growth* and *development*, words which are but too often used as synonyms. "But *development*," says Spencer, "means increase of *structure*, and not increase of *bulk*, while the word *evolution* comprehends both." No mere accumulation of material substance, such as the heaped-up carbon on the wick of an unsnuffed candle, or the slow increase of sediment in geologic formations, for instance, can be properly regarded as growth. But Spencer seems to believe with the Eastern scientists that crystals grow, and often more rapidly than other bodies. Then why should he not also acknowledge that not only crystals but minerals should be considered to be living bodies? Huxley says (*Darwiniana*, 316) that "the matter constituting the living world is identical with that which forms the inorganic world, and that not less true is it that the forces which are exerted by living beings are either identical with those which exist in the inorganic world, or they are convertible into them," and elsewhere, that "Matter and Force are the two names of the one artist who fashions the living as well as the lifeless." Did anyone ever know an artist without Mind to fashion anything? What can Matter and Force accomplish without a directing Intelligence? And does it not seem more logical, in view of the wonderful phenomena exhibited in the growth of crystals, and the behavior of chemical solutions, as well as in the interdependence of all the kingdoms of nature, to agree with a philosophy which sees the Divine Life inherent in every atom, whether organic or inorganic? In the essay just quoted Huxley says that we must speak modestly about the possibility of originating life, recollecting that "Science has put her foot upon the bottom-round of the ladder." But it is to be feared that Science will have to keep her foot upon that bottom rung until she is ready to acknowledge the existence of Mind as a third factor in all manifestations of Matter and Force.

The very terms "organic" and "inorganic" are gradually ceasing to be distinctive as the phenomena of life are more carefully studied, and *The Standard Dictionary of the English Language* even confesses that "the line of demarcation between 'organic' and 'inorganic' is arbitrary rather than natural." That the nature of so-called inorganic and organic growth is essentially the same, is shown by the fact that both bring about very much the same results, in accordance with the universal tendency towards the union of units that are alike, and the separation of those that are unlike. The deposit of a crystal from a solution is a process of selection from the previously combined atoms, and a union of one class into a solid body, and another class into a liquid solvent. The growth of a tree is a very

similar process: the roots suck up from the earth, the leaves imbibe from the air certain elements akin to those of its own substance, rejecting those that are useless to it, and which go to sustain other forms of life. The process of animal growth does not materially differ from the vegetable, and the whole scheme is a beautiful system of interdependence.

What holds the pebbles at our feet in shape, and prevents their being a mere heap of dust? We call the force which holds their atoms in its grasp "cohesion," and that is but another name for attraction, and attraction and repulsion are at the bottom of all phenomena of force, for they are the two aspects of that motive principle we call *Life*.

"From the bosom of the stone the plant is born," said the old Kabbalists, and as we turn from the mineral to the vegetable world we are confronted with more and more varied conditions of growth as complexity of structure increases, and we may find at one extreme tiny plant-cells that are scarcely visible under the most powerful microscope, and at the other, the gigantic redwood trees of California, or the far-spreading banyans of India.

We may of course say that these larger forms are built up of combinations of the smaller, but the fact remains that as a rule, the smallest plants, which are also the simplest in structure, without root, stem, or leaf, are also incapable of growing larger. Then we come to the question of food, and here the secret of growth seems to unfold itself. If in walking through the fields we crush a puffball beneath our feet, the tiny spores fly in all directions, a cloud of almost invisible particles, mere "centers of development." But if we pick up an acorn and cut it open, we see a well-defined germ surrounded by food enough to start it well on its way to be an oak. Still, size is not so dependent upon food in the vegetable world as in the animal, principally because the expenditure of force is so much greater in the latter. A plant leads an entirely inactive life. "Consider the lilies, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin," {Luke (12:27)} the earth nourishes their roots, the air and the sunlight, and the softly-falling summer rains, give vigor and beauty to leaf and blossom and stem.

But when we come to the animal kingdom many other factors have to be taken into account. The seed has little or no need to expend the amount of force stored up in it, except in the early stages of germination, but the animal is obliged to move about to seek its food, and as it grows, and its bulk becomes greater, it has a greater weight to carry, and must expend more force in the process. Mr. Micawber's {Wilkins Micawber, in *David Copperfield*} statement that, given an income of 20 shillings and an expenditure of 19s and 6d, the result would be happiness, but with an income of 20s and an expenditure of 20s and 6d, result, misery, is another way of looking at the same problem. If an animal doubles its weight, and fails to get food enough to increase its strength in proportion, it will very soon go under in the struggle for existence, and the result, certainly for that animal, will be misery. This antagonism between accumulation and expenditure is one of the causes that determines the possible growth of animals, and though, as Spencer has pointed out, some animals, such as the crocodile, for instance,

seem to grow as long as they live, we generally find that it is because they lead a very inactive existence. The crocodile is almost a cold-blooded creature, to begin with, so that it does not have to expend much of its substance in keeping itself warm. It lies about like a log and waits for its prey, it rarely seeks it. Hence it expends very much less than its income, and the result, according to Mr. Micawber, should be happiness, but happiness, from our point of view, of so low a grade, of so ignoble a kind, that it is doubtful if the crocodile's triumphal balance-sheet would tempt any of us to accept his form of "the simple life."

"Large growth," says Spencer, "implies both that the excess of nutrition over waste shall be relatively considerable, and that the waste and nutrition shall both be on extensive scales." We cannot make large fortunes by investing a few pennies, and a little field-mouse, for example, feeding on a few flies and moths and such grains and seeds as it can pick up, can only increase its growth by very small amounts; even if it were to be lodged in a hollow cheese it could not swallow and digest large amounts of nutriment, and therefore it can never grow to the size of a gigantic rat. A young lion, of immensely greater size than the field-mouse when born, suckled till much larger, and fed till he is half-grown, comes into possession of a power and an organism at his majority, so to speak, which enable him to catch and kill animals big enough to keep up the warmth of the hot blood pouring through his veins, to sustain the prodigious strength of his mighty muscles, strong and flexible as bands of steel, and yet leave a large surplus for increase of bulk. Birds waste more strength in getting from place to place than any other animals, the exertion of flying is so much greater than that of walking or crawling, and among birds we find that the very largest are those incapable of flight, like the ostrich or the great auk. And we know that both animals and human beings who are underfed and overworked while growing are certain to be undersized.

All these facts are connected with the idea of growth as increase of bulk, but when we come to degrees of organization we enter upon the question of *development*, increase of *structure* instead of increase of *bulk*. The first changes that occur in the germ are changes that take place round centers produced by division of the original center. The simplest organisms, like the Amoeba for instance, never go farther than this type, but in some bodies, however simple the units, their formation always takes place round a nucleus or joint. "Gradually," says Matthias Jakob Schleiden, "separate masses of cells with a distinct and definite outline appear in the chaos within (the germ or the leaf-bud) and cease to partake of the general process of growth. They are separating themselves into the different kinds of tissue from which the future leaves are to be formed, their skeleton, and their flesh, so to speak." But all this divergence is a regular and not an irregular process, and the little companies of cells file off to their respective duties like so many well-drilled soldiers acting under the orders of an invisible general.

When we come to the animal kingdom, similar changes take place, from the simple elements to the complex structure. After the first divisions and

subdivisions of the fertilized egg, the first great modelling begins, and the line of the spinal cord is sketched out. As the outlining of the separate organs proceeds the protoplasm of the cells gradually takes on the special characteristics of muscle, liver, nerve, or blood cells, etc. Then comes in what has been called "the biological problem of today." Are we to believe with Weismann that the essential cause of all the future differences in the organism is contained in the original, structureless cell, or are we to agree with Hertwig that the interrelations of the cells to each other, to the whole organism and to the environment in the widest sense of the term, must all act as factors in this differentiation?

There are many facts brought up by Hertwig which seem incompatible with Weismann's theory, and many, of course, which support his own. He would ascribe the orderly sequence of the development of the germ to two kinds of causes; first, the continual changes in mutual relations that the cells undergo as they increase in number, which he would call *centrifugal* causes; and second, the influence of its surroundings upon the organism, which he would call *centripetal* causes.

It is sometimes rather amusing to the lay reader to see the satisfaction of the scientists when they have invented a name for anything, and have settled down to a comfortable contemplation of the problem as completely solved. They have said "protoplasm" and they have said "Matter" and "Force," and they have labelled the absolutely structureless contents of a cell with a score of hard names, and then are obliged to confess that they know no more than the rest of us about either matter or force. It reminds one of Alice's conversation with the Dormouse and the March Hare. "They drew all manner of things," said the Dormouse, "everything that begins with an M." "Why with an M?" said Alice. "Why not?" said the March Hare, and Alice was silent.

The theory of Hertwig that the development of a cell depends largely upon its relations to surrounding cells, and to the influence of its environment, is that of the Eastern philosophy, except that the latter insists upon the Divine creative impulse as inherent in both the germ-cell itself and the forces that mould it. This does not necessitate a belief in what is generally known as "design" or "special creation," but only in the idea of a general ground-plan worked out by Universal Law through the agency of intelligent forces, which are simply builders or masons, working under the impulse given them by the unknown Master-Mason.

From all the great general laws of the natural world we may learn something of the laws of the spiritual world, or may, at least, trace analogies that may be very useful to us. One of the most striking of these lessons is suggested by that primary law of growth which shows it always proceeding from a central point, and, except in the case of the lowest, or mineral kingdom, from within outwards. With all living things it is no process of accumulation from without that helps them on, but an impulse from within, and so it is with ourselves. We may toil painfully after all the 'ologies known to us, we may accumulate great masses of facts and theories, we may study every language known to civilized men, but what good will our treasures of knowledge do us unless we have assimilated and

digested them? There is no use being able to say nothing in seven languages; it would be better to study how to be silent in one. Unless our learning really belongs to us, and we are able to make it part of our intellectual equipment, it simply over loads and clogs the machinery of our thought, as indigestible food over loads and clogs the bodily machine. We so often see a person spending time and strength in the pursuit of some accomplishment or acquirement, of which we know no use will ever be made, it will merely be loaded upon the shelves of memory as we pile up useless furniture in a lumber room.

But the knowledge that really serves us is such intellectual and spiritual food as we are capable of making into a part of our very life, that is bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, wrought by the digestive power of our thought into every fiber of our being. The growth that is from *within* is indeed growth, and not mere accretion; it is not increase of bulk, but increase of structure. It is not bulk, but greater complexity of organization that marks a rise in the scale of being, the intricate complications that fit the creature for more numerous and more elevated functions.

And another lesson from the laws of growth is that to be learned from the minuteness of the origin of living things. Step by step we can trace back the formation of the physical body to the tiny cell from which all life proceeds, and find the almost invisible cause of such a complicated series of effects. So, linked each to each, our thoughts and words and deeds go back to their primitive cause, and the most important actions in our lives may be seen to have had their origin in some chance word or passing thought. "Was that my point of turning?" says the poet; "I had thought the stations of my course should rise unsought, as altar-stone or ensigned citadel!"

But there are always two sides to everything, and if we can trace the beginning of sorrow, of trouble, of confusion, to such infinitesimal or unlikely causes, the sources of good are equally tiny and remote, and we must learn not to despise the day of small things, not to feel that the trifling help we might give, is to be withheld because it is trifling and we are ashamed to offer it. For one of the first lessons taught by the growth of the leaf is the inexorable marshalling of its cells to their various duties. As soon as the leaf-bud pushes out from the stem the cells have begun to give up something of their own completeness, that each may be better fitted to work towards the perfecting of the whole. In the lowest order of animal existence the cells of the jelly-like body can each and all serve every purpose of its extremely limited being; any part of the creature can feed, digest, be cut off, and form another speck of life as limited in its range as the first.

But when it is a question of a rise in the scale of being, then each cell has to relinquish some of its functions that it may do better work for the good of the whole. So instead of a cell that can serve for any of its limited needs, as occasion demands, we have the specialized cells that can do but one thing, but on a much higher scale. We seldom realize how completely our bodies are built up of these little lives, toiling incessantly, not for themselves, but for the — comparatively — vast organism of which they form an infinitesimal part. They line the

alimentary canal, and keep strict watch over the food-substances that enter there, selecting some and rejecting others with unfailing accuracy, if not too much interfered with in their work. The blood is made up of red and white corpuscles, or cells, and while the red are coursing over the body in every direction and carrying life and heat wherever they go, the white cells are doing scavenger work, destroying bacteria and noxious germs, and passing even through the walls of the blood-vessels, as they flit about on their noiseless errands.

All over the body other cells are at their work; is a finger cut, a group of cells hastens to repair the damage, and fill up the fissure with their tiny bodies. While the master of the house sleepeth the ceaseless and untiring work goes on. No cell ever arrogates to itself the work of another, but each works for the good of the whole, and so the organism grows and develops, and rises higher on the ladder of life.

The impulse of growth is from within outwards, and living growth is a matter of assimilation, not accretion. But most important is the lesson that the motive power of all growth is from *within*, and that the mind should be the ruler of the body. As we purify the mind, the body will grow purer. For the desires whose gratification wrecks the well-being of the body, really originate in the mind. Ill-regulated and impure minds form images of purely sensuous delights, and the physical senses are stimulated by the pictures set before them, and cry out for their instant realization. But if the mind is constantly occupied with higher things, if only pure and lofty images are formed by an imagination kept busy with that which ennobles, and not with that which degrades, then the senses are starved into silence, and learn their duty as servants and not masters of the whole.

And as we know that the matter of our bodies is in a constant state of transition, its particles coming and going at every moment, we are more or less responsible for the emanations the body throws off; we have stamped them with our own image, and they go to make up the sum of pure or impure influences in our environment. So that man, by raising the atoms of his own physical body to a higher and purer condition through the elevating power of thought, really raises the average of all living beings, and, in fact, how is any average to be raised except by the lifting of each individual unit of the mass?

We might learn many other lessons from the laws of growth, but after all, is not this the most important one: so to live that the material as well as the spiritual world will be better instead of worse for the sum of the work we have done in it; so to live that after long ages of such work we shall have helped our brothers as well as ourselves to attain unto the stature of the perfect man.

KATHARINE HILLARD.

## A STUDY OF LIFE (5)

### V LIFE AND DEATH

We all know that fundamental law of nature which insists on our keeping in a state of perfect equilibrium the physical and mental balances she has entrusted to our care. So much supply, so much expenditure; so much nutrition, so much possible work; so much exhaustion, so much rest required. There is no falsifying of nature's weights unless we break the scales, and we can do that but once. Herbert Spencer's definition of life was "the continual adjustment of internal relations to external relations," which is, of course, the constant change that brings about the perfect balance.

For this definition Mr. Spencer threw aside his former one, that "Life is the coordination of actions," because like many other definitions that included too much. "It might be said of the solar system," said Mr. Spencer (rather in the tone of one who does not wish to speak disrespectfully of the equator), "that it also exhibits coordination of actions in its regular recurring movements and its self-balancing perturbations." But although Mr. Spencer admits that in the abstract these are as properly comprehended in the idea of life as the changes going on in a motionless, instinctive seed, "yet they are foreign to that idea as commonly received and as here to be formulated." And so for the sake of a common idea and a formula, our philosopher turns his back upon the most magnificent of all displays of life, and leaves it to the prophets and the poets to realize that in the ordered march of the planets and the marshalling of the starry hosts there is the same Life as that which ebbs and flows in the blood of man.

"Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days; and caused the day-spring to know its place? Canst thou bind the sweet influences of the Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion? Canst thou bring forth the Zodiac in his season, or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?" {Job chapter 38}

What an impression of exultant life these words from Job give us!

If we examine Spencer's definition of life as a continuous adjustment, we see that it not only means motion, but orderly motion. The great problem that Newton struggled with in vain, and that Kant tried to solve, was the primitive impulse imparted to the planets, which has been the subject of as much discussion as the origin of life itself. Kant came very near the Eastern theories when he offered as an explanation the existence of a primeval, homogeneous form of matter, of which motion was an inherent quality, and out of which all the heavenly bodies were formed. "This is the informing, ever-present moving-

power and life principle, the vital soul of the suns, moons, planets, and even of our earth."

The origin of our knowledge about the *lowest* forms of life, is comparatively recent, and dates from the time of Antonie van Leeuwenhoek, a Dutch philosopher of 1680, who began the study of yeast under the microscope and found it to consist of minute globular particles, but could get no further with the very imperfect instruments of his time. Nearly two hundred years later (in 1838), the great question of "spontaneous generation" began to agitate the scientific world for the *n*th time, when two chemists, one in Germany and one in France, took up once more the study of yeast, and Theodor Schwann discovered that the yeast-globules were really vegetable cells. How difficult it is to distinguish between the lowest forms of vegetable and animal life, may be seen in Professor William Benjamin Carpenter's description of that interesting creature the Rhizopod, which resembles the definition of the perfect woman as "a being entirely composed of negations." "In the lowest Rhizopod type of animal life," says Professor Carpenter, "a little particle of apparently homogeneous jelly, changes itself into a greater variety of forms than the fabled Proteus, lays hold of its food without limbs; swallows it without a mouth; digests it without a stomach; appropriates its nutritious material without absorbent vessels or a circulatory system; moves from place to place without muscles; feels (if it *has* feeling) without nerves; propagates itself without any reproductive system; and not only this, but in many instances forms shells of an unsurpassed symmetry and complexity; and any number of these beings may be produced from detached particles of a single Rhizopod." And when one gazes at the varied and beautiful forms of the shells produced by this speck of protoplasmic jelly, how impossible it is to agree with Huxley that this infinitesimal architect of abodes so exquisite and so various is "simply a molecular machine of great complexity!"

The point at issue with Henry Charlton Bastian and others, was to prove whether life could spring into being in these primitive forms *spontaneously*, or whether each life must come from an antecedent life. That great genius, Pasteur, not only went over and corroborated all the experiments of Schwann, (proving that his views were substantially correct and that no life appeared in a perfectly protected infusion) but he also proved that different forms of fermentation, even in the same substance, are each caused by a special species of organism, nor will any two of these species ever merge into one another. He also proved that the changes in ferments which he investigated, are physiological and not purely chemical phenomena, that is, they are exhibitions of *life* and growth. And now the old question has come up again, and Professor Jacques Loeb is trying to prove that primitive life is a purely chemical phenomenon.

Life, according to Claude Bernard and Louis Pasteur, is nothing else than a process of fermentation. Putrefaction is not possible under conditions precluding the development of life, or, in other words, there can be no putrefaction where there is not at least potential life, and in 999 cases out of a thousand, this

potential life assumes the actual form of bacteria and vibrios. *Ptomaine*, the alkaloid poison generated by decaying vegetable and animal matter — itself a life — can be generated also by living men, animals, and plants.

So in all nature's processes, do life and death go hand in hand. In their useful manual called *The Evolution of Sex*, Professors Patrick Geddes and John Arhtur Thomson tell us that reproduction, in the beginning, is the sacrifice of a part to save the whole, life literally springing from the arms of death. That is, a primitive organic cell which is becoming exhausted, saves itself by dividing into two or more cells, and even in higher forms we find this continuous ebb and flow of life and growth on the one hand, and reproduction and death on the other. But as another scientist (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe) says: "It is not death that makes reproduction necessary, but reproduction that has death as its inevitable consequence." Weismann says that natural death occurs only among the many-celled organisms, the single-celled forms escape it. There is *no* end to their development which can be likened to death. If death does not naturally occur among the Protozoa, it is evident that it cannot be an *inherent characteristic* of living matter. The chain of life is therefore continuous, and "our bodies are but the torches which burn out, while the living flame has passed throughout the organic series unextinguished. Thus though death take inexorable grasp of the individual, the continuance of the life is still in a deep sense unaffected." (*The Evolution of Sex*, 262.)

This refers, of course, only to the persistence of *physical* life. But if we find through all nature a constant analogy between physical and spiritual laws, is it too much to find such analogy in the case of life also, and to believe that if the physical body can be perpetuated by a never-dying germ-cell, that the soul, the breath of Divine Life which vivifies that cell, can also survive the innumerable changes of its dwelling-place?

In the physical world, there is, strictly speaking, no such thing as death, only a riot of life, as it were, an overplus of energy which disturbs the balance of power in the organism, and causes its speedy disintegration, just as a tribe that has ceased to act together for the good of the whole, becomes a scattering and incoherent assemblage of mutinous men, and is easily destroyed by any attacking force with a single purpose.

Physical death is of comparatively little importance; it is but one step more serious than the change of our garments, or our dwelling-places. Or as if we laid aside a tool that had served us more or less well, as we have kept it in condition and improved our opportunities for using it while we waited patiently for better tools and a higher task.

But mental death is unfortunately quite compatible with physical life, and all the bodily functions may go on and the organs be superbly healthy, with the brain almost wholly inactive. There is little difference between such human beings and the higher animals, and it is a terrible thing when this want of brain development, this mental starvation, lies in the nature of our social conditions, when as a consequence of his surroundings, of the circumstances in which he

is born, a man is compelled to live like the beasts that perish. The one tragedy still more terrible is the spiritual death, when a man persistently ignores or denies the powers of his own soul, and given the choice, deliberately chooses the lower rather than the higher; given the possibilities of the angel, prefers to live the life of the brute. Little by little the diviner powers fade out, the light within grows fainter and fainter, till finally it is a soul-less being that slinks past us in the streets, and glances at us with dull and uncomprehending eyes. For the lowest depth of degradation is to have no consciousness of better things, to be ignorant of the possibility of a higher life. Honoré de Balzac gives us, in his character of Baron Hulot {Baron Hector Hulot d'Ervy in *La Cousine Bette*}, a wonderful representation of a man living solely for the gratification of his senses, and who grows more and more debased with each indulgence, till he loses all consciousness of his own degradation. The great novelist shows us that after all, the most terrible retribution for sin is the growing incapacity for better things, that fathomless slough into which such a soul slowly but surely sinks.

This is death indeed, for it is the inevitable consequence of isolation in evil-doing. The same lesson is embodied in Alfred, Lord Tennyson's poem called "The Palace of Art", where the soul isolates herself, not in vice, but in selfish enjoyment of beauty, apart from the common herd, "those darkening droves of swine that range on yonder plain."

But after a time the terrors of solitude and isolation crowd around her, till she rends her royal robes, and cries for a cottage "in the vale among mankind, where she may mourn and pray." But lest we should think that love of beauty, not the selfishness of that soul, was the evil thing, the last words of the poem are:

Yet pull not down my palace towers, that are  
So lightly, beautifully built;  
Perchance I may return *with others* there,  
When I have purged my guilt.

We shall find the lesson that isolation means death taught everywhere in the physical world, as it is in every part of our own bodies. If certain cells in the body cease to work for the good of the whole, but content themselves with absorbing all they can seize, they soon become overfed, they grow and multiply over fast, and at last their little group has grown so large that there is not blood enough for all of them and the middle cells, the most crowded, begin to die. Then the dead cells have to be cast out, and a "malignant tumor" is formed, to the destruction of the whole organism by a lingering and most painful death.

To come back to higher manifestations of life, the widest sympathy is the broadest life, for after all mankind is one, and there are no real distinctions in life on the spiritual plane, any more than there are in life on the physical plane. There are not many different kinds of life, but in reality One Life pervades the universe and manifests itself in different ways through different vehicles. A

sympathetic person is one whose nature responds more readily to the touch of another's word or thought. The walls of personality have not closed around him so tightly that his soul is shut out from its kin. What the Buddhists call "the Great Heresy" is the mistaken conviction of our own separateness, of our *difference* from other men. The higher we ascend in thought, the more we lose this feeling of separation, and the more we realize our oneness, with all mankind. Humanity is now on the ascending arc, it is leaving behind it the period of its grossest materiality, and is rising gradually towards that spiritual condition whence it came. The feeling of human brotherhood is growing throughout the world; everywhere we see the barriers of caste and creed breaking down and a quicker realization of a common thought, a common purpose, that sways men's souls for good. Have not the last twenty years shown us the most astonishing progress, not only in philanthropic work, but in philanthropic *feeling*, in the general attitude of man to man? And more than this; is there not a closer communication of thought, a possibility of communication without words, a wireless telegraphy of the mind, a swifter intelligence that flashes from eye to eye, an impulse for good, that seizes on a whole community at once? In other words, can we not see, in many apparently unrelated ways, what Maurice Maeterlinck has called "the Awakening of the Soul"? In the chapter so entitled in his *Treasure of the Humble*, he says: "It may be said that we are approaching a spiritual period, a time is perhaps at hand when our souls shall comprehend each other without the intermediary of our senses. There has been in history a certain number of analogous periods, when the soul, obedient to laws unknown, rises, so to speak, to the surface of humanity and manifests, in more direct ways, its existence and its powers. . . . Certainly we must admit in our daily lives, between the humblest of beings, mysterious and direct relations, spiritual phenomena, and a nearness of soul, never spoken of in former times. I am not speaking of spiritualism, of telepathy, nor of other phenomena of the sort, but of the direct relations of one soul with another. Do you know — and it is a strange and disturbing truth — do you know that if you are a bad man, it is more than probable that today your mere presence will proclaim it a hundred times more clearly than two centuries ago. Men judge each other in a way beyond words and acts, and even beyond thoughts, for what they see without understanding it, is situated far beyond the domain of thought."

This is a very significant suggestion, the more so that it comes from one who is virtually a Frenchman, and we have been taught to expect from modern France scientific clearness and precision, but little in the way of spiritual insight. This growing nearness of all mankind, of which Maeterlinck speaks, this dropping of the veils between human souls, this recognition of their unity, is, at the same time, the strongest proof we can have of the spiritual nature of man and his oneness with the Divine. "If we love one another," says St. John, "God dwelleth in us and His love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in him and He in us, because he hath given us of His spirit."

It is needless to dwell upon the idea of death, because there is in reality no death, only a transformation of life. In Greek art, Death was represented as a beautiful youth, the twin brother of Sleep, and therefore a *transient* condition; there were no grisly horrors attached to his image until the gloomy *Danses Macabres* of the middle ages represented him as the conqueror of Life, the relentless enemy of all mankind. That which we call death is but an excess of life, for not one atom in the universe is ever destroyed, it is only passed through an endless series of transformations. If this be true of our physical bodies, how much more evident its truth as regards our spiritual selves! We are drops in the ocean of Life, tossed up against the shore of Time by a beating wave, to glitter for an instant in the sunshine, and then to be merged again in the Great Deep whence we came. We were as truly drops of that ocean before we sparkled for a moment in the sun, as we shall be drops of that ocean forever more. But unlike the water-drops, our brief passage through physical existence gives us a store of experience that we shall never lose. It is as if a golden thread of memory were let down from Heaven to earth that caught the drops as they fell, and turned them into pearls. All we have gathered in our earthly experiences that belongs to the spirit, shall surely survive, written not on the tablets of the brain, but woven into the very texture of the soul itself. The real distinction between life and death was established once and forever by St. Paul, when he said, "the mind of the flesh is death, but the mind of the spirit is life and peace."

KATHARINE HILLARD.

## LETTERS FROM JULIA

It is a good plan sometimes, to examine the statements of other theories than our own, particularly as to forms of consciousness persisting after death, and to compare them with those that theosophical students have been in the habit of considering authoritative. The trouble, however, with all statements of the kind, is, that on such debatable ground one man's word is as good as another's, and no man's experience is of the slightest use to any other man, as nothing seems to us really "evidential" that we have not received from our own consciousness. The most that we can do after studying the cases that the *Psychical Research Society* has garnered up, and those that the host of unassociated ghost—seers, have accumulated, is to try to formulate anew general testimonies as to certain conditions existing upon other planes than ours, and to see if any of this information appeals to our sober judgment, or our conviction of truth.

The worst feature in the old-fashioned "spiritualism" so-called, was its extremely material character. The life after death was described as a mere replica of this one, with its more disagreeable features omitted; with material banquets without consequent indigestions, and with beautiful houses and gardens that apparently kept themselves. Animals were also admitted to this paradise, apparently under the same beatific conditions, and little babies, that had passed out of this life twenty years ago, reported themselves as riding to school on ponies, and appeared never to grow up. "The Summerland" was described with an amount of gush that lent a new terror to death, instead of depriving it of its former ones, and was infested with {absurd} little Indian boys and other impossible creatures who vied with each other in murdering the King's English.

To this very material view of spiritual existence, succeeded a more indefinite, less tangible, but also less sentimental picture of postmortem conditions, if picture it could be called that shape had none, but only a shadowy likeness to things known here. The theory that now appears to be the favorite with the psychic investigators seems to be that the more trivial the phenomena, the more "evidential" they are, that is, the more acceptable as evidence. If a departed spirit ask for his hat, or describe his walking-stick, these utterances are considered subtly precious because they are supposed to give inquiring friends a more perfect conviction of that spirit's identity than any more lofty utterance could, that being less limited as to ownership. So that if the spirit of Emerson were enticed into a seance, and he complained of the absence of pie at breakfast in the region he now inhabited, it would be to that listening circle a stronger

proof of identity than if he had spoken of the eternal verities, or of the adamantine necessities which encompassed him.

More lately, we have had coherent narrations like those Lilian Whiting has reported as given her by Kate Field, narrations based on continuous intercourse with departed friends, marred now and then by touches of the material, but in the main exceedingly plausible, all open, however, to the objection that no one's experience will ever really *convince* another, "neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

A short time ago I came across a little book first published in England in 1897, called *Letters from Julia*. It purported to be a series of letters written automatically by Mr. William Thomas Stead, at the dictation of a lady named Julia, who had died, and these letters were addressed, in the first place, to her friend Ellen who still lived, afterwards to Mr. Stead himself, that they might be published in his periodical called *Borderland: A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research*. They seemed to me both less materialistic and more rational than anything of the kind I had ever read, and for the benefit of those who, like myself, had never seen the book, I have noted down some things that struck me as interesting. Mr. Stead in his preface gives his reasons for believing that these letters are what they profess to be, real letters from the real Julia, who is not dead, but gone before, but into this question of identity it is not necessary for me to go. At present I am concerned only with the *contents* of the letters.

Julia's description of the method of leaving the body, is much like other descriptions of that process which we call death, the brief unconsciousness, the awakening to a feeling of renewed life, of perfect ease, of wonder at the strangeness of all this, and at the impossibility of communicating with the living friends who were present. The most valuable part of her teaching is that existence is continuous, that place is immaterial, that the spiritual condition is everything, that, in fact, no one is really on the earthly plane who lives in the spirit of the Lord, which is love, "To love anyone, truly, really, means that we are putting ourselves in his place, loving him as ourselves; that we desire for him the best, and give up ourselves and our own pleasure in order to secure it for him. This is true love, and wherever you find it, you find a spark of God. . . . Heaven differs chiefly from earth and from hell, in that in Heaven all love up to the full measure of their being, and all growth in grace is growth in love." The *Letters* are written from the point of view of an earnest Christian, using the terminology of the Church, yet they lay great stress upon the absurdity of speaking of a man's "church" as in anyway determining his religion. "You will not find from us on this side any authoritative declaration as to any religion that will be considered as true by all spirits communicating. They are of all stages and phases, and the religion of some will be absolutely unthinkable by others. . . . The degree of a man's love measures his religion. We don't care for the shape of the shutters that shut the light out, nor for the endless discussions as to the windows that let it in. The best window is the one that lets in the most light."

To return to the statements about the life after death, mostly made after a long interval of silence, during which the disembodied spirit was studying its new environment. When the soul leaves the body, generally a painless process, says Julia, it is as naked as at birth. (More so, indeed, as it has discarded the physical body.) The soul-body appears to be conscious from the first, and there is no break in its consciousness, the memory, the sense of identity, even the sex remain, but all is different. When the thought of nakedness crosses the spirit, there comes the needed clothing. "The idea is creative, we think, and the thing is, there is no putting on of garments; there is the sense of need, and the need is supplied. . . . When the soul leaves the body, it remains the same, it retains the mind, the knowledge, the experience, the habits of thought, the inclinations, but the soul, which is the only real self, and has used the mind and the body as its instruments, no longer needs those instruments." The most extraordinary thing to her in the new condition, says Julia, was the difference between the apparent man and his real self, which gave a new meaning of the warning "Judge not." The next great surprise was that of the utter nothingness of the things most prized here, wealth, rank, worth, merit, station, had all passed as a cloud passes, and simply existed no longer.

The first feeling after the passage into another form of life, is not so much fear as great awe and curiosity, writes Julia. And then comes to the newly delivered soul its Guardian Angel, "a kind of other self, a higher, purer, and more developed section of its own personality," to teach it the ways of the new life. "The angel guardian who came to me had wings," writes Julia, "which were unnecessary and unusual, but were the outcome of my own thought, which had always pictured angels with wings, although they were as useless as steam engines to beings who have but to think, and they are there."

One of the great surprises of the new condition is to learn that the physical senses are not so much helps as hindrances to knowledge. "We are on earth as it were with blinkers on." The physical consciousness needs the temporary seclusion of life from the realities of the world of spirits into which it is ushered at death. Hence to close the eyes in death is to lay down the blinkers that limited and confined our vision. Then comes the going forth into the new world. At first Julia walked as she used to walk, only with much more ease, moving among hosts of people who seemed living beings, until she saw them pass through matter, which living beings, of course, could not do. (She did not realize that physical matter existed for her no longer, as she was now functioning in that "fourth dimension," the characteristic of which is permeability.<sup>1</sup>) These beings moved at greatly differing rates of speed, and on being questioned, her guide said that the mind could move as it chose, and her movements depended only on her will. She found that she could leave the earth and soar among the stars, as there was nothing to interfere with her thought and her volition. Her first flight under the direction of her Higher Self took her to a very pleasant world, full of restful peace and contented love. "The place had a placid smile of tranquil joy; the note I remember, the details I will not enter upon." It

was here that she met the friends who had gone before. (She must have died young, they were so singularly few.) And none of them was so close to her as to make her long for them more than all else, or they would have come to meet her when she died. The meeting with them was very pleasant, but it had an element of strangeness in it. They had grown spiritually, they knew more and loved more. There were but five or six, the dearest of them all being a little sister who had passed away many years before. Julia saw her as she had last parted from her, but she was only assuming the child-form to gain recognition. Afterwards she saw her as a young woman. "There is no difficulty in our assuming whatever form we need for the purpose of the moment. I do not mean to say that we could assume permanently any disguise, but we can make ourselves appear for the time what we think we wish to be. We have no need to do so for our own purposes, but when a newcomer arrives, or when we have to manifest ourselves to you who are still in the body, then we need to use this thought-creation, and body forth the visual appearances with which you are familiar."

The beings of the next world have made no sudden changes in their natures, they do not seem to have become angels or saints because they ceased to live on earth. "You are, in the loom of time, weaving the fabric of this world. You make your next life, and you make your life here. You do it day by day, you do it hour by hour. This is one of the truths of all religions, and what all religions teach is truth, but you do not realize it, and you often deny it."

The absolutely subjective nature of the form and clothing of the beings in the next world would solve many of the puzzles that ordinary spiritualism has left unanswered. People you have known, according to Julia, appear to you in their habit as they lived; either you have sufficient memory and imagination to picture all the details or they have done so that you may identify them by the appearance most familiar to you. The greatest difference between this world and the next is that in the latter the consciousness of love is everywhere. "My dear friend, if you had but love enough you would have Heaven where you are. . . . The open secret of Heaven is love. . . . If there were but more love in your world it would be even as ours; for to you also would be given the vision of God. . . . When you think with real feeling and earnestness of another's welfare and long to help him, you do help him."

There is much said in these *Letters* about the soul's need of quiet and meditation. "What the world needs is an arrest of this fretful fever about trivial things which perish with the using. . . . To truly live, you must make time to think; to create for some moments at least, a silence where our own voices may be heard. That is nothing new, but the world seems to be forgetting it more than of old." And great stress is laid upon individual effort, not dependence upon any so-called "spirit guides." "Who will not trust his own soul has lost it," writes Julia. "And who will not rely upon the voice of God in his own soul will seek for it in vain in the voices from beyond the Border."

This is one of the most valuable lessons taught by the little book. Whether written entirely by W. T. Stead, or from the dictation of a disembodied Intelligence, we have no means of proving. There is one rule, however, that is infallible: "By their fruits ye shall know them." A teaching based upon love to God and one's fellows, that insists upon charity and liberality of thought and dependence upon one's Higher Self alone, that lays down no rigid rules of life, but only begs for a few minutes daily of retirement and quiet meditation, in which the voice of the silence may be more plainly heard; a teaching that shows the transitory nature of material things and the reality of the spiritual, and demonstrates the power of Thought and Will, differs in no wise from the doctrines of Theosophy. It is nothing new, as these letters themselves declare, but to see these things from other points of view than our own is sometimes very helpful, and I for one am glad to acknowledge a debt of gratitude to the little book, whether written by an incarnate or a disembodied spirit.

KATHARINE HILLARD.

NOTE

1. See *The Secret Doctrine* (I:251).

## THE STORY OF “SALLY”

A very curious and interesting book was published lately by Dr. Morton Prince of Boston, called *The Dissociation of a Personality*.<sup>1</sup> It was all the more curious because Dr. Prince seemed deliberately to shut his eyes to a very important part of the evidence he had collected. I think that no case of so-called “Multiple Personality” has provided us with an entity so markedly individual, so original, and so spicy as the self-styled *Sally Beauchamp*. The Miss Beauchamp, known to the world at large, was an uninteresting and colorless individual in comparison, and Dr. Morton Prince neglected — may we be pardoned for thinking — an unusual opportunity for the study of a very rare and curious phenomenon. As the case mentioned has been talked and written about in many ways, and given in detail in Myers’ *Human Personality*, but always from the same point of view (that of the scientist and psychologist, studying a case of hysteria in a most complicated form), it may be interesting to look at it from what we may call the immaterial instead of the material side. Miss Beauchamp (as Dr. Prince calls the young lady of 23, who came to him in the early part of 1898) was an extremely delicate person, of neurotic heredity, and very unhappy childhood. Up to the age of 16 she suffered all sorts of nervous strains and shocks, and then ran away from home. As a child she was visionary and morbid, had fits of somnambulism, and often went into trances. When in a comparatively normal condition, which was very seldom, she was a favorite among her friends, and a dignified, dainty and intelligent girl, of the best New England type, a good scholar, and thoroughly well bred. When Miss Beauchamp first put herself into Dr. Morton Prince’s hands, she appeared to him with various phases, which most people would call “moods,” but which Dr. Prince called *personalities*, though I confess but one, the one called *Sally* seems to have a right to that name. For the sake of convenience, the young lady herself was called B-I, her condition under hypnotism B-II, while the entity who afterwards called herself Sally was known at first as B-III.

Another phase, called B-IV, appeared in June, 1899, and was called by Sally “the Idiot.” She was not a person, insisted Sally, only a modification or mood, of B-I. “There are not three of us, and there shan’t be, and that’s all there is about it,” wrote Sally. It was in April 1898, a very short time after Miss B. came to Dr. Prince, and while she was being hypnotized for the first time (when she was called B-II), that B-III first appeared upon the surface, and after a while took the name of Sally Beauchamp and kept it. She had very little control over her limbs at first, and stuttered very badly, but after a while gained complete mastery of her arms and hands, as well as her vocal organs. She soon developed a trick of rubbing her closed eyes, and when asked why she did this, said that

she wanted to get her eyes open in order to see, she had a right to see and she *would* see. Towards the end of June Miss B. had fallen into a very nervous and abstracted state, and was at the mercy of another and a stronger will, a condition of which Sally instantly took advantage. Sally rubbed her eyes and "willed" very hard, and "folded herself up," a term she used for putting herself into a state of abstraction, and for the first time was able to *see*<sup>2</sup>. She wrote to Dr. Prince, "Rejoice with me and be exceeding glad, for I am on the top of the heap at last! Never again shall I be squeezed — never again be bored!" The word "squeezed" she used to denote a peculiar psychical state in which she lost all power to control Miss B., or to manifest herself. Her coming depended largely upon a condition of illness or fatigue on Miss B.'s part. The better and stronger Miss B. felt, the more deeply was Sally imprisoned, or "squeezed," as she put it, and she would give no other explanation. Miss Beauchamp never knew of Sally's existence except as a phase of herself, one half of her mind acting upon another part, or upon her body. Sally's letters she regarded as her own vagaries while in a trance, and when confronted with any of Sally's doings, would say "that after all that was only part of herself!" Sally, on the contrary, always refused to admit identity with either B-I or B-II, and asserted positively that she did not alternate with B-I, but coexisted with her. She knew all Miss B.'s thoughts, but did not share all Miss B.'s acquirements, such as a knowledge of French and shorthand, but declared that this was because she *paid attention* to some things and not to others. What she meant by being bored was, that as all her tastes and desires were the exact opposite of Miss B.'s, she was terribly bored by being obliged to lead Miss B.'s quiet, indoor, conventional life. Sally's desire to get her eyes open meant that only then could she feel anything, or tell into what position a limb had been moved. But let her open her eyes, and join the visual to the other senses, and she could feel everything. So with hearing and the other senses. Sensation could be restored by suggestion, but only for a few hours.

Sally was never hungry or thirsty, had no bodily discomforts, and did not know the meaning of fatigue, of pain, or of ill-health. The other "personalities" were not in the least anesthetic. Sally declared that she never slept, and that she was conscious of all that went on in Miss B.'s brain, of her dreams at night, as well as her thoughts by day. "I don't know exactly what you mean by *dreams*," wrote Sally on one occasion; "Miss B.'s mind is 'going' off and on, all night long. Some of the things she thinks, she remembers when she wakes up, and some she doesn't. If she remembers them, you call them dreams, and the others you don't. I don't see why the others are not just as much dreams as what she remembers." Sally also had much to say of a secondary consciousness that takes note of all things surrounding the main object of attention. This peripheral consciousness, if we may so call it, explains dreams, Sally says, which are for the most part made up of ideas belonging to it, although memories may be woven in with them. While this subconsciousness is asleep, it nevertheless

hears everything, and this is why a mother wakes at the slightest sound made by her child, although she may sleep peacefully through all other noises.

Sally was entirely ignorant of *time*. A day, a week, a month, were absolutely alike to her; "a little while ago," or "a long while ago," were the only divisions of time that she knew. She always asserted that she was "years and years older" than Miss B., but had no more accurate measure of her age than that.

She insisted that her body — that is, of course, Miss B.'s body — did not belong to her, nor was it a part of her any more than her clothes. She felt that she was "just *thought*," without a body, and she seemed to have the conviction that she could exist independently of the physical body if she wished, although she asserted that she was not an "astral" body. "She did not believe in that kind of stuff." Sally did not simply alternate with Miss B., she coexisted with her, but she hated her, and tormented her in every possible way that a mischievous-loving sprite could devise. She stole her money and her clothes, she filled her room with spiders and snakes, she unraveled her knitting, and sewed up her dresses and cloaks, she piled all the furniture on the bed three or four times in a night, and made poor Miss Beauchamp pose as a statue on top of a rickety pile of chairs for hours at a time.

Why should Sally have so tormented her *alter ego*? Because she disliked the studious and indoor life she was forced to lead with Miss B., and because she was very jealous of her; jealous of her superior culture, jealous of the love of her friends, and of the care and attention lavished upon her. "Nobody seems to care what becomes of me," said poor Sally. And so she took it out in devising new torments for her rival. "Do you know what I shall do if you don't write what I asked you to?" she wrote to Miss B. "I shall put a little creepy mouse with cold feet and a long, long twisty tail down your back, and fasten him in so that he will bite you. Consider this, little sister mine, and hump yourself. You don't half appreciate me — not half."

In January, 1900, Sally had been tormenting "B-IV" to such an extent that she had made her ill, and thereby spoilt her own fun, whereupon she wrote to Dr. Prince: "She seems to be getting all tired or sick or something. What shall I do with her? She isn't a real person — I know she isn't; yet one cannot help feeling sorry for her sometimes, she is so perfectly helpless." And again she wrote to Dr. Prince: "Many thanks for your note. Being a brick is loads nicer than gaining a moral victory. I hate morals, and victories, too. Do you know Dickey? *He* doesn't consider me a subliminal at all, on his honor, and I may stay, and he's going to hypnotize me to get at the real subliminal. Isn't it amusing? Will he call it B-V, or will he make it tell him all about me? I think it's awfully funny, but I can't conceive of things being done without my knowledge, even in hypnosis. They never have been, you know, since that very, *very* early time when I used to sleep."

Finally Dr. Prince got Sally into harness, as it were, and made her write her autobiography for him. She went back to her babyhood, and described her

cradle, and even drew a picture of its bars. She remembered learning to walk and to talk, which was very hard at first. "Afterwards I liked it better, for it was 'willing,' you know, the first that I was conscious of." Then she began to feel a sense of opposition, much stronger at some times than at others. This, of course, meant the beginning of the "dissociation." Then came a consciousness, Sally said, of "the child on the surface," so easily diverted, and of herself as the other child who was years and years older, and stronger.

"I remember her thoughts distinctly as separate from mine," said Sally. "Now they are long, long thoughts, that go round and round, but then they were little dashes. . . . Learning to walk was the first experience of separate thoughts. . . . I can remember when I was there, farther back than she can, and therefore wasn't I *the* person? . . . She had visions very often. I didn't, but was conscious of her having them. . . . She believed in fairies; I didn't, and don't." Finally the double consciousness became continuous. Speaking of the other personalities, Sally says: "When I am outside now, they seem to be dead. At least, if they are not, I don't know what has become of them. They aren't in me, because I am always just one. If they were (in me) I should have all their knowledge as well as their memory and feeling, and I haven't. The only real ones are Miss B. and myself; B-II being Miss B. asleep, and B-IV Miss B. rattled."

Sally had made her will (it must have been a curious document!), and she said that B-IV ought to make hers. "Some of the spirits," said Sally (the only time that "spirits" are mentioned or alluded to), "who neglected to do so, are awfully troubled now, and try in every way to atone for their carelessness."

Finally Dr. Prince, by a complicated system of hypnotism and suggestion, succeeded, early in 1904, in fusing B-I and B-IV into what he called "the real Miss Beauchamp." This condition did not prove permanent, but remained unchanged only about two months. From December 1904, with the exception of one slight lapse, the real Miss Beauchamp has been in continuous existence.

But with the resurrection of the real Miss B., poor Sally goes back where she came from, "squeezed" out of existence, and unable to come at will or to be brought at command. Of Sally, her life and her doings, Miss B. knows nothing. Dr. Prince said to her one day, that after all, Sally was only a part of herself, and was a child, not to be taken too seriously. Whereupon Sally wrote: "I'm not a child. If you think I am, you're *terribly* *mistaken*. That comes of having a lot of theories that you fit people to, regardless of what those people really are. It's always your theories you have in mind, not at all the people. You could not make me a part of Miss Beauchamp, not if you tried for fifty years, and she can't do it either."

The Doctor's manuscript of 1904 says that Sally has matured. She says herself that people don't always stay the same age, and she would have it understood that she has developed since this study was completed. She has acquired some knowledge of French, and has partially regained her tactile sensibility.

The book itself, and the modifications of Miss Beauchamp's personality, have been sufficiently reviewed and discussed. But as our psychologists have decided, as a general thing, to taboo all mention of the *soul* of man, they are obliged to leave one very important factor out of their study. It is very easy to say "a split personality," but after all, does it cover the whole ground? "I can remember much further back than she can; then why shouldn't I be *the* person?" demanded Sally. But Dr. Prince thinks we are safe in saying that Sally is the *subliminal* consciousness, which has become highly developed and organized, has obtained finally an independent existence, and is able to lead an individual life of its own.

If we take Sally's own testimony, then we have a unit of consciousness, "just thought," as she said, inhabiting the same body with an entirely different ego, and capable of asserting itself, and of sense perceptions, only under certain limitations. The other one must be in a decidedly nervous and weak condition, and Sally must "fold herself up," to use her own picturesque language, or become abstracted, must "will very hard," and must rub her eyes a great deal, before she could see, that is, could add the visual images of her surroundings to her mental life. From the time she got her eyes open to the present (1900), says Dr. Prince, she has had a spontaneous and independent existence, and always refers to events as being before or after she "got her eyes open." Nevertheless, she declares more than once that she is years older than Miss Beauchamp.

If the "subliminal" theory does not fit all the facts in the case, there is the spiritualistic doctrine of "possession," and more than one theosophical explanation.

KATHARINE HILLARD.

#### NOTES

1. Longmans, Green & Co., New York.
2. A Spiritualist friend tells me that spirits cannot see things or people on this plane, except by using the eyes of a medium. They can perceive the presence of their friends, but cannot see their faces.

## AN OLD FLEMISH MYSTIC

[TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF MAURICE MAETERLINCK. (MUCH CONDENSED.)]

The life of John Van Ruysbroeck was like that of most great thinkers, entirely interior; he said of himself, "I have nothing to do with the outside." Nearly all his biographers, Laurentius Surius among others, wrote almost two centuries after his death, and their work seems altogether legendary. They show us a saintly hermit, silent, ignorant, extraordinarily humble, extraordinarily good, living, all unawares, in the midst of miracles. The trees under which he went to pray to God, shone with an aureole; the bells of a Dutch convent tolled of themselves upon the day he died, and his body, disinterred five years after his soul left it, was found intact, and giving forth marvelous perfumes that cured the sick brought from the neighboring villages. We can put in a few lines all that is historically certain. He was born in the year 1274, at Ruysbroeck {Ruusbroeck}, a little village near Brussels, Belgium. He was first a vicar of the Church of St. Gudula; then, by the advice of the hermit Lambert le Bègue, he retired to Groenendaal Abbey (Green Valley), in the Forest of Soignes in the neighborhood of Brussels. Holy companions soon joined him there, and he founded with them the Abbey of Groenendaal, the ruins of which are still visible. It was in this retreat, that drawn by the strange rumors of his theosophy and his superhuman visions, many pilgrims, the Dominican Johannes Tauler and Geert Groote among others, came from Germany and Holland, to visit the humble old man, returning filled with an admiration that has left its traces for us in their works.

He died, according to the *Necrologium* of the monastery, on the 2nd of December, 1381, at the age of 107, and was given by his contemporaries the name of "the Admirable."

This was the century of mystics and the epoch of gloomy wars in Brabant and Flanders. St. Bonaventura and St. Thomas Aquinas had just died, and Thomas à Kempis went to study God in that mirror of the Absolute which the illuminated Fleming had left in the depths of the Green Valley, while later on, the painters Jehan de Bruges {Jan van Eyck}, Hubert Van Eyck, Rogier van der Weyden, Hugo van der Goes, and Hans Memling were to people with figures the desert world of the hermit.

He left an enormous quantity of writings — to analyze them all would be difficult, monotonous, and useless. All his books treat exclusively of the same thing, a theosophy of Ruysbroeck's own, a minute study of the introversion and introspection of the Soul, the contemplation of God above all images and similitudes, and the drama of the Divine love among the solitary summits of the spirit.

Many books are more regularly beautiful than *The Adornment of the Spiritual Marriage*, many mystics more helpful and more opportune than John of Ruysbroeck (the Admirable), Emanuel Swedenborg and Novalis {Georg Philipp Friedrich von Hardenberg} among others. He has no external order, no scholastic logic. He often repeats himself, and often seems to contradict himself. He ignores most of the artifices of language, and seems to be only able to speak of the Ineffable. He undertakes to teach us what passes in God, and gives us pages that Plato could not have written. We must not expect a literary work from him, we can only trace the convulsive flight of a blind and wounded eagle above the snowy mountain tops. I think that only those who have lived intimately with Plato and the Neoplatonists of Alexandria, will get very far in these books. Most readers will feel as if they had entered the void; they will have the sensation of an uninterrupted fall into a bottomless abyss, between black and slippery rocks. There is neither light nor air of the ordinary kind in this book, and its spiritual atmosphere is quite unendurable to those who are not prepared for it. To enter here one must be in a philosophical mood as different from the common condition, as the waking state is from the sleeping; and Porphyry in his *Principles of the Theory of Intelligibles* seems to have given the proper warning to be put at the beginning of this work. "By the intelligence we can say many things of that principle which is superior to the intelligence. But intuition serves us much better in the absence of thought than by thought. It is like sleep, of which we can speak, when awake, up to a certain point, but of which one can only get knowledge and perception through sleep. In fact, the like is only known by the like, and the condition of all knowledge is that the subject becomes like the object." I repeat, it is difficult to understand this without preparation. The philosophical imagination is a faculty which develops very slowly. We find ourselves here suddenly standing on the confines of human thought, and far within the arctic circle of the mind. It is extremely cold, and extremely dark, and nevertheless you will find nothing but flames and light. But to those who come here without having prepared their souls for these novel conditions, this light and these flames will be as dark and as cold as if they were only painted ones. It is a question of a very profound science, not of a dream. Dreams are not unanimous; dreams have no roots, while the radiant flower of divine metaphysic blossoming here, has its mysterious roots in Persia and in India, in Egypt and in Greece. And nevertheless it seems as unconscious as a flower, and knows nothing of its origins.

I know the judgment that most men would pass upon this book. They would see in it the work of a haggard solitary, a monk beset with hallucinations, and consumed with fever and fasting. But some will recognize without difficulty, that far from being crazed by hunger, solitude, and fever, this monk possessed on the contrary, one of the keenest, most exact and most subtle philosophical minds that have ever existed. He knew nothing of Greek, and probably not much of Latin. He was alone and poor. And yet in the depths of that Brabant Forest {Forest of Soignes}, his ignorant and simple soul received,

unconsciously, the blinding reflections of all the solitary and mysterious summits of human thought. He knew, although unaware of it, the Platonism of Greece, the Sufism of Persia, the Brahmanism of India, and the Buddhism of Thibet; and his marvelous ignorance rediscovered the wisdom of buried centuries, and foresaw the science of centuries yet unborn. I might quote entire pages of the *Avesta* with its *Zand* (commentaries), of the Kabbala, of the Gnostics, of Porphyry, Plato, and Plotinus, whose almost divine substance would be found intact in the writings of this humble Flemish priest.

But the organism of their thought differs strangely. Plato and Plotinus are, above all, masters of dialectic. They arrived at mysticism through reasoning. They used the discursive mind, and seemed to distrust the intuitive or contemplative soul. But it is within ourselves that are found things not contained in any of the philosophies, and as soon as we are no longer obliged to formulate the mysteries within us, we are more profound than all that has been written, and greater than all that exists. However it may be, the mystic verities have a strange superiority to ordinary truths in that they can neither grow old nor die. They have the immunity of Swedenborg's angels (who constantly tend towards the springtime of their youth, so that the oldest angels seem the youngest) and whether they come from India, from Greece, or from the North, they have neither country nor birthday; wherever we may meet them, they seem as immovable and imminent as God himself.

But words were invented for the ordinary uses of life, and are unhappy, disquieted, and astonished as vagabonds around a throne, when from time to time some royal soul tries to lead them forth. And, on the other hand, is the thought ever the exact image of the unknown something that gave it birth, or is it not always the shadow of a struggle that we watch in it, like that of Jacob with the angel, the more confused as the stature of the soul differs from that of the angel?

This book is not too far from us; it is probably at the very center of our humanity; it is we who are too far from this book; and if it seems to us as discouraging as the desert, and if divine love appears terrible therein, and the thirst of the summits intolerable, it is not the book which is too ancient, but we who are too old, perhaps, and sad, and without courage, like old men round a child; and it is another mystic, Plotinus, the great pagan mystic, who was probably right when he said to those who could see nothing from the heights of introspection: "We must first adapt the organ of vision to the object we would contemplate. The eye could never perceive the sun, had it not first taken on the form of the sun; so the soul cannot see beauty, unless it first becomes beautiful, and all men should begin by making themselves beautiful and divine, in order to be able to see the beautiful and the divine."

Here ends Maeterlinck's introduction to *The Adornment of the Spiritual Marriage*. As he admits that the first twenty chapters of the first book are tedious and full of platitudes, it will, perhaps, be best to give the prologue to the second book, in which Ruysbroeck's theme, "Behold the Bridegroom

cometh, go ye out to meet him" (Matthew, 25:7), is explained for the second time.

"The wise virgin, that is, the pure soul, who has renounced the things of this world, and lives the life from God in the virtues, has drawn from the vessel of her heart the oil of charity and divine works by means of the lamp of a stainless conscience. But when Christ, her bridegroom, withholds his consolations and the renewed effluence of his gifts, the soul becomes sleepy and drowsy and dull.

In the middle of the night (that is, when it is least expected), a spiritual cry resounds within the soul, "*Behold*, the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him." We shall speak of this *vision* and of the interior coming of Christ, and of the spiritual going forth of the man to meet Jesus, and we shall elucidate and explain the four conditions of an interior, lofty, and desirable life to which all may not attain, but many do, nevertheless, thanks to the virtues and to the internal courage.

In these words (of the text) Christ teaches us four things. First, He desires that our souls should be illuminated with a supernatural light; this we notice in the word *Behold*. (In the French, *See*.) In the next words He shows us what we ought to see, that is, the coming within us of our bridegroom, the Eternal Truth; it is this that we see when he says "*The Bridegroom cometh*." In the third place, He orders us to carry into outside things our interior life according to the law of righteousness, and this is why He says, "*Go ye out*." In the fourth place, He shows us the end and motive of all endeavor, the meeting of our bridegroom, Jesus Christ, in the bliss of the divine unity. Now let us speak of the first word. Christ says, "*Behold*." Three things are needed by him who would have the supernatural sight of interior things. The first is the light of divine grace, more sublimely felt than it can be in the outer and active life with no internal activity. The second is a forsaking of all preconceived ideas, and a stripping of the heart, so that the man may be free from false conceptions, from attachments, and from all creatures. The third is a setting free of the will, by means of the concentration of all the bodily and the spiritual forces, and a deliverance from all inordinate affections. So that the will may flow into the unity of God and the unity of all thought, and the reasoning being may obtain and possess in a supernatural manner the sublime unity of God. It is for this that God created the heavens and the earth, and all that is therein.

Now consider attentively: there are three kinds of natural unity in all men, and besides these, there are the supernatural unities of the righteous.

The first and the supreme unity of man is in God; for should men be separated from God in this world, they would fall into the abyss, and become nothing. But without our cooperation, this unity would make us neither saints nor happy men. It is part of ourselves, and yet above us, like a beginning and support of our essence and our life.

Another unity or union exists in us naturally. It is the unity of supreme forces, as far as they originate naturally in the unity of mind and thought. It is

the same unity as that which is immanent in God, but in Him it is part of His essence, in us it is an active principle. Nevertheless, the mind is entire in each unity, according to the integrity of its substance. We possess this unity in ourselves, above the emotional nature; and from it is born memory, intelligence and will, and all the power of spiritual works. In this unity, the soul is called *mind*.

The third unity which is part of our nature is that fund of bodily forces in the unity of the heart, which is the source and origin of physical life. The soul possesses this unity at the living center of the heart, and from it come all bodily functions, and the five senses, and from it the soul takes its name (*âme, anima*), for it is the source of life, and animates the body, that is, it forms it and keeps it alive. These three unities are in man's nature, as one life and one kingdom. In the inferior unity man is a physical and emotional being, in the intermediate, reasonable, and spiritual; and in the superior unity, he really lives and has his being. And these exist in all men, as part of their being.

Now we will say how this triple unity is adorned more sublimely and cultivated more nobly by interior effort joined to the active life. When man, thanks to love and right intention, raises himself in all his actions and all his life, towards the honor and glory of God, and seeks repose in God above all things, he will await in humility and patience and in the abandonment of self and the hope of new riches and new gifts, and he will be ever indifferent as to whether it will please God to grant him these gifts or to refuse them. In this way he is prepared to receive a life of interior desires, and when he is ready, into this well-prepared soul is poured a noble wine. There is no vessel more noble than the loving soul, nor beverage more necessary than the grace of God. Man offers thus to God all his actions and all his life, with a simple and upright purpose, and with "a repose higher than his purpose, higher than himself, and higher than all things, in that sublime unity where God and the loving spirit are united without intermediary."

One more extract from *The Adornment of the Spiritual Marriage* will show how beautifully the old Flemish mystic uses the things of nature, the birds, the flowers, the insects, for illustrations of his thought. He has been speaking of obstacles in the way of spiritual well-being. "Observe the wise bee," he says, "and do as she does." She lives in a unity made up of an assemblage of beings like herself, and she does not go out in a storm, but when the weather is calm and serene, in the bright sunshine, and she flies towards all flowers where she might find honey. She does not linger on any flower, neither for beauty, nor for sweetness, but she gathers from them honey and wax, that is to say, the sweetness and the substance of their purity, and she brings them back to the unity which is formed by the assembly of the whole hive, in order that the honey and the wax may be made fruitful.

"Now the wise man will act like the bee, and he will soar on high that he might dwell with attention, intelligence, and prudence upon all the gifts, and upon all the sweetness, that he has experienced, and upon all the good that God

has done to him, and thanks to the ray of love, and of the inner perception, he will find a multitude of consolations and of good things. And he will rest upon none of these, but laden with gratitude and thanksgivings, will direct his flight back to the unity wherein he would dwell forever, to repose in God for all eternity."

KATHARINE HILLARD.

## **MADAME GUYON**

{JEANNE-MARIE BOUVIER DE LA MOTTE-GUYON}

A copy of the autobiography of Jeanne Marie Bouvières de la Motte, afterwards Mme. Guyon, lies before me, printed in Dublin in 1775, and the anonymous translator takes great credit for his liberality in being willing to publish the merits of a French saint, and a Roman Catholic at that. “Shall we utterly despise and cast away all the experience and leadings of a chosen Vessel,” he asks, “because the product of a French soil and foreign clime? Because she was born in a Romish Country and bred a Papist, shall we exclude her . . . from a place among the great multitude which stand before the Lamb?”

Probably the psychologist would not accept all the phenomena of Jeanne’s childhood as pure saintliness in the bud, but would lay many of the occurrences that set her apart from other children, to the account of physical weakness, and the sensitiveness of an overwrought nervous system. For some time after her birth the child’s life trembled in the balance, and she was always delicate. At the tender age of two-and-a-half she was put under the care of the Ursuline nuns, and a year or two later she was transferred to the Benedictines. After a time she was taken home, where she was left almost entirely in the charge of servants. Before she was seven she had become “a show pupil,” and delighted in wearing a miniature nun’s habit, and practicing all sorts of childish austerities. While at home she was sent for one day to amuse the exiled Queen of England, who was charmed with the beauty and precocity of the child, and wanted to take her and bring her up as a maid of honor. Fortunately her father refused to let her go, and sent her back to the Ursulines, where her half-sister tenderly watched over and taught her. Her other stepsisters and brothers were not so congenial, and the brief intervals of her visits to her father’s house were made miserable by their jealousies. At ten she was transferred to the Dominicans, where for the first time she happened to come across a Bible, which she pored over for many days.

Her mother took more interest in her as she grew towards womanhood, and her grace, her beauty, and her wit began to be admired by all. Her father refused several offers of marriage for her before she was twelve years old, at which age she first partook of the communion, although her religious nature was not yet really developed. Her desires were fixed upon her own salvation, rather than the helping of others to reach perfection, although she performed the outward duties of the religious life, visiting the poor, and spending much time in the study of religious books. Her faults were in the strictly French sense, the defects of her qualities. Perpetual admiration of her intellect, her beauty, and her grace, naturally made her vain, a fault increased by the attention fixed

upon herself, and fostered by the outward routine of the convent, and the worldly incense of her mother's *salon*. The austerities she prescribed for herself made her very irritable, and when she missed seeing her cousin, de Toissi, who was considered a great saint, and who called at her father's house on his way to take up missionary work in Cochin China {southern Vietnam}, she was so grieved that she cried all the rest of the day and the whole of the following night. May we be pardoned for thinking that de Toissi's sanctity could not have been the only cause for so much emotion, especially as about a year afterwards, she became very much attached to a relation of her father's, an accomplished young gentleman who wished to marry her, but her father thought him too near of kin. This disappointment had a very bad effect upon the seeds of devotion just springing up in her heart, and as she herself says in her autobiography, "I left off prayer, whereby I became cold toward God, and all my old faults revived, to which I added an excessive vanity, and I began to pass a great part of my time before a looking-glass . . . This made me so inwardly vain, that I doubt whether any other ever exceeded me therein, but there was an affected modesty in my outward deportment that would have deceived the world." And she spent whole days and nights in reading romances, in which she was encouraged "by the fallacious pretext that they taught one to speak well!"

Just before Jeanne was fifteen her father took his family to Paris. Here Monsieur Guyon, a man 38 years of age, and very wealthy, sought her in marriage. Her father, without consulting her in any way, gave his consent, and this child of fifteen became the wife of a man she had seen but three times before the ceremony, and who was in every way unsuited to her, besides being decidedly her inferior intellectually. But the crowning misfortune of the marriage was the character of M. Guyon's mother, who seems to have combined the worst traits of all the objectionable mothers-in-law ever known. She was coarse, avaricious, and hard hearted, and considered the elegance and refinement of her young daughter-in-law to be an intentional reflection upon her own manners, if she could be said to have any. If Mme. Guyon spoke, she was reproved for forwardness, and roughly silenced, if she kept still, she was accused of haughtiness and pride, and was scolded from morning till night. As she was not allowed to visit, her own mother complained that she did not come to see her often enough, so that poor Jeanne was abused, not only by her husband's relations, but by her own family as well. Before she was sixteen her spirit was completely broken, and she sat in company in a stolid silence. Her husband was a martyr to gout, and before they had been married four months, he had a severe attack, through which she nursed him faithfully. He generally had two attacks a year, each lasting about six weeks, during which periods he was confined to his bed. When one thinks of the irritability that is so constantly associated with gout, one cannot help feeling that the poor girl was sorely tried. As she says herself, "great crosses overwhelm and stifle all anger at once, but a continual contrariety irritates and stirs up a sourness at the heart." Mme. Guyon herself became very ill, and was more than once at the point of death.

About this time her husband met with great pecuniary losses, but she had passed through so many trials, that all love of riches had long since died out in her. She visited the poor, took care of the sick, and sought for spiritual help from every source that she could find. A lady who was an exile came to stay at her father's house, and told her that she had all the virtues of the active life, but had not yet attained the simplicity of prayer which she herself experienced. But Mme. Guyon could not understand her. She was still trying to get by her own efforts what she could only acquire by ceasing from all effort.

About this time her missionary cousin, de Toissi, returned from Cochin China, and this lady and he understood one another immediately, and conversed together in a spiritual language, which she could not comprehend, although she admired it. He would fain have taught her his own method of prayer, but she was not yet prepared for it. No sooner had he left her father's house, however, than she met a very religious man of the order of St. Francis. He had intended going in another direction, but a secret power changed his design, and Mme. Guyon's father insisted on her going to see him. He had just come out of a five years' solitude, and was much confused at being addressed by two women, for ever mindful of *les convenances* {accepted conventions, social proprieties} she had taken a relative with her. For some time he did not speak, but Mme. Guyon told him in a few words all her difficulties about prayer. He presently replied: "It is, Madam, because you seek *without* what you have *within*. Accustom yourself to seek God in your heart, and you will find him." Having said these words, he left her. The advice brought into her heart what she had been seeking so many years, or rather discovered to her what was already there, though she had not known it. Nothing now was more easy to her than prayer, and once engaged in it, hours passed away like minutes. From the hour of her interview with the Franciscan monk she was a mystic, she had exchanged the active life for the meditative. This change took place on the Magdalen's day, July 22nd, 1668, when she was a little over twenty. She now bade farewell to all her old pleasures and amusements, such as they were, and settled down to a quiet life, and the care of the temporal as well as the spiritual good of those around her. She was especially absorbed in the desire to be wholly God's and by the destruction of her own will to achieve union with the Divine. It was much the same thing as the doing away with the sense of separateness, and leaning to identify the soul with God.

During the year 1670, a curious incident happened. One day, when on her way to church, a mysterious stranger appeared at her side, and began to talk to her. He seemed very grave and learned, but was so poorly dressed that she took him for a beggar. He spoke to her in a wonderful manner about God and sacred things, knew all her faults and failings, and gave her to understand that God required of her the entire subjection of her nature to him, which should lead to the utmost purity and height of perfection. She never saw him again, but his words remained in her memory always.

Not long after this, she returned from a short journey to find her husband ill with gout and other ailments, her little daughter dangerously ill of smallpox, and her eldest son attacked by so malignant a type of the same dreadful disease, that although he recovered, he was disfigured for life. Her father wanted to take Mme. Guyon and her youngest son to his own house, before they should catch the infection, but the terrible mother-in-law would not allow them to go. The little boy and his mother were taken ill the same day, and the child died literally for want of care. The mother-in-law would not send for a physician, and Mme. Guyon, who was frightfully ill, was only saved by the accidental visit of a clever surgeon. But her beauty was gone forever. Shortly after her recovery, she met Father François de La Combe, who then learned that Mme. Guyon was in possession of something he lacked. The knowledge of the "interior way," came from her to him as she had received it from the Franciscan Monk. It seemed that now she must have passed through every trial that could afflict so religious a spirit, but the worst was yet to come. She must be taught to relinquish cheerfully even spiritual pleasures. About the year 1674, she entered upon what she termed a state of desolation, which lasted with little intermission for nearly seven years. This condition of darkness and emptiness went far beyond any trials she had yet met with. "But I have experienced since," she says, "that the prayer of the heart, when it appears most dry and barren, nevertheless is not ineffectual nor offered in vain. . . . If the soul were faithful, to leave itself in the hand of God, it would soon arrive at the experience of the eternal truth. . . . But the misfortune is, that people want to direct God, instead of resigning themselves to be directed by him." This state of desolation into which she fell, was undoubtedly in a great part a reaction from the spiritual ecstasy and emotional happiness which had preceded it. During this period of darkness and emptiness, as she expresses it, her husband died, and to her fell the task of settling up his disordered affairs, a task of which she acquitted herself to the admiration of everyone, although she says she knew as little of business as of Arabic, and therefore believed that she had Divine assistance in the discharge of her duty. She did not realize that a naturally quick perception and unusually good powers of reasoning fitted her for any such task, and that she had great executive ability was shown in more than one crisis of her life. It seems hardly necessary therefore to call in the aid of the Almighty to settle up M. Guyon's estate. She was left a widow at the age of 28, with two sons and an infant daughter, born just before her husband died. Her long twelve years of domestic martyrdom were at last over, as her cruel mother-in-law informed her that they could live together no longer, and Mme. Guyon was free to depart with her children. But the depression was too severe to be removed at once, and failing to get help from others, she wrote to La Combe, begging him if the letter reached him before the Magdalen's day, to pray for her. It reached him the day before, and the prayer was answered. After nearly seven years of spiritual desolation, on July 22, 1680, the glory of God settled on her soul never more to depart. She had passed through the last of the trials which were part of her

initiation into the inner mysteries of Quietism. She now enjoyed not merely a peace from God, but the God of Peace. She had attained to Unity instead of union. She wrote a beautiful little poem about this time, in which she speaks of sailing with Divine Love over a watery waste, in which the boat sinks, and every support is withdrawn from her. Finally Love himself disappears, and she is left alone in the dark. She cries out —

Be not angry — I resign  
Henceforth all my will to Thine;  
I consent that Thou depart,  
Though Thine absence break my heart!  
Go then, and forever, too,  
All is right that Thou wilt do.

This was just what Love intended,  
He was now no more offended;  
Soon as I became a child  
Love returned to me and smiled.  
Nevermore shall strife betide  
Twixt the Bridegroom and his Bride.

And now begins a second period in the life of Mme. Guyon. From childhood up, her spiritual nature had been in a state of preparation. One trial after another she had triumphantly passed through, and now she was to give of her spiritual wisdom to others. She settled at Gex, France {near Geneva, Switzerland} in the first place, in the summer of 1681, taking up her abode with the Sisters of Charity there, and began to teach the doctrine of “sanctification” or “holiness.” La Combe, theoretically her director but, in reality her pupil, preached a sermon on the subject which led at once to his being warned against heresy. But the Bishop of Geneva was keen-sighted enough to see that the objectionable teaching really came from Mme. Guyon, and she was compelled to leave Gex, and take refuge with her infant daughter and her two maids in Thonon-les-Bains, France. Although Mme. Guyon remained a member of the Roman Catholic Church and conformed to its rights and ceremonies, she had really outgrown all divisions of creed or nationality. Her principal teaching was that the *will* itself must be entirely subject to God. There are but two principles of life, self and God. One or the other must be the central pivot. She was able to discern the interior state of those who came to her for instruction, and if they were insincere in their questions about divine things, she held her peace, and answered not a word.

After two years or more at Thonon, she and La Combe were ordered by the Bishop of Geneva to leave his diocese, and they worked their way over the Alps to Turin, but after a few months Mme. Guyon returned to France and took up her abode at Grenoble, where she wrote that beautiful little book called *A Short Method of Prayer*. But she was soon accused again of heresy, and had to

steal away to Marseilles, where she found that the whole city was in an uproar against her on account of the little book on Prayer. She managed with great trouble to make her way to Genoa Italy, and so on to Chambéry and Grenoble, where she met her daughter, whom she took with her to Paris, arriving there, after an absence of five years on that memorable anniversary to her, the Magdalen's day, July 22nd.

This was in 1686, and Mme. Guyon was now thirty-eight years of age. She took a house in a quiet part of Paris and her two sons and her daughter lived with her. In less than a year La Combe was arrested for heresy and imprisoned for the rest of his life, some 28 years. Mme. Guyon, though at great risk, continued to write to him whenever possible. The authorities tried to drive her out of Paris, but only succeeded in getting Louis XIV to issue a *lettre de cachet* to confine her in the convent of Saint Marie, at a time when she was only partially recovered from a severe illness. After eight months, through the intercession of Mme. de Maintenon, she was released, and went to live with the friend who had persuaded Mme. de Maintenon {Françoise d'Aubigné, Marquise de Maintenon, morganatic wife of Louis XIV} to plead for her. Shortly after this, her daughter married.

Now began the most active and the most important part of Mme. Guyon's life, and the beginning of her relations with François Fénelon (Archbishop of Cambrai), and Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet (Bishop of Meaux). Fénelon, like her self, was a mystic, and was guided by the inner light, though to her he owed the final teaching as to the "interior way." Mme. de Maintenon had become a great admirer of Mme. Guyon, invited her constantly to her table, and met with her and Fénelon at the Hôtels de Chevreuse and Beauvilliers where a religious *coterie* assembled three times a week to discuss their inward experiences. During the three or four years that the light of Mme. de Maintenon's countenance shone upon Mme. Guyon she was virtually the spiritual instructress of Saint-Cyr-l'École {near Versailles, in France}, and found herself surrounded by disciples in Paris. At St. Cyr the young ladies hung upon her words, and strained every faculty to imitate her perfections. Mysticism became the fashion, and finally the pupils of St. Cyr obeyed the mistress of the novices no longer. They neglected their duties, and indulged in prayer both seasonable and unseasonable. They had illuminations, and ecstasies, and heard voices. They stopped in the midst of their sweeping, to lean upon the broom and lose them selves in contemplation. A good housekeeper once said that she knew that her maid had experienced religion because she swept under the mats. Tried by this test, the religion of the inmates of St. Cyr was not a lasting one. Mme. de Maintenon was alarmed. "I had wished to promote intelligence," she said, "but we have made orators; devotion and we have made Quietists." She commissioned Bishop Godet des Marais of Chartres {Louis-Antoine de Noailles}, (one of the two confessors at St. Cyr, Fénelon being the other), to demand the surrender of all Mme. Guyon's books, setting herself the example by publicly handing over to him her own copy of *A Short and Very Easy Method*

*of Prayer.* Mme. de Maintenon was nothing if not politic, and after questioning Bossuet, Louis Bourdalane and others as to the heresy of Mme. Guyon, she concluded that it would be necessary to disown her. Mme. Guyon requested to have a commission appointed to examine and pronounce upon her life and doctrines. The point that shocked Bossuet most was Mme. Guyon's declaration that she felt herself unable to pray for any particular thing, because to do so was to fail in absolute abandonment and disinterestedness. The commission met from time to time during some six months at the little village of Issy-les-Moulineaux, where one of the commissioners resided. From there Mme. Guyon was sent to Meaux, that she might be under the immediate supervision of Bossuet, a journey that had to be performed by coach, in the most severe winter of many years. The coach was buried in snow, and she narrowly escaped with her life. Bossuet did not disdain to visit her sick bed, and to take advantage of her exhaustion. He demanded a submission, and promised a favorable certificate. He received the act of submission, but withheld the certificate for six months, after which he sent her the document, certifying that he was satisfied with her submission to the Church, of whose sacraments he authorized her to partake, and acquitting her of all implication in the heresies of Miguel de Molinos.

In the meantime Fénelon had been added to the commission of three, a sweet and lovely nature, and no match in any way for the overbearing and treacherous Bossuet. Mme. Guyon was too sincere and pure-minded to suspect any want of honor in her examiner, and not only placed in his hands all her most private papers, including her autobiography, which even Fénelon had not seen, but persuaded Fénelon to be equally confiding. The trust of both was shamefully abused and their most sacred disclosures used as weapons against them. After all, the Quietism of Fénelon was of a more moderate type than that of Mme. Guyon, who was altogether a broader and a loftier soul. Their chief technical difference seems to have lain in the possibility of attaining perfect disinterestedness, that is, were they willing to be damned for the glory of God? Mme. Guyon professed to conduct devout minds by a certain method to this point, Fénelon only maintained the possibility of realizing such a love, but as Robert Alfred Vaughan (*Hours with the Mystics*, II:259), very shrewdly remarks, in any case it is a supposition which involves a very gross and external conception of Hell, and one might add, a very inadequate and low conception of God.

Mme. Guyon now began to hope for a retired life among her friends in Paris, but Bossuet, finding that she trusted him no longer, chose to call this removal a flight, and had her arrested with her maid, and confined in the castle of Vincennes. This was in December 1695, and finally, in 1698, she was transferred to the Bastille {Bastille Saint-Antoine}, and placed in solitary confinement. Here her faithful maid died. After four years spent in this terrible prison, she was released in 1702, and was allowed to visit her daughter for a time, after which she was banished to Blois for the remainder of her life, happily

an uneventful remainder. She taught by correspondence and conversation as far as she was able, and revealed true religion to many of those who sought her out. At last, on July 9, 1717, she passed away, at the age of sixty-nine, both Bossuet and Fénelon having preceded her.

We cannot but recognize in her one of the “great souls” of the epoch, the greatest probably of her time and nation. Many legends grew up about her miraculous powers, such as grow up about all saints, whose followers think they honor them by ascribing to them supernatural gifts, when the greatest of all gifts was the love of God in which she most truly lived and moved and had her being. At least in 1668 and 1680 she experienced that union with God of which all mystics speak. She was a woman so beautiful, so graceful, so clever, and so keen of perception, that it was no wonder that vanity was her besetting sin, and the last to be cast out of her soul as it struggled upwards to perfection. In her *A Short and Very Easy Method of Prayer* she begins by declaring that all are capable of prayer, which is nothing but the application to God, and the internal exercise of love. There is nothing said about *petitions*, prayer is a condition, not an asking for something. The first degree of prayer is *meditation*, and the first thing to learn is that the Kingdom of God is *within us*. We should withdraw from the outward and concentrate upon the inward; then repeat the Lord’s prayer, pondering in silence over each sentence. If we feel inclined to keep up the silence, let us not continue the prayer until that desire subsides.

The second degree of prayer is simplicity. After a time the soul finds that it is enabled to approach God with ease, and prayer becomes sweet and delightful, and the soul needs not to think of any subject. We must begin to give up our whole existence to God, losing our own will in his.

A more exalted degree of prayer is that of *active contemplation*. In this condition the soul enjoys a continual sense of God’s presence. Silence now constitutes its whole prayer, and selfish activity becomes merged in divine activity, as the stars disappear when the sun rises. Souls in this State pray without effort, as a healthy person breathes.

The soul next passes into what may be termed *infused prayer*. Gently and without effort it glides into this condition (which is difficult to distinguish from the preceding one), and a state of inward silence ensues. The soul suffers itself to be, as it were, annihilated, and thereby ascends to the Highest. “We can pay due honor to God only in our own annihilation, which is no sooner accomplished than He, who never suffers a void in nature, instantly fills us with Himself.”

In her book called *Spiritual Torrents* she uses the figure of the mountain torrents that seek to reach the sea in diverse ways. “Some advance gently towards perfection, never arriving at the sea, or reaching it very late, being satisfied to lose themselves in some stronger and more rapid river, which hurries them along with itself to the sea.”

And speaking afterwards of the capacity of the soul, in a passage very like one in Dante, she says that all holy souls are in a state of fullness, but not in an

equal amount of fullness. “A small vessel when full, is as much filled as a large one, but it does not hold as much. These souls all have the fullness of God, but according to their capacity for receiving, and there are those whose capacity God enlarges daily. . . . It is a capacity of ever growing and extending more and more in God, being able to be transformed into Him, in an ever-increasing degree, just as water joined to its source, blends with it ever more and more.”

It will be readily seen in how many ways the Quietism of Mme. Guyon resembles the doctrines of theosophy, more particularly in the teaching of continuous meditation, and what Patañjali calls “meditation without a seed.”

KATHARINE HILLARD.

## THE STORY OF JONAH

In 1892 Professor André Lefèvre, of Paris, published an exceedingly interesting book called *La religion*. A brochure of some 570 pages, it covers a very wide field, and brings together a most valuable and varied fund of information. Were it not professedly written from a purely materialistic point of view, it would be even more valuable than it is, for the strong bias of the writer's mind occasionally blinds him to some point of great value. But as it is, Professor Lefèvre has assembled many facts of great importance to the student of religions, and everybody is free to follow the example of Molière {Jean-Baptiste Poquelin} and take what belongs to him wherever he may find it.

Among other interesting things Professor Lefèvre has discovered that there was a Hindu celestial monster named *Ketu*; that apparently *Ketu* was transformed into a Greek *marine* deity, a goddess named *Ceto*, who espoused the Titan *Phorkys*, and made him the father of the *Cetaceans*, in our day, the order of whales and porpoises. Elsewhere *Phorkys* is called "the Old Man of the Sea," and is Darkness; married to *Ceto* "the Abyss," by whom he has three daughters, called *Deino*, *Pemphredo* and *Enyo*. They were also called the *Graiae* {three gray-haired sisters of the Gorgons}, and were said to have in common one eye and one tooth, which they used alternately, and to dwell at the uttermost end of the earth, where neither sun nor moon beheld them.

It is in lower Chaldea, says Professor Lefèvre, that we must look for the true Cetacean, or fish-gods. The most important of them is *Oan*, or *Oannes*, whom Berossus described as being half fish, half man, with a human voice. This creature spent the whole of the day with men, teaching them letters, sciences of all sorts, geometry, and agriculture. At sunset he plunged into the sea again, and spent the night at the bottom of the ocean, "for he was amphibious," that is, he was capable of functioning on both the physical and astral planes. It is needless to say that Professor Lefèvre is not responsible for the clause in quotation marks.

It would seem a far cry from lower Chaldea to Greenland, but among the Eskimo, or Inuit, as they call themselves, were many worshippers of a deity known as "the Great Whale." Professor Lefèvre does not give us the Inuit name for this god, but his description of the initiation of the Inuit priests or wizards, the *Angakkuit* {singular = *Angakok*}, seems to throw much light upon the story of Jonah, and resembles in a striking manner the general outlines of all initiations. The Inuit neophytes wandered on the seashore, invoking the Great Whale, and gradually by their incantations attracted it towards the land. When they had at last drawn it upon the beach, they forced it to open its great jaws, into which they flung themselves. The whale carried them from island to

island, and from shore to shore, and finally into the gulf where the northern Paradise is hidden. Here we have a curious correspondence with the theosophic theory of the Sacred Imperishable Land at the north pole. In this northern paradise, the priests were gradually (*à loisir*) initiated, and became *angakok*, which is said to be a condition, rather than a thing, although a priest or wizard is called *an Angakok*. They acquired extraordinary faculties, and a transcendent intellect during this sojourn. "How long did they stay there? They do not know, for the measure of time is one thing below, another above." Their novitiate completed, the Great Whale deposited them once again upon their native shore. There seems to be no doubt that the Eskimo came originally from Asia, *via* Behring's Straits {now the Bering Strait}.

In the story of Jonah, the Greek word *Ceto*, the root of our word *cetacean*, can be translated, according to some authorities, either as *sea-monster* or *ship*. In either case, much Biblical criticism founded upon the physical impossibility of a whale's swallowing a man, or a man's living several days inside a whale, falls to the ground.

So much for the literal side of the story, but the mystical side, with its three days and three nights "in the heart of the sea," seems to establish its kinship with the Angakok initiations, although the story of Jonah is overlaid with a number of conflicting details such as are apt to gather around all similar legends as time rolls on.

An interesting paper read before the American Philosophical Association by Mr. Paul Haupt, says that the Book of Jonah (which may have been composed about 100 B.C.) represents a Sadducean protest against the Pharisaic exclusiveness based upon the conviction that Divine Grace was reserved for the Jews and not for the Gentiles. And he quotes the author {George Adam Smith} of *The Book of the Twelve Prophets* as saying that "this is the tragedy of the Book of Jonah, that a book which is made the means of one of the most sublime revelations of truth in the Old Testament, should be known to most only for its connection with a whale."

In the twelfth chapter of Matthew it says that when Jesus was asked by the Pharisees "for a sign," he said that they should have no sign but the sign of the prophet Jonah, "for as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth," again the place and period of initiation. The lesson that Jesus wished to convey was one of toleration. He told the Pharisees that the men of Nineveh would rise up in judgment against them, for the Ninevites repented when Jonah had preached to them, but a greater than Jonah had come to the Jews and they had not listened. And the Queen of the South had journeyed from the utter most parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold a greater than Solomon had come to them, and they had not listened. Jonah went among strangers in a foreign land, to deliver the message of the Lord, and the people of Nineveh repented, but Jesus came unto his own, and they received him not.

To return to the story of Jonah. The word of the Lord came to him, bidding him go to Nineveh and rebuke it for its wickedness. In *Isis Unveiled* (II:258), there is a very interesting paragraph about Jonah, who is there identified with *Iona*, or the dove sacred to Venus, or Astarte, whose bust was generally carved upon the prow of the Syrian vessels. Hence some commentators believe that Jonah was picked up by one of these ships. But the Kabbalists say that Jonah was a runaway priest from the temple of Venus, and wished to abolish idolatry and institute the worship of the one God. That he was taken prisoner near Jaffa (the biblical Joppa) and confined by the devotees of Dagon in one of the prison cells of their temple. In the middle of the temple stood an immense idol, the upper portion of whose body was human, and the lower fishlike. Between the belly and the tail was an aperture which could be closed like the door of a closet, and in which offenders against the local deity could be imprisoned while awaiting sentence. However this may be, the Bible story goes on to say that Jonah was afraid to go to Nineveh, where the fish-god Dagon was worshipped, and seems to have thought he could get out of the Lord's jurisdiction by going to Tarshish, the great mining country of southern Spain, so he went down to Joppa, and finding a ship there going to Tarshish, he paid his fare and embarked. It was not long before a terrible storm arose, and the sailors were frightened, and every man cried to his own god, and as a further precaution, threw most of the cargo overboard. But Jonah had gone down "into the sides of the ship" — which corresponds to the whale's belly — and was fast asleep. The shipmaster woke him up, and begged him to intercede with *his* God, as theirs seemed unable to help them, and then some one suggested that they should draw lots, to find out whose fault it was that this storm had arisen. So they drew lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah. Then they asked a great many questions, as to his country, and his occupation, and his religion, and what he had done to be pursued by such a tempest (for he had told them he was trying to flee from the Lord), and what they should do to him to calm the terrible seas? And Jonah told them to throw him overboard, for he knew that once rid of him the tempest would subside. The sailors evidently thought this an extreme measure, and tried hard to row their vessel to shore, but the sea was too much for them. So after praying the Lord of Jonah not to blame them if an innocent life were lost, as they were doing this to please Him, they threw Jonah overboard, and the sea at once became calm. Here we have the scapegoat idea, that appears so often in the Old Testament.

If we accept the word *Ceto* as meaning ship, it would seem that Jonah was picked up by a passing vessel. It is a picturesque little story as it stands, but the probability is that the whole account is more or less figurative, and symbolizes the trials that precede the initiation of a prophet or divine teacher. In the prayer that Jonah addresses to the Lord as we have it in our Bibles, he calls the belly of the fish "the belly of hell," and we all know that there is no word answering to our conception of *hell* in the Bible.

"Thou hast cast me into the deep, into *the heart of the seas*," says Jonah; Jesus said that the Son of man was to be for three days and three nights in *the heart of the earth*, and both expressions mean the place of invisible spirits, or Hades.

The sea is constantly used in symbolism as an emblem of sorrow. "And there was no more sea," is one of the Apocalyptic promises (see Revelation, 21:1). The expressions used by Jonah may all be applied to the severity of the trials which preceded his initiation. "The waters compassed me about even to the soul," he says, "the weeds {reeds, rushes, sea plants, seaweed} were wrapped about my head," — a very curious and graphic expression {loss of ordinary consciousness, descent into the abyss, symbolic death before rebirth}; — "I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me forever, yet hast thou brought up my life from the pit" (or *corruption*).

When Jonah had promised to pay that which he had vowed, the Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land. {Rebirth.} There is no idea given of the lapse of time between what we may consider to be the completion of Jonah's initiation, and his second mission to Nineveh. The little that we know of the prophet does not endear him to us, and the choice of him as a divine messenger, seems to be another instance of what we should consider the selection of a very indifferent tool. But "the gods see otherwise," nor can we tell what great purposes the very imperfections of their messenger may further. Jonah tried to run away when the Lord, whom he worshipped, ordered him to take the message of warning to the inhabitants of Nineveh, and when sent again, after having successfully gone through the severe trials figured by the tempest and the fish, he showed such arrogance and harshness that the Lord rebuked him by the parable of the gourd and the worm. And Jonah passes out of sight, angry and dissatisfied because the Lord had taken pity upon the inhabitants of Nineveh when they had repented of their evil ways, and refused to punish them further.

KATHARINE HILLARD.

## INTERWOVEN<sup>1</sup>

A very inadequate title for these letters from a son who has passed away, to his mother who is still in the flesh. They present the same curious mixture of the valuable and the worthless that we usually find in such documents, and the life of another state of consciousness as depicted in them differs more in degree than in kind from our own. The letters were written through a medium, her arm only being used for the transmission of words, and cover a period of about six years, ceasing with the death of the medium herself. Their genuineness is vouched for by the writer of the preface, Miss Sarah Louise Ford, of Boston.

The chief interest of the book lies in the development of the character and intellect, and even the style, of the son, Wadsworth Cecil, a young physician, who died suddenly of diphtheria shortly after he had begun to practice, and furnishes a remarkable instance of “a ruling passion (literally) strong in death.” To a theosophist the letters go far to corroborate the idea of heaven or Devachan, as a dream-life wherein our strongest desires, our highest aspirations are fulfilled, and the greater part of the book describes as actually taking place many things which might have been merely a subjective vision. One of the most curious things in it is the intense interest of the young physician in everything related to his profession, and the progress that he seems to make in medical knowledge and skill. There are seven bodies, he says, all capable of separation, and even on earth it will not be long before they can be taken to pieces like the parts of a watch, and cleaned and repaired and put together again. As this has already been done here for the eye and the stomach, it was a pretty safe prophecy to make. He seems to confuse “body” and “shape,” for he goes on to speak of his many shapes — a thought shape, a luminous shape, a spirit shape, etc. And again he speaks of the last body, which will be born into the seventh sphere, and contain all the lighted powers as organs. The uvula, he says, is a storage battery for the next body, and little coils of ganglia lie in every part of the physical body as preparations for the higher result. The study of the human body is the key to all knowledge. When ignorant people are taught more about their bodies, and the proper use of every ligament and tendon, valve and cell, they will understand the relation between mind and matter. Matter is the light of the mind in a denser condition. Everything seems to this student to be expressed in terms of light and electricity and vibration. He hardly knows what is meant by a cycle, he says, but he knows that certain seeds of powers which are left by adepts culminate and work into action among the people, and this gives a rise or lift to mind all through the kingdoms, not only in earth, but in the next sphere and the next. So there is constant progression in knowledge, and by and by what is now the lower mortal law will burst as a flower into the

higher sense. He speaks many times of the storage in all the organs for the future body. "The potency of the future is as the meat in the nut." After the sixth sphere it is the power, not the organ, which is considered and used. When we understand all the organs, they will be raised into the glory of health, and in the seventh degree the white, spiritual-atomed being will occupy its body as a palace or mansion. There will be no need of the circulation of the blood, for the fire in the blood will have taken its place. Veins are the conveyors of magnetism and arteries of electricity, and when these two are as one in balance, there can be no disease. Again he writes:

"There are two ways of becoming immortal, either by overcoming the obstacles of life and making deposit of a strong-principled self, or by sinking back as a soul-seed into earth and back through the animals into chaos, becoming an element, and again starting with all heredity effaced, and almost as a new identity." But souls, he resumes, are never entirely lost after once having "acquired individuality." The doctrine of the development of the Soul is continually cropping up in these letters, though often very crudely expressed, as indeed is most of the book. In another letter the young physician says, "I don't wonder that it was said that Christ turned water into wine, for I find that the properties of all results lie in water. It is enough to say that what Christ did was not by a miracle, but by a natural law." Natural law also permits the development in the eye itself of far or near vision. "I saw how this might be done by certain loosening of small muscles and widening of others so as to give more space in the iris.<sup>2</sup> It is possible this could be attained upon earth if people believed it, or the eye-doctors could see the law."

And in another place Dr. Wadsworth says that when people are brought up from materiality into more refined conditions, there will be exceeding lightness of the human frame. The true man will be made up of sinews, nerves, cords and tendons, and the flesh which breeds disease will go down to animals and out. He speaks of the essence of fire, which refuses to run in flesh, but keeps to the nerves. And yet there is so exalted a nerve-state, that the fire even irradiates the outer self, unless the man carries too much fat.

In the same letter he says the power of magnetism sent by the hand or the will, is to be a great force on the earth. Mind is in high action, and in less than twenty years it will be able to conquer any disease without medicine, save, perhaps, the very finest quality of some herb. The power of hypnotism will rule, and prevent pain of all kinds, even in operations.

Several times he speaks of sight as merging into feeling in the fifth world; "and the moment I feel, then I see, because every nerve sees. I know that in the physical body the nerves had eyes, only they were undeveloped. . . . As we progress, every nerve sees, and develops into what is called the sixth sense or intuition. . . . To see and hear exactly as we did on earth we must have the same apparatus, with the same vibrations, or else use what we call a medium to see and hear with. I can see my words as fire, and watch them glance along the nerves and come out at the end of the medium's pencil. But I do not see the

marks nor the paper, which are in the outer world. Christ could turn water into wine because he could control every element. It is done on the principle that in the finer air all elements exist, or that all that composes the earth is elementally within the ether. All things contain a bit of all other things. . . . There is a great fact, that the moment the soul neglects any part of its mansion it begins to die. Body is a thing that has got to be tuned up in every minutiae, or it loses its sounds and its vibrations. . . . Father and I are learning the highest method of motion, higher even than rolling one's self in a fireball and willing the way to certain points. It is a simple infilling with desire to be at such a point and consuming the body, as it were, in the desire, and thus becoming entirely unconscious for one moment. It is an awful intensity, and could not be done by anyone on earth, for memory and every principle of self are dropped for a moment, and if the life-thread would not connect, then there would be loss of individuality. After sleep the soul easily catches the thread of life, because memory and nearly all the soul-forces remain attached, but when a soul drops all these, and remains entirely isolated for a moment, so as to overcome distance, then is the danger. Suppose I had lost myself and could not connect! Well, it must be learned if we would be in all parts of the kingdom at a moment's notice."

Many spheres are quite out of sight from earth, he says. "The planets are all earths, just as this one is, and belong to what we call borderland," a curious confirmation of the theosophical theory that all visible stars are on the same plane of matter as our world. . . . The flesh down here (*i.e.*, on earth) is water and pulp, but in the spirit it is light and fiber, like a spiderweb or the filaments of a fine petal. In higher worlds the flesh is yet more spiritualized, being composed of ether and light. . . . I am a second body now, and my second self is ten times more alert and light and youthful than the other. . . . There is a way, too, of living on, and shedding age by not dying, a kind of caterpillar condition. This is the old Rosicrucian system, and is done in caves and deep forests. When Jesus went up in the Mount to pray, he cast off his outer self, and renewed (his body) without dying, and so came down fresh and young. A great many do this. They are very wise, having known many generations. . . . Did you hear me when I said, No, I could not make shape yet? Possibly in time I could learn to put myself together, but hardly to look natural, I fear. You would not like to see me unless I could thicken to my former shape and face. This is only a chemical arrangement. But at present I have too much to do to try to form. It is not hard work, but a long process of affinity with like atoms — like "modeling."

Then he takes up the germ-theory again, and once more repeats that germs are live atoms. "They are builders and destroyers, the one pitted against the other, like all the opposites. If any one can find a way to increase the white corpuscles and set them against the red corpuscles, this would drive out disease. There are two sets of germs in a body, the spiritual or white (second body germs), and the material (or earth-body), red germs, and it is the red germs that begin to cause decay in whatever organ is used or exposed too much. And the

white corpuscle germ if increased in numbers will stop that decay. The trouble is, that no one looks at it in this light, and so they don't try those particular elemental extracts from roots, which will increase the white corpuscles, and thus eradicate disease from the red ones. The 'gold cure,' so-called, is somewhat successful for the very reason that it increases the white germs, and drives out the rot of liquor." This is again quite on a line with theosophic teachings, which describe the white corpuscles — as indeed science has done — as the scavengers of the body, the devourers of the germs of disease. As early as 1846 Dr. Augustus Volney Waller said that the white corpuscles were able to pass through the walls of the blood-vessels, and go all over the body, of which they are the sanitary police. And Dr. Andrew Wilson in 1893 said much the same thing. (*Lucifer*, January 1894.) Theosophy adds to this the statement that the spleen is the reservoir of animal magnetism, and the original center of the force which evolves the astral man. It would seem then, that to increase the number of white corpuscles, those "elemental extracts from roots," of which Dr. Wadsworth speaks, should be directed to the spleen. But perhaps even more efficacious would be what he calls the main thing for doctors, and in fact for everybody, to raise the tone of the soul, to expel fear, deceit, idleness, ambition and all evil forces. Where would the old notion of the spleen as the source of melancholy come in then? There is a point of mind that can be reached, he says, where nothing distresses. It corresponds to insanity. "Insanity is the unconscious depth, while what I mean is a conscious height, a peculiar oneness with the divine law, so that the soul can overlook all obstacles and know their reasons."

Again he speaks of the use of certain herbs as so dilating the eyes that they acquire telescopic powers, and worlds can be seen at immense distances. Also, that the eardrum can be excited to such a degree that one can hear the past, as in a shell, the revealments of history at the time the shell was forming. . . . "An old Egyptian told me that the small efforts and longings of people to see or hear or understand were all as dim prophecies of the future unfoldment."

I might go on much longer with the plucking of flowers from this garden of another world. I have abstained from gathering weeds and thistles, for those we can find everywhere, nor has it seemed best to quote the descriptions of celestial mansions and household conveniences and curious contrivances of all sorts. It has been pointed out to me that the "spheres" and planes spoken of by the young doctor were all sub-divisions of the astral plane, and that probably he had not got as far as Devachan at the time of writing. Also that many things said by him as to conditions in the astral and physical bodies, while absurd in the eyes of a scientist, are quite right when read as he wrote them, in the language of another sphere of thought. Whatever we may think of this explanation, it would certainly be well to look at the book from the writer's point of view, for nothing does more to widen one's mental horizon than to be forced sometimes to take another's point of view instead of our own. It lifts us out of our ruts, it compels us to see that there are many things in heaven and

earth not yet formulated in our philosophy, and many, many misconceptions and errors that we have yet to correct. The great thing is to keep an open and unprejudiced mind, and to be ready to receive new ideas, however strange, and as strangers, give them welcome.

Above all let us realize, at least, that we have infinite fields of Knowledge still to explore, and that much of our progress consists in an ever-increasing ability to slough off the trammels of our old intellectual skin, and be ready for the new. Walt Whitman said this many times, but never perhaps more beautifully than in these lines:

This day before dawn I ascended a hill, and looked at the crowded heaven,  
And I said to my Spirit, *When we become the enfolders of those orbs, and the  
pleasure and Knowledge of everything in them, shall we be filled and  
satisfied then?*

And my Spirit said: *No, we but level that lift, to pass and continue beyond.*

KATHARINE HILLARD.

NOTE

1. Published by George H. Ellis & Co., Boston.

2. It is, of course, the shape of the eyeball, not the iris, that affects the length of vision.

## AT THE GATE OF DEATH

One of the most interesting signs of the times is the increasing tendency of conservative thinkers to feel their way cautiously into what seems to them a novel line of thought, but which to those accustomed to theosophical teachings, appears to be a very slight deviation from the ordinary conceptions of life and death. It is nevertheless always an advantage to see what we call truth, and perhaps even self-evident truth, put in a new and tentative form, so that we suddenly awake to the perception of possible outlines that we had never seen before, as when a much-belated spring like the present gives one glimpses of rugged mountain sides and abrupt cliffs through the delicate tracery of the half-opened leaves, that had been hidden in other years by the luxuriant foliage of summer.

The more Mr. Arthur Christopher Benson writes, the closer he seems to come to theosophical ideas without actually expressing them, so that he reminds one of the blind man in a game of blind-man's buff, who comes straight toward one for a breathless instant, and when just within touching distance suddenly dashes off to the other side of the room, quite unconscious that a captive was so nearly within his grasp.

Mr. Benson's recently published book *{The Gate of Death: A Diary}* (by G. P. Putnam's Sons), is in the form of a diary, and is founded on an experience — not so rare perhaps as the author seems to think — of two returns from the very gate of death. The first time it was an accident, a fall from a tree, that brought him almost within the dark portals, and some months afterwards an attack of pneumonia and heart failure very nearly swept him once more out of our world.

The accident that had such disastrous results occurred on January 27th, and had the rather singular effect of obliterating not only all recollection of the unconscious interval of a week or more which followed it, but also all memory of the five days preceding it, even when confronted with the careful record of them in the diary. The writer feels that in sleep there is "a sort of subterranean consciousness," but that death, by closing all the avenues of sensation, might leave one for a time in a state of perfect isolation. "I have always believed in the preservation of identity," says Mr. Benson, "and I have sometimes wondered whether the reason why the spirits of the dead have no power of communicating with the spirits of the living may not be that the soul that has suffered death may have to learn its new conditions," just as a child born into this world does. But then the terrible question arises — why do we not become more conscious of the presence of the spirits of the dead when some time has elapsed after death, and they have learned these new conditions?

Mr. Benson speaks of his slow and interrupted return to consciousness, and the first real perception of objective realities, when he saw his sister sitting by his bed, and she asked him if he knew her. "Yes," he said, "of course I know you; but I am not sure that I know who I am." He says this seemed to him a very witty repartee at the time, at which he laughed in a feeble and drowsy way. After that, the glimpses of life became more frequent, but the one overpowering desire was to be let alone. He would not allow himself to groan, for fear that his brother and sister would be summoned, to kneel beside him, to pray over him, perhaps to touch his hand. How wise are the teachings of theosophy, that bid the parting soul be left in undisturbed peace during those solemn moments when it is withdrawing itself from the body!

"It had always seemed to me a wanton cruelty," says Mr. Benson, "to fill the room of a dying person with relations and friends, when he could not remonstrate or resist. If the sense of privacy dictate that one should lie down to sleep and rise and dress again alone, it had always seemed to me that when the spirit was about to lay aside its human vesture for ever, it might at least demand to suffer death in solitude." Then he fell asleep, and when he awoke he was still in the body, but nothing left to him but just life. He desired nothing and feared nothing, but merely watched life as a man might watch an expiring flame, wondering whether it would go out or not. One thing seemed to him certain, that there is no terror in death to the dying. This is an almost universal experience — there may be dread of suffering, sorrow at leaving one's dear ones, but to the actual passing out of life, only a quiet indifference, a blunting of the sensibilities, a floating away on a calm tide of sleep.

When the well of life began slowly to fill, says Mr. Benson, the deep, real, vital thoughts came back first. The memories that he treasured then were the thought that he had made a few happier, that he had done a few kindnesses, that he had won some love, nothing else seemed to matter. And here again we have the same note struck that filled the other messages we have read lately purporting to come from another state of being, the *Letters of Julia, Interwoven, The Gray World* {by Evelyn Underhill}, and many others, all proclaiming with one accord that *Love* is the all-important thing.

When the all absorbing and terrible clinging to mere life subsided, two emotions came back to our writer, the first, a tender consciousness of the love he held most dear, and with it a wide love for the whole beautiful world, for the little race of men, faring on so patiently to the unknown goal, followed by an intense sense of God and His fatherly nearness to him, that swallowed up all other thoughts.

Then when the high tide of this universal love had subsided, he began to put together the lessons he had learned at the Gate of Death. And here he comes again very close to theosophical teachings, and states perhaps the strongest of all arguments for continuous life. "Just as I cannot conceive of the annihilation of existing matter, neither can I conceive of the annihilation of what I call vital force and consciousness. The life that animates matter is to my mind fully as

real and actual as matter itself. As to consciousness, that is a different question. . . . It may be that consciousness is dependent upon the union of life and matter; but I believe with all my heart in the indestructibility of life, and I thus believe that when I die, when my body moulders into dust, the life that animated it is as much in existence as it was before. . . . It may be that the vital force which I call myself may be distributed again among other lives, it may be that it is a definite and limited thing, a separate cell or center; and thus it may hereafter animate another body — such things are not incredible. But in any case it is all in the hands of God."

Is it any less in the hands of God if we separate the vital force from the "I am I" consciousness, the intellectual soul from the emotional soul, the individual Ego from the personality? This is one of the many places where the writer seems to skim over the clear depths of thought like a swallow that dips a hasty wing and is off again, before one realizes that he is there.

Mr. Benson comments at some length upon the doctrine of probation, which some think explains everything in the nature of sin and suffering in this world, but which he says with swift decision, "does not explain a thousand things." He confuses continuously probation with punishment — surely a man may be *proved* by happiness, good fortune, health of body and mind, as well as by the reverse of all these. We are reduced to assuming, he says, that there must be a new life to redress the balance of the old, because if there were not another life the inequalities, the injustices of this life would be intolerable. Well, why not? Why should we not assume that not one but many lives are given us in which to work out our salvation, and believe too, that the whips which scourge us, the fetters that bind, were forged by our own hands in the many lives that lie behind our present consciousness? But with the keys of Karma and reincarnation in his hands, with some little knowledge of what he calls "the Oriental doctrine of metempsychosis" he is nevertheless confronted by the, to him, insurmountable difficulty involved in the death of babies and little children, and all the consequent sorrow of their parents. But there is no pain, no suffering which would not become bearable, he is sure, could we look forward with a certain hope to the possibility of feeling ourselves one with God, and God one with us.

Much that we can heartily agree with, is in Mr. Benson's comments upon our funeral ceremonies, which he calls utterly heathen and barbarous things, and for children especially, a revolting cruelty. "For them at least death should be veiled in the same mystery as birth." Not till the body is laid in the ground, would he have any solemnity or function, and then he would have a service as beautiful and hopeful as possible, with the mind directed to the thoughts of life and the mystery of the future.

One of the strange things about our view of the future life and those who have gone before, is our constant tendency to think of them as changed, and to feel that we should regret that change. Mr. Benson confesses that it would be repellent to him, but that he cannot believe that the essential differences of

human beings would cease with death. Some tinge of humor he hopes will survive, and though many of his best and dearest friends are clergymen, he would be sorry to have to think that the after-life was going to be run, so to speak, on strictly clerical lines.

Outside of the thoughts I have taken up as more or less like our own, there are many wise and beautiful sayings in this book, and some exquisite bits of description, sometimes perhaps, a little too exquisite. The temptation of work, he says, "is to sacrifice kindly and generous intercourse with others to it. Christ rather indicated that life should be lived on the simplest lines; and if we were only content to do that, what a network of small social chains and ties would be immediately unloosed! I have learnt that one perceives things by resting, in a way in which one does not always perceive them by working." And again, "the light by which we walk is within us, rather than outside of us; and it is in our souls that we must seek for it, rather than in any external illumination."

Mr. Benson is not only a mystic, but a poet, even if he does not write in verse, and his prose sometimes runs in perfect rhythm, as in this line: "charged with sweet secrets, musical with dreams." And very beautiful is his description of a dim orange sunset, that concludes his book. "Just at that moment over the stream sailed a great heron, with curved wings black against the sky, dipping and sinking with a deliberate poise to his sleeping-place.

"So would I that my soul might fall with a glad and contented tranquility to the shining waters of death; to rest while all is dark, until the dawn of that other morning. . . . God rests, but ceases not. Through day and night alike beats the vast heart pulsing in its secret cell. Through me, too, throbs that vital tide. What pain, what silence shall ever avail to bind that mighty impulse, or make inanimate whatever once has breathed and loved?"

KATHARINE HILLARD.

## THE HINDU-ARYAN THEORY OF EVOLUTION

Did we need any proof of the difficulties that beset the path that Dr. Rajan {Tirumangalum Chrishna Rajan Iyengar} has given us, would furnish it, by its misuse of prepositions, for he calls it the “Hindu-Aryan Theory *on* Evolution {and Involution: Or, The Science of Rāja-Yoga}.”

In speaking of the sacred books of the East, Dr. Rajan says that when the technicalities used in those books are literally translated, “they often fail to convey the ideas of the author, and the coherence of the thought is lost.” This is perfectly true, but it is equally true that in the effort to give the spirit rather than the letter, the translator may lose as completely the real meaning of the author. Dr. Rajan quotes Max Müller as saying, “We are constantly made aware of our deficiencies in being unable to catch and render accurately the minute shades of meaning, whether of inspired seers of the Upaniṣads, or the acute reasoners of the Vedānta school of philosophy. We find it almost impossible to give a close and faithful equivalent in English.” And apart from the usual difficulties encountered by every translator, there is the fact pointed out by Dr. Rajan, that many of the terms used in these sacred books have a technical meaning, known only to the students whom he calls “traditional,” meaning those to whom the secret doctrine has been handed down from generation to generation by “traditional” teachers. Here the translator endows an English adjective with a special meaning, finding it impossible to express his idea otherwise. Dr. Rajan’s command of the English language is surprisingly good, but he occasionally has to draw upon his own resources, or give to an English word a meaning that it does not possess, and he has the usual struggle of foreigners with the definite article, who never seem to know when it should be put in and when left out.

But these are mere details, and only go to indicate the difficulties in the path of every translator, more especially, he who would try to embody the subtle expressions of the Sanskrit in a tongue so devoid of these niceties that every English metaphysician has to begin by inventing his own vocabulary as he finds those of his predecessors quite inadequate to his needs.

From the time of the Civil War in India, 3900, or 5000 years ago (Dr. Rajan has a lofty contempt for dates), the deepest and most important of the sacred teachings, and the explanations and definitions of the technical expressions used therein, were either not published at all, or cancelled before they could be circulated. The books containing the true and complete theory of the Evolution of the Cosmos and of Man, the highest philosophy of the Hindu-Aryans, is in the safe keeping of the “Traditional Teachers,” and is handed down orally from the Guides (or Gurus) to the Disciples. The Vedas, Upaniṣads, the Purāṇas and

the *Bhagavad Gītā*, are composite works, each containing various theories, as the key of this or that philosophy, Monism, Dualism, or any other, be used to interpret their dark sayings. The complete *Bhagavad Gītā*, which contains 1008 stanzas, has never come into general circulation, and never will. A complete exposition of the Hindu-Aryan theories of Evolution and Involution, has not thus far been printed in any language, as they have always been taught orally by the “Traditional Teachers” to their chosen disciples.

The Science and the Art of Rāja-Yoga, according to Dr. Rajan, were brought to perfection by the early seers or Rsis, in the beginning of Hindu-Aryan history. They began by studying the problems of the constitution of man, and his different states of consciousness, waking, sleeping, dreaming, and dreamless sleep, and the principles which enabled him to remember and repeat his dreams, etc. After close observation and repeated experiments, they arrived at the conclusions upon which they built up their theories of Evolution. In order to preserve their methods and discoveries, they initiated their fittest students in the art of Rāja-Yoga, which has been kept secret for many reasons. It is based upon psychological (“physical”?) facts, and is as distinctly a practical art as anything we know today.

Dr. Rajan’s aim in the present work is to give an outline of (I) the Theory or Science of Rāja-Yoga, which deals with (a) The Evolution of the Cosmos; (b) The Descent of the Universe and Man, other wise known as Involution; and (c) the Ascent of Man; and (II) the Methods of Man’s Ascent, known as the Art of Rāja-Yoga. Students of Theosophy have been accustomed to speak of Involution and Evolution as applied to the progress of man and the Cosmos, and to consider their history as following similar lines.

As the soul has for its abode the physical body, made up of material things, the origin of these things must be studied before the soul can be comprehended. The first object of study of the ancient Hindu-Aryans was the construction of the Cosmos, and this study is the first step of the ladder leading us to the intimate knowledge of the “Self.”

We will not stop to recapitulate those theories that Dr. Rajan rejects, but proceed at once to his own solution of the problem of creation, which he states as follows: “That which gives rise to illusory phenomena without itself undergoing any essential change is Para-Brahman, or the Efficient Cause.”

As the sun radiates light and heat, so Para-Brahman, or the Efficient Cause (which answers to what we call “the Absolute”) radiates Cosmic Conscious Energy or Will (Aksaram), and Cosmic Matter (Mula-prakrti), forming the Hindu Trinity. These two energies are unborn and endless in Para-Brahman, because they are one with it. At the time of Cosmic Activity this Cosmic Conscious Energy combines with Cosmic Matter, and works as the Cosmic Ego (Ívara or the Logos). In constitution this Cosmic Ego is All-Knowledge; He is Real Being; He is the Knower; He is Bliss. As He is not entangled in matter, He is holy, and free from pain, and in character is Universal, and All-Pervading. This is the first Ego in the Cosmos, and all other Egos are but His reflection. In

the “Trinity,” Cosmic Conscious Energy is one root of the “Highest Self” (Īśvara). This theory is called Advaita, or pure Monism.

Differentiation takes place when Cosmic Activity springs from the Cosmic Ego and illuminates Cosmic Matter, and this illumination causes the existence of the three states of matter called “Tri-guṇa,” namely “Mental Matter” (Sattva-guṇa), “Vital Sense Matter” (Rajas-guṇa), and “Vital Matter” (Tamas-guṇa), and they are all in the atomic condition.

The reflection of the Cosmic Ego upon the different states of matter has given rise to the whole Cosmos in all its different kingdoms, just as varied reflections are given by different mirrors. This is why the Cosmic Ego is said to be the “Material Cause” for the appearance of the universe. And now for the effect of His Light upon these different states of matter.

I. The reflection of the Cosmic Ego, or Supreme Being, on “Mental Matter,” caused the inherence of a portion of Himself therein, and this portion is called an Individual Ego (Jīva-Ātma). This Individual Ego inherits every property of the Cosmic Ego, namely, Para-Brahman, a portion of Cosmic Conscious Energy, and Cosmic Matter. In this group of three, Para-Brahman or the Efficient Cause is common to both the Cosmic and the Individual Ego; the other two (that is Matter and Energy) are inherited by all Individual Egos directly from the Cosmic Ego. This inherited portion of the Cosmic Conscious Energy in the individualized state is called “Vṛtti,” which the Doctor translates as “Individual Conscious Energy;” the inherited portion of Cosmic Matter is called “Kāraṇa Śarīra,” which he calls “Primordial Matter.” This is the first state of Matter in which the Individual Conscious Energy is enveloped, and combined with which it is called an Individual Ego. This Individual Conscious Energy in its turn illuminates Mental Matter through its veil of Primordial Matter, and this illumination causes the existence of the “Intellect” (Buddhi) and “the Mind.”

The differentiation of the Intellect and the Mind takes place after the manifestation of the Individual Ego; therefore these two principles belong to its Involution and not to the Evolution of the Cosmic Ego. The latter has neither “Intellect” nor “Mind” in an individualized state, as the Individual Ego has. If it had, it would be a limited being, a larger man, subject to birth and death. Therefore there is no such thing as “Universal Mind.”

II. The reflection of the Cosmic Ego on Vital-Sense-Matter (Rajas-guṇa) causes the existence of the five Vital-Sense-Forces *{prāṇas}*, namely, Prāṇa, Apāna, Samāna, Udāna, and Vyāna. These are the vehicles that convey sensation to the Mind and the Intellect. They are the seats of “Ignorance” jointly and severally, and are the instruments by which we govern our bodies in their various aspects.

III. The reflection of the Cosmic Ego on Vital Matter (Tamas-guṇa) causes the existence of two forces, the Transforming Force, and the Delusive Force. The Transforming Force causes the existence of the five Vital Elements<sup>1</sup> in this wise: it directly causes the existence of Ākāśa; Ākāśa causes Vāyu; Vāyu

causes Tejas; Tejas causes Āpas, and Āpas causes Pr̥thivī. Each of these elements is invisible in an uncombined state, and even the combination of all five is invisible under certain conditions, for these Elements belong to the invisible world. Every thing we see, however, is due to their combinations. Literally, Pr̥thivī means earth; Āpas, water; Tejas, light, heat, or fire; Vāyu, wind or air; Ākāśa, ether or space. There is no equivalent for these terms in English, and the literal translation is quite misleading. These “Elements” are the units of different states and qualities of matter, and when combined in different ways produce different results. According to Hindu-Aryan science every “Element” of modern chemistry is a combination of these five Vital Elements, even the gas hydrogen. The positive Ion of the Electron theory, is the “Ākāśa” of Hindu-Aryan psychology. The other four may stand for negative Ions of different qualities, but they are not the identical things, and are only cited to give an idea of what these Vital Elements are. Ākāśa is the basis of them all, and there can be no combination of any or all without Ākāśa.

The “Transforming Force” (Vikṣepa-Śakti) has four aspects, (1) the “Serpentine Force” (Kundalinī-Śakti); (2) the “Integrating Force;” (3) the “Disintegrating Force,” and (4) the “Illusory Force.”

1. The function of the Serpentine Force is to keep the Individual Ego, the Intellect, the Mind, and the five Vital-Sense-Forces coiled up, or enveloped, as it were, to form an entity, and besides this, it acts as both the positive and the negative poles of that entity. Again, these form the clothing of the Vital-Sense-Forces, and enable them to evolve into special senses and the organs of senses.

2. The function of the Integrating Force is to cause a thing to grow, as when a flower becomes a fruit, in which process we find additional bulk and weight, change in color, expansion in dimensions, and gravitational adjustment.

3. The function of the Disintegrating Force is to eliminate excessive material, or to cause the disappearance of a thing.

4. The function of the Illusory Force is to show one thing for another, to keep the real hidden, and to show the unreal. It conceals the cause and shows the effect.

The process of the involution of the different states of matter then, may be summed up thus: The Individual Ego illuminates Mental Matter, and thus causes the existence of the Intellect and the Mind. The five Vital-Sense-Forces conjointly with the Serpentine Force, shine upon the Mind with such power that it becomes completely subservient to them. The Intellect is the spectator of all this, but indirectly, and is not entangled in their clutches as the Mind is, although it belongs to the group of principles which make up a perfect unembodied entity. This entity forms one of the stumbling blocks in the path of the translator, as Dr. Rajan can find no better name for it than “Ignorant Entity” (Pra-Ajan {Ajñāna}), although it would seem as if he meant by it, the reincarnating Ego, because he goes on to describe the process of its reincarnation. The birth place and the circumstances of its parents are determined by the results of the deeds

of its past lives, and it is subject to death and rebirth over and over again until the Individual Ego attains that knowledge which leads to Atonement.

The results of the unmeritorious deeds of past lives cause the following obstacles to obtaining this knowledge:

1. They cause one to forget or ignore one's own Ego (Jīva-Ātma). To understand it, and its relation to the Cosmic Ego, one has first to learn these theories of the Evolution of the Cosmos, and the Involution of the Universe and Man.

2. The sufferings of this life are in proportion to the unmeritorious deeds performed in one's past life. In order to obtain a happy life in the future one has to perform many meritorious deeds.

3. Forgetfulness, which is the characteristic of the Mind, and Ignorance, which is the characteristic of the five Vital-Sense-Forces, cause one to lose the knowledge of one's own Individual Ego, and its relation to the Cosmic Ego, and results in repeated births and deaths. In order to avoid this, one must have direct cognition of one's Individual Ego and its relation to the Cosmic Ego, which alone frees one from the pain of repeated births and deaths, and enables one to enjoy "Eternal Happiness." By doing meritorious deeds *with unselfish motive* (this is the only trace of anything ethical in this system) one prepares the way for learning the secrets of the Transforming Force. The first secret is, how the Serpentine Force helps the Vital-Sense-Forces to ensnare the Mind; the second is the process of Integration; the third is the process of Disintegration, and the fourth is the Illusory process of the Transforming Force. When these faculties have been acquired, one becomes able to read the records of one's own previous life, and that of others also.

The Delusive Force denies the existence of anything that is not perceptible to our senses.

This first part of the Hindu-Aryan theory of the Evolution of the Cosmos and the Descent of the Universe and Man, is followed by the second part, on the Ascent of Man. It begins with an analysis of the physical body, and the definition of *Kośa*, which we have been used to call *sheath*, and thought of as containing the soul as a scabbard contains a sword, a very faulty metaphor. But Dr. Rajan defines "*Kośa*" as "matter in any form or state" and divides the physical body into five aspects of matter: (1) the physical body, "*Ana-Maya-Kośa*"; (2) The Life-Sustaining Body (the Astral), "*Prāṇa-Maya-Kośa*"; (3) Mind, "*Manas, or Mano-Maya-Kośa*"; (4) Intellect, *Buddhi* ("*Vijñāna-Maya-Kośa*") and (5) Bliss (or "*Ānanda-Maya-Kośa*"). (Each of these divisions contains the word *Māyā*, and would seem to point to the fact that these varied aspects of matter are but illusions, one and all.)

Five and not seven, is the predominant number in this philosophy: the organs and systems of the human body are divided into five groups, the Vital-Sense-Forces are five, the Vital Elements are five, the constituents of Mind are five, the states of Consciousness are five. It will be readily seen that these classifications rest upon a purely material basis, and the highest division of

man, the “Bliss-Body,” Dr. Rajan explains, is a state of consciousness in which a “Brahma Vāriṣṭha” (the highest degree of “Holy Man”) clearly understands that there is no difference between the Cosmic Ego and the Individual Ego. This “direct cognition” gives him Eternal Bliss, and as this state is enjoyed from within the premises of “Primordial Matter” (Kāraṇa-Śarīra), the attribute “Body” (Kośa) is added to Bliss, making “Ānanda-Maya-Kośa.”

“As Cosmic Matter (Mula-Prakṛti) is the fountainhead of all the states of matter in the Universe, so is Primordial Matter (Kāraṇa-Śarīra) the fountainhead of the different states of matter in an individual.” A Brahma Vāriṣṭha or Holy Man of the highest degree in the physical body, when he has expiated all the results of his previous deeds, becomes a Videha-Mukta, meaning that he has become one with Cosmic Conscious Energy, and free from matter of any sort.

It will be readily seen that this system of philosophy is absolutely material and self-centered and that no glimmer of brotherly love enters into it. Good deeds are to be performed for the sake of acquiring merit, “with an unselfish motive,” of course, if one can manage it. It reminds one of the childish promise that a splendid present should be his who could think for ten consecutive mornings of a red fox without thinking of his tail. To heap up meritorious deeds for the sake of a good balance to one’s credit, but with a perfectly unselfish motive, involves a mental agility difficult indeed to the western mind, even when Dr. Rajan naively suggests that the more meritorious deeds you do, the less time you will have to do unmeritorious ones!

But the book is a perfect storehouse of information on the nature of man and the universe, and the key to many an occult secret lies in its pages. The explanation of all “phenomena” is there, very lightly veiled, but nevertheless impossible to perform by any but the trained student. How long and how difficult that training, Dr. Rajan explains, and this is one of the most valuable things in the book, as showing the utter absurdity, and worse, the absolute danger, of so many of the pseudo-Rāja-Yoga systems that have sprung up of late years among us. The chief value of the book to a student of Theosophy, is the clear and logical sequence of its thought, and the light it throws on various difficult points by a new interpretation of Sanskrit terms. Dr. Holmes once said that the words of all sacred books needed to be de-polarized, and it is beginning to be as necessary for the theosophical writings as for other scriptures.

KATHARINE HILLARD.

NOTE

1. Ākāśa {ether}, Vāyu {air}, Tejas {fire}, Āpas {water}, and Pr̥thivī {earth}.

## WHY I BECAME A THEOSOPHIST

To speak of *becoming* a Theosophist, seems to imply a passing from one condition to another, whereas to a child fortunate enough to have been brought up in a Unitarian environment, there was no violent change, but only a taking on of knowledge, and a widening of the windows of the soul. My father never spoke to us of religion, but I am sure that he was what in his own day would have been called “a free-thinker,” and that his influence upon my mother was always in the direction of breadth and freedom. Her father was one of the old-school rigidly conservative Unitarians, and I can remember what a different atmosphere pervaded his house on Sundays, from what we had been accustomed to in England.

The first impression of a religious nature that I remember, a few years before we left England, was when my mother tried to explain the omnipresence of God and the divinity of Christ on a Unitarian basis. I was then about seven years old, and the result of her efforts I well remember was to make me exclaim, “Well, then, if Christ is divine, there are two Gods, and if God is everywhere there is only room for one!” Afterwards I went away and meditated, in a child’s fashion, upon this hard saying, and finally came to the conclusion that there was only one God, and that Jesus was our Elder Brother, a phrase I had probably picked up in some book, for my reading in those days was very extensive and exceedingly varied. I had recently read about “the Crusade of the Children,” and I made up my mind that as soon as I was a little older — seven seeming even to the child’s mind somewhat too young for such an undertaking — I would get up a crusade of children to go about the world and preach a new religion, which should declare that there was but one God, our Father in Heaven, and that Jesus Christ was not another God but only our Elder Brother. Having settled this to my own satisfaction, I said nothing more on the subject, and my dear mother probably felt that she had explained the knotty question of the Divinity of Christ and the omnipresence of God in a manner perfectly satisfactory to her juvenile hearers.

Not very long after this, I got hold of Captain Frederick Marryat’s novels, and in one of them (I think *Mr. Midshipman Easy*, but I have never seen the books since), I came upon a boatswain who believed in reincarnation, not in the theosophic sense exactly, but rather in the repetition of events and characters in regular cycles. It had a curious effect upon my mind, which seemed to be struggling with something known before and known better, like the twisted fabric of a dream that one cannot rightly recall. Then came, long afterwards, of course, when I was about fourteen, the teachings of the Reverend Samuel Longfellow, a brother of the poet. Of him it was said that while Henry

Wadsworth Longfellow was *made* a poet, Samuel was born one, and also it was said that he was good enough to be a saint and interesting enough to be a sinner. He was certainly a mystic, and his teachings were like those of all the mystics — but another term for Theology. He preached to the Second Unitarian Church in Brooklyn for seven years, and then went to Germantown, after his brother Henry's death, retiring to live with his nieces in the old "Craigie House" {now known as "Longfellow House"} in Cambridge. After this, through the influence of some of my literary friends, I became very much interested in Positivism, and the talks given by the Crolys {probably especially Jane Cunningham Croly, Founder of Sorosis, an early women's professional club} and many others. Their foundation-stone, the creed that man had no rights, only duties, had a certain chilly grandeur about it, but the worship of an abstraction, called "Humanity," was not at all satisfactory to the religious sense, and even the severe and lofty ethical system of Positivism seemed lacking in food for the soul. I was sure I was not a Positivist, but that was all I was sure of.

On my first return from Italy in 1884, I came across Mr. Sinnett's *Esoteric Buddhism*, which was just then making a tremendous sensation, and like many another Theosophist took my first lessons in the "Wisdom Religion" from that fascinating book. Four winters spent in Italy, studying Dante and the mysticism of the middle ages helped me very much, as at the same time I was studying all the theosophical books that were then published. Mr. and Mrs. Sinnett very kindly sent me lists of books, and long and helpful letters, but after the "first fine careless rapture" drawn from *Esoteric Buddhism*, I began to feel that too many of its symbols and allegories were taken as solid realities and matters of fact, and when I visited H.P.B. in May, 1888, *en route* to New York, I was glad to find that she sustained my objections.

That was twenty-one year ago, and it is harder sometimes to recall things of that date, than even our childish impressions, I suppose because the former come in crowds, and childhood's memories, strong enough to persist at all, are few and far between. My ideas of H.P.B. before I met her, were of the haziest description, and by no means worthy of her. On arriving in London, I went to an afternoon tea at the Sinnett's, and there met Countess Wachtmeister, who was then living with H.P.B., and she asked me to come and see her.

I arrived in the midst of a domestic tempest. H.P.B., in a gorgeous Oriental dressing-gown and a royal gaze, had been interrupted in her work with Dr. Keightley, I think (possibly Mr. Bertram Keightley), because the Countess smelt gas, and had insisted that the only available man should go down into the cellar and see about it, to the great disgust of H.P.B. The Countess took the blows of the winged words most meekly, and it was somehow conveyed to my moral consciousness, without a syllable being said on the subject, that such tempests were part of the training of the disciples who surrounded their great leader. After that I spent two or three evenings with Mme. Blavatsky, who smoked cigarettes and played solitaire, all the while she led the conversation. And she impressed me above all, as a great *Power*, and behind the clumsy figure

in the Oriental robe, there seemed to be agencies unseen, that worked her will. Her eyes were the most piercing I ever saw, and appeared not only to meet your own, but to see through and behind your bodily presence. She advised me to settle neither in Rome nor London, but to return to New York. "You could not do better," she said in her emphatic way, "than to go back to New York, and study with W. Q. Judge. He is a *good man*." Never shall I forget the stress she laid upon those words, as if to answer the attacks she doubtless foresaw.

Later in the spring of the same year I met Mr. Judge, who came to see me in Brooklyn, and of that visit I can remember little or nothing. I did not appreciate him quickly. Seeing him at first in my own home, and not in his proper environment, some little time elapsed before I learned to recognize, under that quiet and rather insignificant exterior, the wisdom, the practical common sense, the humor, and the independence of the man. Day by day I learned to know him better, and to trust him more. In the *Letters That Have Helped Me* (II:116), is an extract from a paper that I wrote in commemoration of our Chief, which perhaps I may be excused for repeating here, as explaining another of my reasons for becoming a theosophist.

To the mystical element in the personality of Mr. Judge was united the shrewdness of the practical lawyer, the organizing faculty of a great leader, and that admirable common sense which is so uncommon a thing with enthusiasts. . . . And blended with the undaunted courage, the keen insight, the endless patience, that made his personality so powerful, were the warm affections, the ready wit, the almost boyish gaiety that made it so lovable.

In the autumn I took up my abode in New York, and joined the T. S. In November the first volume of *The Secret Doctrine* was published, followed quickly by the second, and the problems that had found no answer in the earlier books, were all solved here. Twenty-one years of diligent, but of course not consecutive study have not exhausted its infinite variety.

K. H.

## AN ARYAN MEETING IN 1893

In the palmy days of The Aryan {The Aryan Lodge of the Theosophical Society in New York (1879-1895)}, there occurred now and then a meeting of so much more than usual interest, that someone wrote notes of it, either at the meeting or the next day. Those were the days when people would drop in from anywhere, and one could always count on a spirited discussion. On this particular evening, Colonel Hooper opened the ball, so to speak, with a very interesting paper relating his own personal experiments in hypnotism when a boy. Some traveling hypnotizer called his attention to the subject when he was only about twelve years old, and during the next five years he made a great many experiments. By the time he was seventeen, he became disgusted with the whole thing, he knew not why, and gave it up entirely. He began very naturally with the Braid method {James Braid's approach emphasized physiological focus and mental concentration, not mesmerism or magnetic fluids}, which depends upon inducing fatigue of the eyes by gazing at some small bright object, followed by an imperious command to sleep. He found that a large proportion out of a given number of people were susceptible, but were affected in different ways by the methods that Colonel Hooper used, the results obtained being divisible into four classes. (I.) With one boy he could control only the motor muscles, the mind being quite unaffected. (II.) With another, the imagination was reached, and Colonel Hooper was able to make the boy fancy himself a cat, for instance, and exhibit a far more perfect representation of a cat than he was capable of doing when awake. (III.) Another boy became clairvoyant, and was able to give an account of some friends of Colonel Hooper's then in the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii), fully corroborated by subsequent letters. None of these subjects seems to have been affected on more than one plane of consciousness, and each remained insensible to the hypnotic influence in any other condition, the boy who could move his muscles never imagined himself to be other than a boy, and the clairvoyant boy never thought that his muscles were not under his own control. (IV.) One boy, a lazy, idle, and generally bad boy, was so affected by the influence exerted by Colonel Hooper, that he became an excellent scholar, shot up to the head of his class, and his conduct generally was above reproach. But after Colonel Hooper left the place where they both lived, the boy rapidly degenerated, and without the hypnotic influence to keep him up, completely relapsed.

Colonel Hooper said that at that time he could give no explanation of these phenomena, but became convinced that any influence which tended to make of a human being a mere puppet, swayed by the will of another, must be

pernicious, let alone the danger of arousing forces of which the operator and subject were alike ignorant, and which they could not control.

(It must be remembered that this paper was the report by an elderly man, of the researches and experiments of a boy of seventeen, and much must have been left out, and probably a good deal read in. Nevertheless it is a very interesting report of a very early stage in the history of hypnotism.)

Mr. Bertram Keightley followed Colonel Hooper, with a few remarks based on the verses from the *Bhagavad Gītā* read by Mr. Judge, on opening the meeting, wherein “the five agents” necessary to the accomplishment of every act were enumerated. Mr. Keightley spoke of the five planes of consciousness, and of the five kinds of *Prāṇa*, as described by Rāma Prasād and others, and seemed to think that much might be learned from the hints in old Hindu books upon these subjects. He considered hypnotism as harmful because it acted upon the mental plane, and mesmerism as beneficial, because it was, if properly administered, a mere transference of vital force from the operator to the subject, quite analogous to the transfusion of blood as practiced by modern physicians. He laid great stress upon the principle that such mesmeric treatment to be really beneficial, must act entirely upon the plane of vital force, so to speak. The operator should keep his mind in an attitude of calm and sympathetic expectancy, fastened upon the organ he is endeavoring to aid, for any strenuous exertion of willpower, or any attempt to improve the *mental* attitude of the patient, would inevitably result in hypnotic phenomena.

Dr. John D. Buck, also a visitor at The Aryan that evening, “took up the wondrous tale” with an admirable exposition of the subject, illustrated by some diagrams showing the relations of the macrocosm to the microcosm, of the universe to man, the nature of the laws of vibration, and of the polarization of cells. The seven planes of the universe were represented by seven parallel spaces, the seven planes of consciousness in man illustrated by smaller but also parallel and corresponding spaces in two individuals. According to this diagram the sphere of hypnosis does not extend beyond the lower mental planes. The two individuals mentioned are the operator and the subject, and vibrations started on any plane in the consciousness of the operator (below that of the higher mind) would start corresponding vibrations not only on the same plane in the subject, but throughout the universe, just as one piano string will answer another that has been tuned in the same key.

Dr. Buck then gave a brief exposition of the theories of Hermann von Helmholtz and others as to the corresponding laws of color and sound, considering it a fact that an invisible color was an audible sound; and an inaudible sound was a visible color. That is, that certain rates of vibration were represented to our perceptions as color or as sound, according to their swiftness and their quality, the properties of a wave, or vibration, being four, its length, its rapidity, its quality, and its amplitude. (It was said, also, that there are 32,000 vibrations between the last perceptible as color and the first perceptible as sound.) It was noted that a vibrating string if divided by a node at its central

point, would give forth a sound just one octave higher, each equal division of the string giving out a proportionately higher note, showing the rhythm of seven in sound, as the white ray splits into the seven colors of the spectrum.

The rate of vibration, then, of any plane in the subject being made synchronous with the corresponding plane in the operator, hypnotic condition ensues, and the corresponding cosmic plane is also set in vibration. It will be easily seen, therefore, that the will of the operator, acting upon the lower mental plane, not only affects the mind of the subject with more or less permanent effect, but also opens a door through which elemental forces of the worst description may rush in.

The ordinary hypnotizer begins his work upon the lowest plane, the adept using such forces begins upon the highest.

Again, suppose a mass of cells, or rather colloids, adhering to some surface, in a condition, owing to their imperfect development, of non-polarity, that is, with the positive and negative poles of each cell lying in diverse relations to each other, and therefore inert and incapable of organization. A magnetic current of moderate force sent through such a mass of unpolarized cells, would result in bringing them into partial harmony, but a large proportion of its force would be expended in the effort, leaving but a small residuum to pass through the mass of cells. A second vibration, however, finding its path partially prepared for it, would lose less of its force in the transit, until succeeding vibrations, having brought the cells into a condition of perfect polarity, the whole amount of force would be transmitted.

Therefore it will be seen why the hypnotizer finds it so much easier to affect a subject that he has controlled before, and why automatism, as it is called, the reducing the mind of the subject to a state of complete subjection, in which he becomes a mere puppet in the hands of the operator, is so exceedingly dangerous. Colonel Hooper's experiments on his idle and vicious schoolfellow also serve to show how superficial the effect upon the boy's real nature was, as the force being withdrawn he at once relapsed into his original condition, with the additional danger of a liability to be affected by *any* will, for good or for evil, stronger than his own.

In summing up the discussion, of which the above is but a meagre report, Mr. Judge said that none of the speakers had touched upon the real reason of H.P.B.'s theory that "mesmerism is a beneficial force, hypnotism an evil one." That reason lay in the fact that hypnotism produced a violent contraction of all the cells of the body (a condition, Dr. Buck said, analogous to that produced by chloroform), and therefore prevented the proper action of the vital forces; whereas mesmerism, acting upon the physical plane, was really a transfer of vital energy akin to the transfusion of blood, which, expanding the cells, and setting free the clogged currents of life enabled the vital forces to repair the ravages of disease. Mesmerism, or animal magnetism, acted entirely upon the physical plane, hypnotism upon the mental, wherein lay its danger, as set forth by the other speakers.

Here the notes end, but in an article by H.P.B. (in *Lucifer*, December 1890) we find a very extensive treatment of the subject and much valuable information.

(As the *Lucifer* article referred to in the notes of “An Aryan Meeting” was published so long ago (December 1890), it was thought best to give some extracts from it here. The whole article is so valuable that I regret extremely that these extracts are necessarily brief. It is very interesting to compare with it an article in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, by the late Clerk Maxwell on “Electricity and Magnetism.”)

#### H.P.B. ON HYPNOTISM

In the *Lucifer* article H.P.B. begins by explaining the Braid method, by which sleep was induced through the fatigue of the eyes fixed upon a small bright object held between the brows. In this method (says H.P.B.), no electro-psychic or even electro-physical currents are at work, but simply the mechanical, molecular vibrations of the bright object gazed at. It is the *eye* (the most occult organ on the surface of the body) which, by serving as a medium between the bright object and the brain, *attunes* the molecular vibrations of the nervous centers of the eye into *unison* (that is, equality in the number of its vibrations) with the vibrations of the bright object. It is this unison that produces the hypnotic state. But it is through *atomic*, not *molecular*, vibrations, produced by the act of energy called *WILL*, in the ether of space (therefore on a quite different plane), that the *super-hypnotic* state (suggestion, etc.) is induced. In animal magnetism or mesmerism, produced by passes, it is the human will — whether conscious or otherwise — of the operator, that acts upon the nervous system of the patient. For what we call “will-vibrations” and their aura, are absolutely distinct from the vibrations produced by the simply mechanical molecular motion, the two acting on two separate degrees of the cosmo-terrestrial planes. (A clear realization of what is meant by *will* in occult sciences is necessary here.)

That which is transmitted has no name in European languages. Occultism calls this force “the auric fluid,” to distinguish it from the auric *light*, the *fluid* being a correlation of *atoms* on a higher plane and a descent to this lower one in the shape of impalpable and invisible plastic Substances generated and directed by the potential Will. The auric *light* (Karl von Reichenbach’s *od* {the universal life-force permeating nature and living beings}) is a light surrounding every object in nature, and is only the astral reflection emanating from them; its color or colors, their combinations and the varieties thereof, denoting the special characteristics and qualities of each object and subject, the human aura being the strongest of all.

When a healthy operator mesmerizes a patient with a strong desire to cure him, the exhaustion of the operator is in proportion<sup>1</sup> to the relief felt by the

patient; a process of *endosmosis* has taken place, the operator having given part of his vital aura to the patient. Too much of it would kill him, as a glass may be shattered by too powerful vibrations.

The agent of this transmission is a magnetic and attractive faculty, terrestrial and physiological in its results, yet generated and produced on the four-dimensional plane — the realm of atoms.

The direct gaze of the operator is more potent, hence more dangerous, than the simple passes of the mesmerizer, who, in nine cases out of ten, does not know how to will. Mesmerism by passes is performed on the first (and lowest) plane of matter, hypnotism (which necessitates a well-concentrated will), is enacted (if performed by a profane novice), on the fourth plane, if by anything of an occultist, on the fifth.

Occultism maintains that electric or magnetic fluids, which are identical, *are due in their essence and origin to molecular motion*, now transformed into *atomic* energy. Because the needle of a galvano — or electro — meter fails to record the presence of electric or magnetic fluids, it does not follow that none exist, but rather that the energy has passed to a higher and non-connected plane.

The force, then, which is transmitted from one man or object to another, whether by hypnotism, mesmerism, electricity, metallo-therapeutics or "fascination," is the same in essence, varying only in degree, and modified according to the sub-plane of matter it is acting on — of which sub-planes there are seven.

All bodies endowed with the power of calling forth these phenomena, have one thing in common. They are all generators of rapid molecular oscillations, which, whether through transmitting agents or direct contact, communicate themselves to the nervous system and change the rhythm of its nervous vibrations on the sole condition of being in *unison*, not in nature or essence, but in number of their vibrations. Moreover this rate, especially in an animal organ or organic cell, changes according to health and general condition.

Therefore, two conditions are requisite to success in an hypnotic experiment. *First*: as every organic or inorganic body in nature is distinguished by its fixed molecular oscillations, it is necessary to find out *what* body is in unison with any special human nervous system; and *second* to remember that these bodies can only influence such systems when the number of their respective oscillations becomes identical.

On all planes the agent is created by the same force at work. In the physical world and its material planes, it is called MOTION; in the worlds of mentality and metaphysics, it is known as WILL.

As the rate of molecular motion in metals, woods, crystals, etc., alters under the effect of heat, cold, and so forth, so is the rate of vibration raised or lowered in the cerebral molecules. In Braidism it is the eye that, unconsciously to the subject, attunes the oscillations of his cerebral nervous centers to the rate of vibration in the object gazed at, by catching the rhythm of the latter and passing it on to the brain. But when passes are used, it is the Will of the operator radiating through his eye, that produces the required unison between his will

and that of the subject. And out of two objects attuned in unison, one will always be stronger than the other, and thus have mastery over it, with the potentiality of destroying it. See the experiments with the “sensitive flame,” which will respond to a note struck in ratio with the vibrations of the heat molecules, or may be *extinguished* by an intensification of the sound.

KATHERINE HILLARD.

NOTE

1. But the skillful mesmerizer will know how to replenish his power from the cosmic life-currents.

## A SUMMARY OF THE SECRET DOCTRINE (1)

### PART 1 EVOLUTION

Putting aside all technical and Sanskrit terms as far as possible, let us try to deal in this study not with complicated and puzzling details, but with the broadest and simplest aspects of what appears to us to be truth. Ralph Waldo Emerson says, “We know truth when we see it, from opinion, as we know when we are awake, that we *are* awake.” {*Essays, First Series*, “Spiritual Laws.”}

In the very beginning of this study one is confronted with two great problems of which it is necessary to have some clear understanding before going on. What is meant by the terms “God” and “man”? Many definitions of both are fully given in the theosophical manuals, and above all in *The Key to Theosophy* and *The Secret Doctrine*, but their very fullness is sometimes an obstacle in the path of the beginner, and it has been thought advisable, therefore, to frame a skeleton as it were, of the chief teachings of *The Secret Doctrine*, to be filled out by the results of the student’s own study and reflection. For no study, however persevering, no mere heaping up of facts, will be of much avail, unless accompanied by the sifting processes of thought that shall separate the wheat from the chaff, and prepare the bread of life for the heavenly banquet. But no system of philosophical or religious thought can be formulated without some expression, however crude and inadequate, of our conception of the Absolute Unity in whom we live and move and have our being. In *The Key to Theosophy* there is a very beautiful extract from a kabbalistic poem, which expresses such a conception as well as so lofty an idea can be expressed.

“Thou art One, the root of all numbers, but not as an element of numeration, for Unity admits not of multiplication, change, or form. Thou art One, and in the secret of Thy Unity the wisest of men are lost, because they know it not. Thou art One, and Thy Unity is never diminished, never extended and cannot be changed. Thou art One, and no thought of ours can fix for Thee a limit or define Thee. Thou Art, but not as one existent, for the understanding and vision of mortals cannot attain to Thy existence, nor determine for Thee the where, the how, and the why, *etc.*, *etc.*.”

To this majestic conception of the Divine Unity, we may add the theosophical teaching that all Nature, objective and subjective, what is within us and what is without, *is, was, and ever will be* One Absolute Essence, from which all things proceed, and to which all things must return. Upon the absolute identity of all spirits with the One Spirit, depends the conception of Universal Brotherhood, the outcome and realization of this identity. And as all mankind is in reality of one Essence, infinite and eternal, whether we call it “God” or

“Nature,” or prefer to give it no name other than “THAT,” it follows that nothing can affect one nation or one man without affecting all nations and all men, as a pebble thrown into a quiet lake sends ripples in every direction, till they die out upon its shore, or as the report of a cannon traverses the ether with vibrations that never end.

In *Isis Unveiled* (II:587-592 *et seq*), we find ten propositions stated as the fundamental principles of Eastern philosophy, and slightly condensed, they read as follows:

I. There is no miracle. Everything is the result of law.

II. Nature is triune; there is a visible, objective nature; an invisible, indwelling and energizing nature, the exact model of the other and its vital principle, and above these two, Spirit, source of all forces, alone, eternal, and indestructible. The lower two constantly change; the higher third does not.

III. Man is also triune; he has his objective physical body; his vitalizing astral body or soul, the real man; and these two are brooded over and illumined by the third, the sovereign, the immortal Spirit. When the real man succeeds in merging himself with the latter, he becomes an immortal entity. (*The trinity of nature is the lock of magic; the trinity of man the key that fits it. Isis Unveiled*, II:635.)

IV. Magic as a science, is the knowledge of these principles; as an art, its application in practice.

V. Arcane knowledge misapplied is sorcery; beneficently used, true magic or WISDOM.

VI. Mediumship is the opposite of adeptship, one is controlled, the other controls.

VII. All things that were, that are, or that will be, are recorded in the astral light, and are visible to the initiated adept.

VIII. Races of men differ in spiritual gifts.

IX. One phase of magic is the voluntary and conscious withdrawal of the astral body from the physical. Inert physical matter may be disintegrated, passed through walls, and recombined — in certain cases and under certain conditions — but not living animal organisms.

X. The cornerstone of Magic is an intimate, practical knowledge of magnetism and electricity, their qualities, correlations, and potencies, and a familiarity with their effects on animals and men, as well as a knowledge of the qualities of plants and minerals.

These “fundamental principles,” simple as they appear on the surface, comprise, if rightly understood, the most important teachings of occultism, while the truth demands a knowledge of “the natural sciences” such as is possessed by no one living man.

Another view of the fundamental propositions of *The Secret Doctrine* will give us —

(A.) An Omnipotent, Eternal, Boundless and Immutable PRINCIPLE, which is beyond the range of human thought. It is Omnipotent, because it is Power; it is *eternal*, because it has neither beginning nor end; it is *boundless*, because it is infinite, and is best symbolised by a sphere whose center is everywhere, and whose circumference is nowhere; it is *immutable* because it is devoid of all attributes, and in it is neither变ableness nor shadow of turning. It is “Be-ness,” rather than Being, and is beyond all human thought or speculation.

This “Be-ness” is symbolised in the Secret Doctrine under two aspects. On the one hand absolute, abstract Space, the one thing that no human mind can exclude from any conception, or conceive of by itself. To think of ourselves as somewhere, and to think of all other things more or less distant from ourselves, as somewhere else, in fact, is perhaps as near as we can get to an idea of Space, but it is far from an idea of *abstract* Space.

On the other hand, we have absolute, abstract Motion, representing unconditioned consciousness. And as consciousness is inconceivable to us apart from change, Motion best symbolizes change, its essential characteristic. V. K. Clifford {William Kingdon Clifford}, the mathematician and philosopher, was thinking of this essential characteristic of motion when he said — “In point of fact we do nothing all day but *change our minds.*” Like the shifting figures of a kaleidoscope, one combination of ideas is swiftly followed by another, and one can never get the same figure twice.

This abstract Motion is the ONE LIFE, eternal, invisible, but omnipresent, without beginning or end, yet periodical in its regular manifestations. We have, then, as the fundamental proposition of the Secret Doctrine, this metaphysical ONE ABSOLUTE or BE-NESS. From this “Causeless Cause” the occultist derives the “First Cause,” or the Logos (the *Word* of St. John), for the “first” cannot be the Absolute because it is conditioned and finite, and is but a manifestation of the Absolute. But as soon as we pass from this phase of thought, which to us is absolute negation, duality begins, in the contrast of Spirit (or Consciousness) and Matter, Subject and Object. These are the first of what the Eastern philosophers have called “the pairs of opposites;” but Spirit and Matter are not to be regarded as independent realities, but rather as two aspects of the Logos, constituting the basis of conditioned Being. Apart from Universal Substance, or that which underlies (*sub stans*) Matter in all its grades of differentiation, Universal Thought (the root of all individual consciousness) could not manifest itself as that individual consciousness without a vehicle of matter, because at a certain stage of development, a physical basis is necessary to focus a ray of the Universal Mind. And apart from Universal Thought, Universal Substance would remain an empty abstraction.

Duality therefore is the very essence, as it were, of the Existence of the manifested Universe. But just as the opposite poles of Spirit and Matter are but

aspects of the One Unity in which they are synthesized, so there exists in the manifested universe the guiding power of all manifestation, the "Thought Divine," transmitted and made manifest through the intelligent Forces which are the architects of the visible world. Thus from Spirit — or Universal Thought — comes our consciousness; from Universal Substance the several vehicles in which that consciousness is individualized and attains to *self*-consciousness; while the Divine Energy in its varied manifestations, is the mysterious link between Mind and Matter, the animating principle electrifying every atom into life.

(B.) The second fundamental axiom affirms the eternity of the whole Universe as a boundless plane, the periodical field of numberless universes. "The Pilgrim" — the title given to the Monad or Unit of consciousness during its cycle of incarnations — is the only eternal principle in us, being an indivisible part of the Universal Spirit. Furthermore "the appearance and disappearance of Worlds, is like a regular tidal ebb of flux and reflux." This is a manifestation of the absolute universality of the law of periodicity recorded in all departments of nature.

(C.) Thirdly, the Secret Doctrine insists upon the identity of all Souls with the Universal Over-Soul, itself an aspect of the Unknown Root, and (D.) the obligatory pilgrimage of every Soul through "the cycle of Necessity" or incarnation, in accordance with cyclic and Karmic law. In other words, no purely divine Soul can have an independent conscious existence before it has passed through, (first) every elemental form of the phenomenal world of that cycle of existence to which it belongs, and (second) has acquired its individuality, first by natural impulse and then by self-devised efforts modified by its Karma, thus ascending through all degrees of intelligence from that of the mineral to that of the holiest archangel. The pivotal doctrine of the esoteric philosophy admits no privileges or special gifts in any man, except those won by his own Ego through personal effort during a long series of reincarnations. This is the greatest point of difference between the "orthodox" and the theosophical systems, the one dependent on the sacrifice of an innocent being for the sake of a humanity doomed from the beginning to sin and evil, the other holding that man alone can work out his own salvation, and that every step is conditioned by immutable Law. The orthodox view of the atonement is, of course, but the outer and exoteric dogma, the esoteric doctrine is the inner and spiritual teaching. But this is not the place to do more than suggest the difference between the two conceptions, and we will now pass on to the study of the *Stanzas* in the first volume of *The Secret Doctrine*. *The Secret Doctrine* itself is based upon these *Stanzas*, taken from an archaic MS. known as *The Book of Dzyan* (phonetically *Djan*). It is written in Senzar, the secret sacerdotal tongue known to all priests and initiates, and is the original work from which the oldest religious books of all nations were compiled.

The history of cosmic evolution is traced in these *Stanzas*, and is, so to speak, an abstract formula of that evolution — not an account of all its stages and transformations. It is a formula which can be applied to all evolution, from that of the earth upward in an ever-ascending scale. Having described the evolution of the earth and of man, and the history of the Races from the First down to our own (the Fifth) in the Fourth Round, the old book goes no further, but stops with the beginning of the Black Age, and the death of Kṛṣṇa, just (in 1907) 5,008 years ago {5,127 years ago in 2026}. It must be remembered that the first seven *Stanzas* treat only of the cosmogony of our own planetary system and what is visible around it after a period of dissolution and reabsorption into the Divine Life of the Universe in accordance with the law of periodicity before-mentioned. It seems needless to remind the student that each great Cycle of Existence is called a *Manvantara*, and is divided into seven *Rounds* during which the Monad goes through the sum total of experience possible upon this planet, circling down through matter, which becomes grosser with each *Round*, and then having to reascend through ever finer and purer grades to Spirit. Each *Round* is the home, so to speak, of seven Races of men, and these again are divided into Sub-races and Family Races. The seven *Stanzas* then of *The Secret Doctrine*, Volume I, describe the seven great stages of evolution spoken of in the Purāṇas as “the Seven Creations,” and in the Bible as “the Seven Days of Creation.”

I. The first Stanza describes the ONE ALL before the first flutter of reawakened manifestation. And here we are warned that any description of such a state is impossible; it can only be symbolised, or suggested by the negatives of all those most abstract attributes which men *feel*, rather than conceive. “Alone, the One form of existence stretched boundless, infinite, causeless, in dreamless sleep; and Life pulsated unconscious in universal Space.”

II. The second stage of evolution is to a Western mind so like the first, that the student’s intuition only can enable him to grasp the meaning of the allegorical terms used. In fact all these *Stanzas* appeal to the inner faculties, rather than to those of the ordinary physical brain.

III. Stanza III continues the description of the reawakening of the Universe after a period of Cosmic Night, and depicts the coming forth of the Monads from their state of absorption within the One, and the emergence of the New Life, the manifested Logos, from the depths of the great Dark Waters.

IV. Stanza IV shows the differentiation of the “Germ” of the Universe into the septenary hierarchy of conscious Divine Powers, who are the active manifestation of the One Supreme Power. They are the intelligent Beings who adjust and control evolution, as they embody in themselves those manifestations of the ONE LAW which we know as “the laws of Nature.” This stage of evolution is spoken of in Hindu mythology as “the creation of the Gods.”

V. In Stanza V the process of world-formation is described; first, diffused Cosmic Matter, then “the fiery whirlwind,” the first stage in the formation of a nebula. That nebula condenses, and after passing through various transformations, forms a planet or a solar system, as the case may be. “The Deity becomes a Whirlwind”; that is, Eternal vibration in the Unmanifested, changes to vertical motion in the manifested. The Whirlwind is also identified with *Fohat*, “Wisdom becomes Fohat,” says the *Commentary* on Stanza V. Fohat the Spirit of Life, is the Divine Life and Love, the Logos, the potential Creative Power, the active Creative Power, cosmic Motion, cosmic Electricity, etc., etc., according to the plane on which it acts, and the sense in which the term is used. As in the most ancient Greek cosmogony, Eros is the third person of the primeval Trinity (Chaos, Gaea, and Eros), and has nothing in common with Anteros or Cupid, so Fohat is one thing in the unmanifested Universe, and quite another in the physical world. In the unmanifested Universe, Fohat is simply the potential creative power, an abstract philosophical idea. In the manifested universe he is the occult, electric, vital power, which under the will of the Creative Logos gives to all forms that impulse which in time becomes Law. As Divine Love (Eros) the electric power of affinity (chemical and otherwise) is shown allegorically as trying to bring pure Spirit into union with the Soul, the two constituting in man the MONAD, and in Nature the first link between the ever-unconditioned and the manifested. Fohat is the “Spirit” of ELECTRICITY, which is the LIFE of the Universe.

VI. Stanza VI indicates the next step in the formation of such a world as ours, and brings the history of its evolution down to its Fourth great period (or *Round*), that in which we are now living. With the fourth verse of Stanza VI, ends that portion of the *Stanzas* relating to universal Cosmogony. From this verse on, the *Stanzas* are concerned only with our solar system in general, and the history of our globe in particular. The cosmic periods that separate these verses are of immense duration.

VII. Stanza VII continues the history of the earth and of the Creative Powers, and traces the descent of life down to the appearance of Man upon this planet. This ends Volume I of *The Secret Doctrine*, while the development of “Man,” from his first appearance on this earth in this Round, forms the subject of Volume II.

The commas inclosing “Man” in the last sentence, are very significant, and point to a condition or conditions of being quite different from anything we should call man. The *Commentary* on this verse says that Mankind in its first prototypal shadowy form, is the offspring of the 'Elōhīm (creative spirits) of Life; in its physical aspect it is the direct progeny of the lowest Spirits of the Earth; for its moral, psychic and spiritual nature it is indebted to a group of divine Beings whose name and characteristics will be given hereafter.

But man's physical development took place at the expense of the spiritual inner man and nature. The three middle principles of earth and man became with every race more material, the Soul stepping back to make room for the physical intellect; the *essence* of elements becoming the material and compound elements now known.

It were an impossible task to give in a few pages even the merest outline of the Secret Doctrine, and all that can be done here is to set up a few guideposts, as it were, to point out the way to the student. The all-important teaching, the cornerstone of the temple, is the Unity of all things with the Divine, and when this has become a conviction, it dominates the whole structure, and we realize that we are indeed "a temple not built with hands, eternal in the heavens."

And now to turn our attention to a few of the most important details that describe the evolution of ourselves and our environment.

In the first place we are struck by the omnipresence of the number *seven*, which meets us at every turn, and which it is quite unnecessary to emphasize here. But after a long and careful comparison of these correspondences, it seemed that the principal reason for the importance of this number lay in its relation to *life*, and in one of the many hidden places of *The Secret Doctrine* was found an explanation of the mystery in the statement that in our world the rhythm of life is in *sevens*, because that is the rhythm of our Mother the Moon, who in dying imparted her life to her child the Earth, according to the great Karmic law. Other planets and stars and solar systems, have other rates of vibration: in them the rhythm of life throbs faster or slower as the case may be. The Sun is the heart of our solar system, and there is a regular circulation of the Life Essence throughout that system, like that of the blood in the body, the Sun contracting as rhythmically at every return of that essence, as the human heart does, only instead of a few seconds, it takes the solar blood ten or eleven years to make its rounds. See the scientific theory of the recurrence of sunspots.

With Stanza VI we begin the study of the elements, seven in all, although only four are yet fully manifested, the fifth only in part, as we are barely within the second half of the Fourth Round, and the Fifth element can only manifest fully in the Fifth Round. With each Round, or cycle of existence, a new element develops, but in accordance with the general law, not suddenly, but gradually, and overlapping, as it were, those already known, and those belonging to the future. The element of the present or Fourth Round, is, of course, Earth, the lowest and most material point of our evolution, and as we pass that point and the balance turns towards Spirit, *Ether*, the element of the Fifth Round, manifests itself in various ways, and day by day brings some new quality into use.

But, differentiated as they were in the beginning, these elements were not the compound bodies known to the science of today. Occultism has always taught that the recognized chemical elements of today will sooner or later be found to be only modifications of a *single material element*, and also that in

reality there is neither Spirit nor Matter, but simply numberless aspects of the ever-hidden One.

Neither the stars nor the sun can be said to be made up of those terrestrial elements with which science is familiar, though they, and a host more, still unknown, are all present in the outer robes of the sun. And our globe has its own special laboratory, on the far-away outskirts of its atmosphere, crossing which every atom and molecule differentiates from its primordial nature. The essence of cometary matter, for instance, is totally devoid of any of the characteristics with which science is acquainted, and even that matter, during its rapid passage through our atmosphere, undergoes certain changes in its nature.

Metaphysically and esoterically there is but ONE ELEMENT, and at the root of it is the Deity; and the so-called *seven* elements of which five have already manifested, are the garment, the *veil* of that Deity, direct from whose Essence comes MAN, whether physically, mentally, or spiritually considered. Fire, Air, Water, Earth, are but the visible garb, the symbols of the invisible Souls or Spirits, the Cosmic Gods. The hierarchies of these potencies or Forces, have been classified on a graduated scale of seven from the ponderable to the imponderable. They are septenary in their real cosmic gradation, from their chemical (or physical) to their purely spiritual composition.

Ākāśa, Divine Flame, Ether, Fire, Air, Water, Earth, are the cosmic, sidereal, psychic, spiritual, and mystical principles, *preeminently occult* on every plane of being.

After this enumeration of the elements, Stanza VI says that "Fohat builds seven small worlds revolving, one giving birth to the other. He builds them in the likeness of older worlds." This doctrine of the seven small worlds, or the "Planetary Chain," so-called, was at first taken in altogether too material a sense; and was understood to mean a string of globes, of which our earth was the lowest and most material, instead of seven states of matter and consciousness, through which our earth must pass, on its way to purification, so that the fourth Globe corresponds to the fourth Round as a condition of being. The Earth was described as on the fourth and lowest, because the most material, plane of matter, and as the organs of perception are always adjusted to the medium in which they function, it naturally follows that we can normally perceive only material things, unless we are gifted with those higher senses which are only to be the ordinary possession of a future Humanity. Therefore any planets or stars which are visible to us must be on the same plane of matter as our own.

Our Earth, as the visible representative of its invisible "chain of globes" (or states of matter and consciousness) has to live like the others, through seven Rounds or life-cycles. During the first three it forms and consolidates; during the fourth it settles and hardens; during the last three, it gradually returns to its first ethereal form it is spiritualized, so to speak. First the descent into matter, then the reascent to Spirit: this is the history of man, of planets, of solar systems.

When a “planetary chain” (that is, a planet composed of these sevenfold conditions of matter and consciousness), is in its last “Round,” or cycle of life, before finally dying out it sends all its energy into a neutral center of latent force, and thereby calls into activity a new nucleus of undifferentiated matter. Thus the Moon poured forth all her higher principles into the Earth, finally transferring to the Earth’s most material and lowest condition, her life-forces and powers, while she herself became virtually a *dead* planet, in which rotation has almost ceased.

Among the many septenates we encounter, are the seven kingdoms of Nature; first, three degrees of elementals or nascent centers of forces, which range from complete unconsciousness up to semi-perception; then the mineral kingdom, the turning-point of evolution; then three stages on the ascending, objective physical side; *physical* meaning here differentiated for cosmic purposes, but quite subjective to us on our plane.

It is evident then, that we have in the seven kingdoms of nature, three separate schemes of evolution which are interwoven and interblended at every point, the Monadic, or Spiritual, the Intellectual, and the Physical. These three are the finite aspects or reflections, on the field of cosmic illusion, of the ONE REALITY.

The Monadic Evolution is concerned with the growth and development of the Monad into self-consciousness. This of course, refers to the individual Monads or Egos, in conjunction with —

The Intellectual Evolution, represented by the Solar Spirits (or Ancestors); the givers of intelligence and consciousness to man, and the

Physical Evolution represented by the astral shadows of the Lunar Spirits (or Ancestors), around which Nature has built the present physical body.

Each of these three systems has its own laws, and is ruled and guided by different sets of the higher Intelligences, and it is the union of these three streams in his nature, that makes man the complex being he now is. Man, or rather his Monad, has existed on the earth from the very beginning of this Round. But up to our own Fifth Race, the external shapes which covered those divine astral doubles, changed and consolidated with every sub-race; the physical structure of the fauna and flora of the earth changing with it, as they had to be adapted to the ever-shifting conditions of life on this globe during the geological periods of its formative cycle. And thus they will go on changing with every Root-Race, and every *chief* Sub-race, down to the last one of the Seventh in this Round.

Every Round repeats on a higher scale the evolutionary work of the preceding Round. With the exception of some of the higher anthropoids, the Monadic inflow or inner evolution, is at an end until the next cycle of existence.

In the infancy of the Third Race, while they were yet in a state of purity, the “Sons of Wisdom” who had incarnated in that race produced by *will-power* a progeny called “the Sons of Will and Yoga.” It was not a Race, this progeny, but the living Tree of Divine Wisdom. There were other “Sons of Will and

Yoga" produced by a second spiritual effort, but the first one remains to this day the One and the Supreme. It is he who holds spiritual sway over the *initiated* Adepts throughout the world. He is *the Initiator*, called "the Great Sacrifice," for sitting at the threshold of LIGHT he looks into it from the circle of Darkness which he will not cross; nor will he quit his post till the last day of his life-cycle, because the lonely pilgrims on their way back to their *home* are never sure of not losing their way in this limitless desert of illusion called earth-life. The *Watchers* or the *Builders*, are the Guardian Spirits who reigned over man through the whole period of the Golden Age, and furnished the many and various nations with their divine Kings and Leaders. They had finished their own cycle on the Earth and other worlds in the preceding Rounds, and the elect of our humanity will take their places in future life-cycles when they shall have risen to higher systems than ours.

The teaching is then, that in order to become a divine, fully-conscious god — even the highest — the primeval spiritual Intelligences must pass through the human stage. And this does not apply to mankind alone, but to all Intelligences that have reached their appropriate equilibrium between Matter and Spirit as we have, ever since the middle point of the fourth Root-Race of the fourth Round was passed. Each Entity must win for itself the right to become divine through its own experience.

The refusal to admit, in the whole solar system, of the existence of any other intellectual beings on the human plane, is the greatest conceit of the age. All that science has a right to affirm is, that there are no invisible Intelligences living under *the same conditions* as men. It cannot deny the possibility of there being worlds within worlds under totally different conditions from our own, nor can it deny that there may be a certain limited communication between some of those worlds and ours. To the highest of these worlds, we are taught, belong the seven purely divine Spirits; to the six lower ones belong hierarchies that can occasionally be seen and heard by men.

The highest group of the hierarchy of Creative Powers, is composed of the "divine Flames," the first and last of which, are collectively, the Logos. "The highest group is also spoken of as 'the Fiery Lions,' and the 'Lions of Life,' whose esotericism is securely hidden in the zodiacal sign of Leo" (*Life*). This is one of the dark sayings occasionally thrown out, upon which the student may sharpen his wits. At the Divine FLAME are lit the three descending groups. Having their potential being in the higher group, they now become distinct and separate entities.

The celestial Beings of the second Order are still formless, but more definitely substantial. They are the prototypes of the incarnating Monads, and through them passes the Ray, furnished by them with its future vehicle, the divine Soul (*Buddhi*).

The third Order corresponds to Spirit, Soul, and Intellect (*Ātma, Buddhi, Manas*).

The fourth Order are substantial Entities. This is the highest group among the atomic forms, and the nursery of the human, conscious, spiritual Souls. They are called the “*Units of Life*,” and constitute, through the order below their own, the great mystery of human, conscious, and intellectual being. For the latter are the field wherein lies concealed the germ that will fall into generation. That germ will become the *spiritual potency* in the physical cell that guides the development of the embryo, and which is the cause of all heredity. This inner soul of the physical cell — this “spiritual plasm” that dominates the germinal plasm, is the key that some day must open the gates of the *terra incognita* of the biologist.

The fifth Order is a very mysterious one, and is supposed to contain in itself the dual attributes of both the spiritual and the physical aspects of the universe, the two poles, so to speak, of the Universal Intelligence, and of the dual nature of man, the spiritual and the physical.

The sixth and seventh Orders partake of the lower qualities of the Quaternary. They are conscious, ethereal Entities as invisible as ether. They are Nature-Spirits or Elementals, of countless kinds and varieties. They are all subject to Karma, and have to work it out in every cycle. The sixth Order, moreover, remains almost inseparable from man, who draws from it his mental and psychic principles, all his principles, in fact, but his spirit and his body. It is the Divine Ray alone that proceeds directly from “the One.” Stanza VII says: “Through the countless rays, the Life-ray, the One, proceeds like a thread through many beads. Life precedes Form, and Life survives the last atom of Form” (in the external body).

This verse expresses the conception of a life-thread running through many generations. That is to say, the spiritual potency in the physical cell, guides the development of the embryo, and is the cause of all the hereditary faculties and qualities of man. It is the “eternal cell” of Weismann, *plus* “the spiritual potency.” “The functions of the Universal Life on this earth, are of a fivefold character. In the mineral atom it is connected with the lowest principle of the Spirits of the earth (the sixfold Spirits); in the vegetable particle with their second principle, *prāṇa* or individual life; in the animal with both these, *plus* the third and fourth, the astral body and the emotional nature; in man the germ must receive the fruition of all the five principles, the fifth being *Mind*, or the *Intellectual Soul*. Otherwise he will be born no higher than an animal, a person with an intellectual disability present from birth.” Thus in man alone is the Unit of Life complete. As to his seventh principle, *Ātma*, or the Divine Ray, it is but one ray of the universal Sun. Each *rational* creature receives but the temporary loan of that which has to return to its source, while the physical body is shaped by the lowest terrestrial lives, through physical, chemical, and physiological evolution. “The Blessed Ones have nought to do with the purgations of matter.” (*The Chaldean Book of Numbers*, by Levi Dow Balliett.)

The greatest problem of philosophy relates to the physical and substantial nature of life, which is denied by modern science. The believers alone in Karma

and reincarnation, dimly perceive that the whole secret of Life is in the unbroken series of its manifestations, whether in or apart from the physical body.

On our nascent globe, the Monad or Unit of Life, is first of all shot down by the law of evolution into the lowest form of matter, the mineral. After a sevenfold gyration in the stone (or rather in that which will become metal and stone in the fourth Round) it creeps out of it into some low form of vegetable life, say the lichen. Passing thence through all the other grades of vegetable matter, into what is termed animal matter, it has now reached the point at which it has become the germ, so to speak, of the animal that will develop into physical man. All this, up to the fourth Round, is formless as matter, and senseless as mind. For the Monad, or Unit of Life *per se*, cannot even be called Spirit; it is a ray, a breath of the Logos, which having no relations with conditions and relative finiteness, is unconscious on this plane.

Therefore, besides the material which will be needed for its future human form, the Monad requires (*a*) a spiritual model or prototype for that material to shape itself upon, and (*b*) an intelligent consciousness to guide its evolution and progress, neither of which is possessed by senseless though living matter, nor by the homogeneous Monad. It is only when from a potential androgyne, man has become separated into male and female, that he can be endowed with a conscious, rational, individual Soul, the Mind-soul, to receive which he has to eat of the fruit of Knowledge from the Tree of Good and Evil.

The rudimentary man of the first two and a half Races, was only the *first* — gradually developing into the most perfect — of mammals, therefore when the hour strikes, the Celestial (solar) Ancestors, Entities from previous worlds, step in on our plane, (as the Lunar Ancestors had stepped in before them for the formation of physical or animal man) and incarnate in the bodies prepared for them.

Each new Round develops one of the compound elements known to science. Thus the first Round, we are taught, developed but one Element, and a nature and humanity in what may be called “one dimensional Space.” The second Round brought forth and developed two elements, Fire and Air, and its humanity — if we can give that name to beings living under conditions unknown to us — was a two dimensional species, to use again a familiar phrase in a strictly figurative sense. The expression may be regarded, on one plane of thought, as equivalent to the second characteristic of matter, corresponding to the second perceptive faculty or sense of man. “From the Second Round,” says the *Commentary*, “Earth, hitherto a foetus in the matrix of Space, began its real existence; it had developed individual sentient Life, its second principle” (in the septenary division). “The second corresponds to the sixth principle (the Spiritual Soul); the latter is life continuous; the former, life temporary.” The centers of consciousness of the Third Round, destined to develop into humanity as we know it, arrived at a perception of the third element, *Water*. Those of the fourth Round have added *Earth* as a state of matter to their stock, as well as the

other three elements in their present condition. None of the so-called Elements were in the same condition in the three preceding Rounds, as they are now. They could not have remained the same, for Nature is never stationary during the great Cycle (of Life), and every form of life, including Man, is always adapting its organism to the then reigning elements. It will only be in the next, or fifth Round, that the fifth element, *Ether*, will be as familiar to all men as Air is now. And only during that Round will those higher senses, the growth and development of which Ether subserves, be susceptible of complete expansion. A partial familiarity with the next characteristic of matter, *permeability*, which should develop concurrently with the sixth sense (let us call it *normal clairvoyance*), may be expected to develop at the proper period in the fifth Round. But with the new element added to our resources in the next Round, permeability will become so manifest a characteristic of matter that its densest forms will seem to man's perceptions no more obstructive than a thick fog.

Since this was published in 1888, the {Wilhelm Conrad} Röentgen ray photographs {early photographs made using X-rays, revealing bones and dense objects} have shown us that such effects are possible even now. Elsewhere we are told that the conditions of life and the elements themselves in the Sixth and Seventh Rounds, are so entirely outside of our present state of consciousness, that it is impossible even to name them.

“Who forms Man, and who forms his body?” asks Stanza VII, and the answer is — “the Life, and the Lives.” Here *man* stands for the spiritual, heavenly man, the real and immortal Ego. The *Commentary* says: “Fire alone is ONE, on the plane of the One Reality; on that of manifested, hence illusive being, its particles are fiery Lives, which live and have their being at the expense of every other life which they consume. Therefore they are named the DEVOURERS. . . . Every visible thing in this Universe was built by such LIVES, from conscious and divine primordial man, down to the unconscious agents that construct matter, and disintegrate and differentiate the germs of other lives in the elements.”

Thus Occultism disposes of the so-called Azoic (lifeless) Age of science, for it shows that there never was a time when there was no life upon the Earth. Wherever there is an atom of matter, a particle or a molecule, even in the most gaseous condition, there is life in it, however latent and unconscious. Whatsoever quits the neutral state, becomes active life.

We are taught that every physiological change, all diseases, and all the obstructive phenomena of life, are due to those unseen Creators and Destroyers, that are called in such a loose and general way *microbes*. It might be supposed that the microbes of science are identical with the “fiery lives,” but this is not true. The “fiery lives” are the seventh and highest division of the plane of matter, and correspond in the individual with the One Life of the universe, but only on that plane, the lowest in the cosmos. The microbes of science are the first and lowest subdivision on the second plane — that of material life. The

preservation and destruction of the physical body of man, are due to the alternate functions of the “fiery lives,” as “builders” and “destroyers.”

Thus proceed the cycles of septenary evolution in septennial Nature. 1. The spiritual or divine; 2. The psychic or semi-divine; 3. The intellectual; 4. The passionnal; 5. The instinctual; 6. The semi-corporeal; 7. The purely material or physical nature. The lowest, of course, is the one dependent upon, and subservient to, our five physical senses, which are, in truth, seven.

The Universe manifests periodically, in order that through the Ever-Becoming, every cosmic atom passing from the formless and intangible down to matter in full generation, and then back again, reascending at each period nearer to the final goal — that each atom *may reach through individual merits and efforts*, that plane where it re-becomes the one, unconditioned ALL.

The fundamental Law is that system upon which *is hung the philosophy of all* the rest. It is the omnipresent Reality, impersonal because it contains all and everything. *Its impersonality is a fundamental conception of the system.* It is latent in every atom of the Universe, and is the Universe itself.

The Universe is the periodical manifestation of this unknown Absolute Essence. It is best described as neither Spirit nor Matter, but both.

The Universe — with everything in it — is called ILLUSION, because all is temporary therein. Yet the Universe is real enough to the conscious beings in it, which are as unreal as it is itself.

Everything in the Universe, throughout all its Kingdoms, is CONSCIOUS, that is endowed with a consciousness of its own kind, and on its own plane of perception. Because we cannot perceive any signs of consciousness in stones, for instance, we have no right to say that none exists. (Especially as we are told that the consciousness of each thing is of a special kind, and is active on its own plane of perception. As H.P.B. says elsewhere: “In relation to *its own plane* of consciousness and perception, the ant has as good an intellect as ours, and over and above instinct, shows very high reasoning powers.” *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*, I:13.)

The Universe is worked and guided from *within outwards*. We see that every *external* motion is produced and preceded by internal emotion, will, and thought. As no outward motion or change in man’s *external* body can take place, when normal, unless provoked by an inward impulse given through emotion, will or thought, so with the external or manifested Universe. The whole Kosmos is guided, controlled, and animated by an almost endless series of hierarchies of sentient Beings, each having a mission to perform. They vary infinitely in their respective degrees of intelligence, for each of these Beings either was, or is to be, a man, if not in the present, then in a past or future life-cycle. They are either *incipient* or *perfected* men, and differ morally from terrestrial human beings, only in being devoid of the feeling of personality, and the *human* emotional nature.

It is on the acceptance of the theory of the Unity of all in Nature in its ultimate Essence, that mainly rests the belief in the existence of other conscious

beings around us besides the spirits of the dead. It is on the right comprehension of the primeval evolution of Spirit-Matter and its real Essence that the student has to depend for the only sure clue which can guide his subsequent studies.

There is but one indivisible and absolute Omniscience and Intelligence in the Universe, but the first differentiation of its *reflection* in the manifested world is purely spiritual, and the beings generated in it can have no human consciousness till they have acquired it, personally and individually.

The whole order of Nature evinces a progressive march towards *a higher life*. The whole process of evolution, with its endless adaptations, is a proof of the design in the action of the seemingly blindest forces, and shows that what is called "unconscious Nature," is in reality an aggregate of forces manipulated by semi-intelligent Beings, guided by high Planetary Spirits, whose collective aggregate forms the manifested *Word* of the unmanifested *Logos*, and constitutes at one and the same time, the MIND of the Universe, and its immutable LAW.

KATHARINE HILLARD.

(*To be continued.*)

## A SUMMARY OF THE SECRET DOCTRINE (2)

(Continued.)

### PART 2 THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES

We have seen that the all-important point in the theosophical teaching, is the unity of all things with the Divine, and that only upon this foundation can the cornerstone of Universal Brotherhood be laid. For this idea of brotherhood does not mean an aggregate of more or less similar and sympathetic beings, it means the absolute *identity* of all the rays with the One Divine Ray, “the One manifested Life, the Breath of the Absoluteness.” The differences that we see, the obstacles in the way of realizing this oneness of mankind, are all illusions, belonging to this material plane, and have nothing to do with the Real Man, the reincarnating Ego, except in so far as matter affords him a stage as it were, on which to play his many parts, and through the trials and tribulations of the body and the soul to work his way up to the purified and perfected spirit.

There are two ways of studying the sevenfold nature of man, downwards from above, and upwards from below. We can take the descent of the soul into matter as our starting-point, and trace its gradual involution through ever-thickening veils of matter, till it becomes united with the physical body, or we can begin with the material, and follow the gradual ascent of the inner man, to spirit. With the brief sketch of evolution as taught by theosophy just given, it seemed necessary to begin again with the *highest* point in our study, and as the evolution of the Kosmos is governed by the same laws as rule the earth and man, the three schemes of evolution are inextricably interwoven and interblended at every point. With the gradual consolidation of the earth upon which man *as we know him* was to live, the consolidation of his physical body began, and the fourth Element, earth, made its appearance, with the senses fitted to function therein. There never was a time, we are told, when life did not exist upon this earth, but the life of those early periods, was without any of the characteristics by which we know it now. “Life precedes Form,” says the *Commentary*, “and Life survives the last atom of Form,” that is, the external body.

The seven fundamental transformations of the matter of the heavenly spheres, are given as: I. The homogeneous. II. The aeriform and radiant (*the gaseous*). III. The curd-like (*nebulous*). IV. The atomic, ethereal; (the beginning of *motion*, hence of *differentiation*). V. The germinal, the fiery (differentiated, but composed of the *germs* only of the elements in their earliest states). VI. The fourfold, vapory (the future earth); and VII, Cold, and dependent (on the Sun for light and life).

When evolution has run through the whole cycle of seven "globes" (or states of matter and consciousness), on our Earth, that is one Round, and every Round, on the *descending* scale, is a grosser and more material copy of the preceding Round. On the ascending scale evolution spiritualizes and etherealizes, so to speak, the general nature of each "globe," so that when the seventh stage in whatever Round is reached, the nature of everything in process of evolution, returns to its first spiritual condition, *plus* each time a higher degree of consciousness. In the first Round, the globe having been built by the primitive fire-lives, had no solidity nor other qualities, save a cold brightness, neither form nor color; it was only towards the end of the Round that it developed one element, *Fire*, which from its simple *essence* became in our Round the FIRE we know. The first human types did not resemble the men of today either in form or nature, but in the first Round were only dimensionless images from the astral regions. Hence the term *men* would be here a very misleading one, and is used only as an equivalent for "thinking entities."

From the second Round, Earth began its real existence; it developed the second element, AIR, and individual Life, its second principle. The second corresponds to the sixth principle (the Spiritual Soul); the latter is life continuous; the former, life temporary.

The third Round developed the third element, WATER; while the fourth Round transformed the gaseous fluids and plastic form of our "globe" into the hard, crusted, grossly material EARTH. She will reach her true ultimate form only towards the end of the cycle, after the seventh Round. Our globe is so far only in its fourth state, the astral body of desires, of dark egotism, the progeny of the lower Mind. "It is not the human body that is the grossest of our principles, but verily the real animal center, the animal Soul, for our body is but its shell, through which it acts."

It will only be in the fifth Round, as before said, that the fifth element, ETHER, will be as familiar to all men as air is now.

We have glanced at the different phases in the evolution of our earth and of the elements that make life possible in its different phases of existence, and we come now to the study of man as we know him, ourselves in short. This will be again a case of guideposts to a road, rather than the road itself, the subject is so complicated, and the space so small. We must try then to indicate the most important points, and when we find ourselves hopelessly lost, patiently wait for more light. It will certainly come.

I. In the first place, we know that man is composed of a physical body, gifted with five senses now, and the promise of two more hereafter as the conditions of matter and consciousness become spiritualized, and enable man to function on higher planes. That there are even now occasionally human beings who have reached a point of higher development than their fellows, shows that these faculties will one day be the property of all, for the tide of evolution never recedes, it always seeks a higher level.

II. Next comes the astral body, the model upon which the physical body is built, as our great skyscrapers go up, first the mere outline of an office building, till bit by bit the whole structure is filled out and completed, according to the architect's plan. But the analogy is defective in that the astral body, like the physical, is molecular, and does not *outline* in any way the physical body, but interpenetrates every part of it. To withdraw the astral body from the physical, is not the simple thing that many students believe, but really means the withdrawal of every astral molecule from its place in the physical body. The white corpuscles of the blood are formed from astral matter in the spleen, and can slip through the walls of the blood-vessels, or ooze out of a medium's side during a seance. They are the sanitary police of the body, devouring the bacterial germs. H.P.B. (in *Lucifer*, January 1889) calls the spleen "the physical vehicle of the Protean Double." As there are many kinds of astral bodies, with many names, it would be more exact to call the second principle "the *Liṅga Śarīra*," but it seems unnecessary to be so particular here, and better to use the English name whenever possible.

It is the astral body that forms the bridge between our physical sensations and our consciousness. Just as a telegraph operator receives a message, and forwards it to the person for whom it is intended, so a sensation received by our nerves is transmitted by them to the brain, and thence to the corresponding seat of sensation in the astral body, whence it is reflected to the lower mind, and comes into consciousness. Science has never yet bridged the gap between the physical brain and consciousness, and only when the existence of many gradations of matter between the physical and the mental are accepted, will the problem be solved.

It is upon the model of the astral body that the physical body is built, and when it dies, the astral dies and disintegrates with or less slowly. For this reason, among others, cremation is it, more so desirable, as it frees the particles of the physical and astral bodies at once, instead of subjecting them to a long process of decay.

III. The third principle is LIFE, although it cannot properly be numbered, as it pervades every atom of the universe. In the very beginning of her teaching H.P.B. warned her pupils not to think of these principles as watertight compartments, but rather to consider them as having each its seven gradations, and all as interpenetrating and mingling with each other. Life is like the ocean, and we are like the drops of water that compose it, there is no possibility of saying that one drop leaves off and another one begins.

The Life-principle, on our plane, is but the effect and result of the *intelligent* action of the "Host," or collective Principle, the manifesting Life and Light. The "nervous Ether" is the lowest principle of the primordial Essence, which is *Life*. The Sun is the storehouse of vital force, which is the *noumenon* of electricity. It is the action of cosmic electricity upon a compound or even a simple body, that produces life. When a body dies, it passes into the same polarity as its male energy, and repels, therefore, the active agent, which losing

its hold upon the *whole*, fastens upon the parts or molecules, this action being called chemical.

The fourth principle, the animal Soul, completes the Quaternary, or fourfold man, and includes the passional, instinctual, and emotional nature. It is called sometimes the body of Desire. It is this principle that binds us to earth-life. "It is not the human body that is the grossest of all our principles," says H.P.B., "but verily the *middle* principle, the real animal center; whereas our body is but its shell, the irresponsible factor or medium, through which the beast in us acts."

The "breath of life" breathed into the nostrils of Adam, is life and the animal soul conjoined, it is these two together that make the "Vital Spark." When united to the lower part of the Mind, it becomes Kāma-Manas, or the normal brain-intelligence, and joined to the Life-principle, it pervades every part of the body, as the vital force, or Vitality. During life, Kāma has no form or body, but after death it takes a form composed of astral matter, and becomes what is known as the Kāma-Rūpa. It possesses consciousness of a very low order, and is always attracted to the lowest type of mediums. Such a Body of Desire is a very dangerous associate, and is the entity often spoken of as a "spook."

The persistence of the Kāma-Rūpa after death, depends upon the character of the dying person. The more intellectual and spiritual his life has been, the less vitality will the Kāma-Rūpa have, and it will quickly fade out into nothingness. But if during the man's life on earth, his animal nature was predominant, the Kāma-Rūpa would last a long while after the death of the body. In case of sudden death or suicide, the person is doomed to fill out the measure of his days within the sphere of the earth.

The fourth principle then, which completes the fourfold man, the Quaternary, leaves him a perfect animal, with the potential higher qualities still undeveloped. Stanza IV, Part II of *The Secret Doctrine* gives us a wonderfully complete sketch of the evolution of the fourfold man up to the point where it was impossible to make further progress without Mind. "The Breath (that is, the human Monad) needed a form; the Fathers (the Lunar Ancestors) gave it. The Breath needed a gross body; the Earth moulded it. The Breath needed the Spirit of Life; the Solar Ancestors breathed it into its form. The Breath needed a mirror of its body (that is, an astral shadow); 'we gave it our own,' said the Creative Powers. The Breath needed a vehicle of desires (the emotional soul); 'It has it,' said the Drainer of Waters (the fire of passion and animal instinct). The 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 (Solar) Fire. . . .

"(Nascent) Man remained an empty senseless phantom."

This is the summing up of occult knowledge in the poetic language of the East. Modern psychology would say that not until the processes of evolution had perfected the physical brain, could it become a fitting instrument for the

use of the mind, but after all, to the psychologist mind is only a function of the brain. Very different is the conviction of the occultist. *The Voice of the Silence* says: "Have perseverance as one who doth evermore endure. Thy shadows (personalities) live and vanish; that which is in thee shall live forever, that which *Knows*, for it is the man that was, that is, and will be, for whom the hour shall never strike."

IV. The human Monad referred to in Stanza IV, Volume II, as *the Breath*, is the reincarnating Ego, the Ray of the Divine Spirit, eternal and unchangeable, the string upon which are threaded the countless beads of the personalities, "that live and vanish." The Monad, Manas, the Man or the Thinker, is very clearly described in *The Key to Theosophy*. "Try to imagine a 'Spirit,' a celestial Being, divine in its essential nature, yet not pure enough to be one with the ALL, which union it can achieve only by passing *individually* and *personally*, that is, *spiritually* and *physically* through every experience that exists in the manifested Universe. It has, therefore, after having gained such experience in the lower Kingdoms, to pass through every experience on the human planes. This *individualized* 'Thought' is what we theosophists call the *real* human Ego, the thinking Entity imprisoned in a case of flesh and bones. Once imprisoned, or incarnate, the Mind is always dual, that is to say the *rays* of the eternal, divine Mind, considered as individuals, assume a twofold attribute, their essential, heaven-aspiring mind (the higher Manas) and the human quality of thinking, or animal cogitation, rationalized, owing to the superior quality of the human brain, which is the lower Mind (or Manas)."

That is, to put it still more plainly, the mind is always dual, and when we are considering it as an individual Entity, is and composed of the heaven-aspiring intellect, which we call the higher mind, and the reasoning power which we have in common with the animals (but in a higher degree, owing to the superior development of the human brain), which we know as the lower mind.

This conception of the dual character of the mind, solves many problems in connection with the intelligence of animals, and enables us to realize that an animal may be possessed of a physical body, an astral form, vitality, instinct, even a large share of intelligence, and yet be devoid of the higher mind, the reincarnating Ego. As to vegetable or mineral monads, the more correct expression would be "the Monadic Essence" manifesting in that form of matter called the mineral (or vegetable) kingdom. . . . The tendency towards separation into individual Monads is gradual, and in the higher animals, comes almost to the point. "Man is a perfected animal, the vehicle of a fully developed Monad, *self-conscious*, and deliberately following its own line of progress, whereas in the insect, and even in the higher animals, the higher Triad of principles is absolutely dormant." (*Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*, I:13.) Precisely the same thing is said in *The Secret Doctrine*, and in II:81, we have these emphatic words: "Between man and the animal — whose Monads are fundamentally identical — there is the impossible abyss of Mentality and Self-

Consciousness." But we must remember that these higher principles are not *non-existent* in the animal, they are dormant or latent, to be developed in due time. "The animal has an astral body that survives the physical a short time, but its (animal) Monad does not reincarnate in the same, but in a higher species, and has no Devachan, of course. It has the seeds of all the human principles in itself, but they are *latent*." (*The Secret Doctrine*, II:196.)

The best analysis of the higher principles in man, put in the simplest way, is that given in *The Key to Theosophy* (175), beginning with the higher Mind, in order to keep the sequence we have used hitherto.

#### V. THE INNER OR HIGHER EGO.

"The Inner or Higher Ego is *Manas*, the fifth principle, so-called, independently of *Buddhi*, (The Spiritual Soul). The Mind Principle is only the Spiritual Soul when merged *into one* with *Buddhi*. It is the permanent Individuality, or the Reincarnating Ego.

#### VI. THE SPIRITUAL DIVINE EGO.

The Spiritual Divine Ego, is the Spiritual Soul or *Buddhi*, in close union with *Manas*, the Mind-principle, without which it is no Ego at all, but only the Ātmic vehicle.

#### VII. THE HIGHER SELF.

The HIGHER SELF is *Ātma*, the inseparable Ray of the Universal and ONE SELF. It is the God *above* more than within us."

It will be evident, then, that the highest in us is that Eternal Existence which we share with every particle of Life and Intelligence in the universe, and that in conjunction with the Spiritual Soul and the Mind, makes up the trinity in Man, and forms the permanent Individuality or the Reincarnating Ego. Strictly speaking, there are but five principles in man, the lowest, the physical body, being an illusion, and the highest being that Breath of the Divine which overshadows man, rather than forms a part of him. But for ordinary purposes, the sevenfold division is more convenient.

KATHARINE HILLARD.

(*To be continued.*)

## A SUMMARY OF THE SECRET DOCTRINE (3)

(Continued.)

### PART 3 REINCARNATION AND KARMA

Reincarnation and Karma have been rightly called “the twin doctrines of theosophy,” because they are so inseparable, almost impossible to speak of Karma without bringing in reincarnation, or of reincarnation without mentioning Karma. Karma is Eternal Law and Absolute Justice, reincarnation makes the action of that law and justice possible. One of the universal problems of the world, the question that confronts all men when they begin to think, is first, how to reconcile Divine Justice and Mercy with the terrible sin and suffering in the world, and second, how to solve the problem of one man’s life of comfort and luxury, side by side with his fellow’s existence of incessant toil and struggle. What can explain the misery of the thousands of little children that perish every year in the dark and noisome tenements of our great cities, while the parents that brought them into the world are living like dogs with no hope of a better future? Can we wonder at the murders and suicides that we hear of every day, when we realize that they take place among people who have no idea of Divine Justice and no trust in Divine Love?

And besides the “accidents” of birth and station, how many men of more than average goodness are struggling painfully through life weighed down by a burden of inherited tendencies that gradually sap the strength and paralyze the energy of the character, and little by little drag the balance down to the side of evil. Should the man be held responsible for the outcome of such tendencies when perhaps he has not been given the strength to struggle against his insidious foes?

It is a wise old French proverb that says: “to know all is to pardon all.” But only Divine Omniscience knows for how much of a man’s Karma that man is directly responsible, and how much belongs to that of his race, his nation, and the people among whom his lot is cast, in all of which he is necessarily involved. Therefore no man should speak of another’s trials as his punishment, or say of them, “that is his Karma,” for the parti-colored threads of life are impossible to disentangle, and what seems to us righteous retribution, may be the last trial of a saint, or the first step upward of the future prophet.

Nor is it right to say, as some theosophists do, “the good Karma will take care of me,” for Karma is not “good,” any more than it is evil, nor does it “take care” of any one, being absolute and unerring Law. “The Blessed Ones have naught to do with the purgations of matter.” They are concerned with higher things.

Another frequent mistake is to speak of “interfering with Karma,” as if one finger of little man could stop the cogwheels of the Universe. It is supposed by many that to help a person in distress is to interfere with his Karma, because his distress is a part of it, and therefore should not be relieved. But is it not just as truly your Karma which has made you able to help him? One might say with Emerson’s “Rhodora,” “the self-same Power that brought me there brought you.”

Another element in the seeming injustice of fate (and here we take up the thread of reincarnation again) is the shortness of life’s span. Even seventy years is not enough under the most favorable circumstances, to create a character, to weed out its evil tendencies, and strengthen its good ones, to develop its powers, and give a chance for the achievements of the poet, the painter, the musician. How few men have lived to see the fulfilment of their dreams of beauty or usefulness! Of how many glorious youths that died in the heyday of their promise it might be said — “ ’Tis not a life, ’tis but a piece of childhood thrown away.”

But to the believer in reincarnation all these problems are solved by “the twin doctrines,” and instead of a capricious Deity, lifting one man to heaven, and thrusting another into hell at his own pleasure, Eternal Justice metes out to every man the harvest of his own sowing in balances that can never weigh wrong, and he is given all eternity in which to develop the soul, and lead the inner man to perfection. Every good deed, every kind word or thought is stored up for him, and will help to make his next life better and nobler than this one. Not one life, but thousands of lives, if necessary, are his in which to learn the lessons of the higher life, and the today and tomorrow of every man depend upon his yesterdays, and the use he has made of them. What he has sown he shall most surely reap, and in the measure he meted it to others.

But it is not enough to make assertions, we should be able to give a reason for the faith that is in us. In the first place, what is the meaning of “reincarnation” which is sometimes confused with “metempsychosis,” a very different thing? The word *reincarnation* suggests at once the soul as a dweller in the flesh, and if once imprisoned in a fleshly tabernacle, why not many times? The word *metempsychosis* lays more stress upon the dweller, and was once applied to animals as well as to human beings. The latter, according to this doctrine, were doomed to reincarnation in an animal form as punishment for their sins, the dominant sin of the man finding its fitting habitation in the brute whose nature most nearly represented that sin. And the evil traits of men, their cruelty, their greed, their vices of every kind, went after their death, it was believed, to increase the sum of cruelty and greed in the universe, to make the tiger more cruel, the lion more fierce, the shark more rapacious. Pythagoras {of Samos}, according to William Shakespeare, thought the soul of a man’s grandmother might inhabit a bird, but Malvolio {of Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night*} “thought nobly of the soul, and in no way approved that opinion.” Nor was it long before the doctrine of reincarnation superseded that of metempsychosis, and men

began to think so nobly of the soul that they could not believe it could go backwards into animal bodies.

The objections to reincarnation have been founded for the most part on a misconception of the real meaning of its teaching. In the first place it must be understood what it is that reincarnates. Man has already been described as a complex entity, of a sevenfold constitution, endowed with a physical body, an astral body, a portion of the all-pervading Life, and that partially developed mind many of whose characteristics he shares with the higher animals. These four principles form what is generally known as the Quaternary, while the higher Mind and Ātma-Buddhi, or the Spirit-Soul, made one with the Mind (or Intellectual Soul) form the human Trinity, sometimes called the Triad. Beginning with the lowest principle, the physical body, every one knows that it must decay at death and that the astral form decays step by step with it as soon as the life-principle departs, and that "the body of desire" (or the Kāma-Rūpa) the sum of man's passionnal nature, the emotional Soul, has but a short and precarious existence after death, the length of its survival in the astral world depending, as already said, upon the more or less spiritual tendencies of the Ego. His Kāma-Rūpa will dwell for a time on the astral plane clothed in a body made up of astral matter. If a man be of average goodness during his lifetime, all that is pure and unsullied in his nature will return after his death to its source in the Universal Mind, and the astral matter that is to be the mould of his next body will be gradually purified and made ready for a better master than the last.

All men pass from the portals of death into a state analogous to the dream-state, in which the soul, wearied by the cares and trials of life, rests from its labors, and carries out its highest ideals into a fulfilment, which if purely subjective, is none the less real to that soul.<sup>1</sup> While a man dreams, the outer world is lost to him, it ceases to exist, and the scenes and characters of his dream are realities to the sleeping Ego, who has lost all cognizance of waking existence.

Life as a whole runs in a cycle exactly corresponding to its smaller divisions. A man wakes from the quiet sleep of night to the activities of a new day. He fills his day with toil or pleasure or study, and returns again to the sleep of night and the rest that will enable him to go back to work when the next day begins, with renewed physical strength and quickened mental powers. During that period of sleep which we call unconsciousness, he may have received much spiritual help, that assisted the growth of the inner man, and aided him to develop his latent powers, but which he seldom recognizes for what it is. So in the longer cycles, he has his periods of activity, his longer or shorter times of absolute rest, and then a new life with higher powers. The rest that comes between two active periods, or reincarnations, is called *Devachan*, or "the Kingdom of the Gods," and is, like our dream-life, wholly subjective. During this time, the Ego carries out all the long-cherished ideals of its last life, and for the time being, becomes the ideal reflection of the man it was when last on earth. As it is a subjective condition, there can be no consciousness of death in

Devachan, and “nothing will be wanting to make the disembodied state one of perfect happiness. . . The Ego in Devachan lives its intermediate cycle between two incarnations, surrounded by everything it had aspired to in vain, and in the companionship of every one it had loved on earth. . . Spiritual, holy love is immortal, and love beyond the grave has a magic and divine potency which reacts on the living, . . . for love is a strong shield, and is not limited by space or time.” (*The Key to Theosophy*, 150)

Devachan, then, is the heaven that we make for ourselves, the reward of the aspiring soul, but what of its punishment? And here we have again the action of Karma, which is Absolute Justice. It is neither logical nor just, according to theosophy, to punish in the spirit the sins committed in the body, and for which the body is largely responsible. Therefore all sins that mar man’s record in this life are to be punished in the physical body of other incarnations, just as he is suffering now from the retribution due him not only from his last life-cycle, but from all his previous lives on earth, however numerous they may have been. During the active periods of existence, the Ego builds the temple of his soul, eternal in the heavens, and fills it with treasures that moth and rust cannot corrupt. Then comes the peaceful rest in which he grows spiritually, and gradually prepares for a better life than the last. Meanwhile the “stern daughter of the voice of God,” inexorable Karma, has been making up his balance-sheet, and his new life will be conditioned by the past, and will be hampered as that has been, by all the sins and errors which have stained the fair pages of his record.

The Ego then receives after death only the reward of the *unmerited* sufferings endured during its past incarnations. “The whole punishment after death, even for the materialist, consists therefore in the absence of any reward, and the utter loss of the consciousness of one’s bliss and rest. . . Karmic punishment reaches the Ego only in its next incarnation.” H.P.B. herself told the writer that in the case of an atheist who had led a moral life and had devoted himself to working for humanity, the time between incarnations would be short, perhaps only a few months, because he had ignored the spiritual side of his nature, and laid up for himself none of those treasures in heaven which should have been his portion after death. This rapid resumption of life on earth would be the natural result of another Karmic law which regulates the time of reincarnation in normal cases. If the Ego, during its life on earth and its rest in Devachan has been storing up spiritual knowledge and experiences to which it is continually adding, it is not until all this spiritual provision has been exhausted that it is forced to yield to the thirst for earth-life, and to return to the physical plane.

One of the most frequent objections to the doctrine of reincarnation is the fact that we have no recollection of our past lives. But why should we? The organ of memory is the brain, and as long as the Ego resides in the physical body, all its records are imprinted on the brain. When the body dies, the memory also perishes, and with a new body we get a new brain, with all its tablets blank.

Memory as a function of the physical brain is incapable of carrying its treasures over to another life, but as Swedenborg rightly said, there are two memories, the mental and the spiritual, and the spiritual memory is a function, not of the brain, but of the higher consciousness. As the Ego grows more and more spiritual, as that part of his nature becomes more and more developed, he learns to think of his present life as the ordinary man thinks of an old coat, which has nothing to do with the man himself, and is presently to be thrown away like all worn-out garments. Some flash of recollection may come across the brain-memory occasionally, born of some dear association with the long forgotten past, but for real memories of past incarnations we must wait until the memory of the soul is ours. As a rule, people who remember, or think they remember, their past incarnations, always remember themselves as the central figure in the picture. Marie Antoinette and Mary, Queen of Scots, for instance, are very favorite subjects for incarnation (I have met several of them myself), but I never met any one who claimed to have incarnated in the beggar at the door of either of these great ladies, or the scullion in their kitchen. And yet the beggar or the scullion might have attained a height of spiritual growth that neither queen had reached.

“The spiritual Ego of man moves in Eternity like a pendulum between the hours of birth and death,” says *The Key to Theosophy*. “At the solemn moment of death, every man, even when death is sudden, sees the whole of his past life marshalled before him in its minutest details. For one short instant the *personal* becomes one with the individual and all-knowing *Ego*. But this instant is enough to show him the whole chain of causes which have been at work during his life. . . and he feels and knows the justice of all the suffering that has overtaken him. . . As the man at the moment of death has a retrospective insight into the life he has led, so at the moment he is reborn on earth the *Ego*, awaking from the state of Devachan, has a prospective vision of the life which awaits him, and realizes all the causes which have led to it. He realizes them and sees futurity, because it is between Devachan and rebirth that the *Ego* regains his full *manasic* consciousness.”

Nothing has been said so far of the possible loss of the soul, a terrible, but a very infrequent, consequence of *conscious* persistence in evil, the deliberate choosing of the worse instead of the better, for *its own sake*. The trend of the universe is towards perfection, and so long as a spark of good survives in the soul there is hope of its final redemption. Annihilation, moreover, is never instantaneous, and may require centuries for its accomplishment. With every incarnation the entity who has chosen the path of evil “sinks lower and lower until the evil force gradually wears itself out, and such a personality perishes, separated from the source of life. It finally disintegrates, to be worked up into other forms of living things, but as a separate existence it is lost.”

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This brief introduction to the study of theosophy can only indicate its most important teachings, and leaves the student to supply the missing links, which are very numerous. Theosophy has been described as a science, a philosophy, and a religion, but here its scientific side has hardly been mentioned, although it is so often found anticipating the most modern discoveries in physics, astronomy, etc.

Next to the teaching of the Divine Unity, which involves that of Universal Brotherhood, the law of Karma is certainly the most important, as laying such stress upon individual responsibility, and the unerring action of Law. "Man's fate is what he himself makes it," says *The Key to Theosophy* (236-237). "Once grasp the idea that universal causation is not merely present, but past, present, and future, and every action on our plane falls naturally and easily into its true place, and is seen in its true relation to ourselves and others."

And if the student desires a summary of its religious teaching, let him take this passage from *Isis Unveiled*: "There being but One Truth, man requires but one church, the Temple of God within us; walled in by matter, but penetrable by any who can find the way; *the pure in heart see God.*" (*Isis Unveiled*, II:635.)

KATHARINE HILLARD.

#### NOTE

1. To understand this description of the state of the soul between incarnations it must be remembered that in Eastern philosophy the outer world of manifestation is regarded as "the great delusion," the rainbow-hued projection of the white light of the Oversoul in which all souls share. Thus as "the Kingdom of God is within," the soul enters a deeper reality as its consciousness is indrawn. EDITOR.

## WILLIAM SHARP = FIONA MACLEOD

In *The Theosophical Quarterly* for January 1907, there appeared an account of a curious case of double personality, as studied by Dr. Morton Prince of Boston, who called his book *The Dissociation of a Personality*. The personality in question was that of a young lady of 23, an extremely delicate person of neurotic heredity and very unhappy childhood, who seemed at intervals to be possessed by not one, but four different intelligences, who completely monopolized the “real Miss Beauchamp’s” consciousness, and only after a long struggle of some six years, were the intruders finally expelled by the aid of a complicated system of hypnotism and suggestion.

And now an entirely different case comes before the public, still a case of double personality, but this time the secondary personality, if we may use the expression, of a much finer and more spiritual type than the first one. William Sharp had been known as a writer for some years, and possessed a wonderful gift of charm that attracted to him many of the prominent poets and essayists of his day, notably Dante Rossetti and his gifted sister Christina Rossetti, George Meredith, Alfred Lord Tennyson, Edward Dowden, Philip Bourke Marston, the Janviers {Thomas Allibone and Catharine Ann}, Edmund Clarence Stedman, Robert Louis Stevenson, and many others, in England and America. He married his cousin Elizabeth Sharp, after an engagement of nine years, in October 1884; she had an income of \$175 a year, and he, to use her own picturesque phrase, “had \$150 in his pocket.” Their relatives furnished a little house in West Kensington, London, for them, and they began their new life with high hopes. Their busy pens had to work incessantly to keep the wolf from the door, and it is no wonder that much of William Sharp’s writing at this period could only be called hack work. But there were glimpses of something higher always hanging about him, memories of childhood, and strange and beautiful dreams, the seeds as it were, that were to blossom into wonderful flowers of legend and poetry later on. He was born in Paisley, Scotland, but his father loved the West Highlands so well that he took a house every summer somewhere between the mountains and the sea. Here William’s old nurse Barbara, told him wild stories of Vikings and the heroes of ancient Celtic sagas, whose adventures he loved to enact. During his sixth year, the family had a house for the summer on the great heather-clad hills of Loch Long, where the boy especially delighted in a little pine wood nestling on the hillside above the house. It was a holy place to him, he felt there was some great power behind the beauty he saw; behind the wonder of the wind, and the sunshine and the silences he loved, that made him

long to be one with it all. And so he built a little altar of rough stones under a swaying pine, and laid white flowers upon it as an offering. Sometimes he threw such offerings, with many more of his childish treasures, into the loch, hoping to move the mysterious sea-god whom his nurse told him dwelt there, into appearing to his little worshipper. It is interesting to remember that George Sand {pen name of Amantine Lucile Aurore Dupin}, as a little child built an altar of stones under the trees, and laid her childish offerings on it.

There was little or nothing in Sharp's early writings to suggest the psychic side of his life, but everything in his personality; and it seems strange, now that the secret is out, that any of his friends could have read *Pharais* and not have seen William Sharp's hand in every line of it. But he was apparently busy with monographs on the poets and criticism of many kinds, as well as poems, elegiac and lyric. In 1893 he sets down in his diary that he has written "the first part of a Celtic romance called *Pharais*." In Rome he had found "the desired incentive towards a true expression of himself," says his wife, "in the stimulus and sympathetic understanding of the friend (E.W.R. {Ernest William Rhys}) to whom he dedicated the first of the books published under his pseudonym." During the writing of *Pharais* the author began to realize how much the feminine element dominated in the book, and he decided to issue the volume under the name of *Fiona Macleod*, "which flashed ready-made" into his mind. Mrs. Catharine Ann Janvier, one of the first of the few friends let into the secret, asked him "why he chose to send forth good work under the signature of a woman?" He answered, "I can write out of my heart in a way I could not do as William Sharp, and indeed I could not do so if I were the woman Fiona Macleod is supposed to be, unless veiled in scrupulous anonymity. . . . My truest self, the self who is below all other selves, *must* find expression, yet I cannot, save in this hidden way." And later he wrote: "Sometimes I am tempted to believe I am half a woman, and saved by the hazard of chance from what a woman can be made to suffer if one let the light of the common day illuminate the avenues and vistas of her heart."

*Pharais*<sup>1</sup> was published in 1894, and created a sensation in the literary world. A few keen-eyed critics suspected Sharp of its authorship, but the world-at-large clung to their discovery, or what they *thought* their discovery of the predominant feminine element in the book, and refused to believe that a man could have woven so fine and delicate a web of poetic legend.

The next year *The Mountain Lovers* was published, and Sharp fled from the gloom of London, "that vast reservoir of all the evils of civilized life," to the fresh keen air of Arran, Scotland, the smell of the pines, the heather, and the bracken, and the salt weed upon the shore. Here, in the vast solitudes, his other self became more and more real to him. "There is something of a strange excitement," he wrote to his wife, "in the knowledge that two people are here; so intimate and yet so far-off. For it is with me as though Fiona were asleep in another room. I catch myself listening for her step sometimes, for the sudden opening of a door. It is unawaresly that she whispers to me. . . . It seems passing

strange to be here with her alone at last." The illusion was kept up furthermore by the presentation of various copies of *Pharaïs* and *The Mountain Lovers* to George Meredith and other literary lights, and Sharp went so far as to write of "his cousin, Miss Fiona Macleod" to Edward Clodd, president of the Omar Khayyam Club, of which Sharp had just been elected a member. To the *Glasgow Evening News*, which had cast some doubt on the existence of Fiona Macleod (seeming to consider her as a sort of Celtic "Mrs. Harris"). Sharp wrote: "Miss Fiona Macleod is not Mr. William Sharp, Miss Fiona Macleod is not Mrs. William Sharp, Miss Fiona Macleod is — Miss Fiona Macleod." And the better to guard his secret, he kept up a simultaneous fire of articles by Wm. Sharp, which effectually masked the new and startlingly original legends and poems by F. M., of which he and his wife continually spoke and wrote to each other as of something entirely outside of themselves. So when his wife was in Italy, he wrote to her: "There can be no question that F. M.'s deepest and finest work is in this *Washer of the Ford* volume (just published). As for the spiritual lesson that nature has taught me, and that has grown within me otherwise, I have given the finest utterance to it that I can. . . . Than *The Last Supper* I shall never do anything better. Apart from this intense inner flame that has been burning within me so strangely and deeply of late — I think my most imaginative work will be found in the titular piece *The Washer of the Ford*."

To the writer *The Last Supper* is the finest thing Sharp wrote, and his friend Thomas A. Janvier wrote to him: "The stories seem to be the result of some outside force constraining you to write them. . . . Of all in the book, my strongest affection is for *The Last Supper*. It seems to me to be the most purely beautiful and the profoundest thing that you have done."

The central story of *The Archer* was one of the tales which the author valued most, and a curious coincidence happened concerning a part of it. That "arbitrary fantasy" is the record of a dream, or vision, which the author had at Tarbert. In a letter from Mr. William Butler Yeats received shortly after, the Irish poet related a similar experience which he had had — a vision of a beautiful woman shooting arrows among the stars. "That night she appeared to Arthur Symons who is staying here, and so impressed him that he wrote a poem on her, the only one he ever wrote to a dream." By this time Fiona was corresponding with many of Sharp's friends, and some of her own, and to Ernest Rhys the Welsh poet, she wrote in December 1906, parrying his questions in a very characteristic and charming way. "Fiona," she told him, "was the Gaelic diminutive of Fionagh (Flora). For the rest — I was born more than a thousand years ago, in the remote region of Gaeldom known as the Hills of Dream. There I have lived the better part of my life, my father's name was Romance, and that of my mother was Dream. I have no photograph of their abode, which is just under the quicken-arch immediately west of the sunset-rainbow. You will easily find it. Nor can I send you a photograph of myself. My last fell among the dew-wet heather, and is now doubtless lining the cells of the wild bees. All this authentic information I gladly send you!"

It was a tremendous strain upon William Sharp to keep up with the two sides of his nature, because while he wished F. M. to develop under the veil of secrecy he had thrown about her, he was anxious that the reputation of W. S. should be maintained. The needs of the two natures were not always alike, and sometimes created a complex condition, that ended in a nervous collapse.

In 1899 *The Dominion of Dreams* was published, and W. S. writes to a friend: "This book is at once the deepest and most intimate that F. M. has written. . . . If ever a book (in the deeper portion of it) came out of the depths of a life it is this; and so, I suppose, it shall live — for by a mysterious law, only the work of suffering, or great joy, survives, and that in the degree of its intensity. . . . In one of the stories in this book, *The Distant Country*, occurs a sentence that is to be inscribed on my gravestone when my time comes<sup>2</sup>: "Love is more great than we conceive, and Death is the keeper of unknown redemptions." This is the last sentence (except a quoted proverb) of *The Distant Country*, and Fiona herself says of that tale, if tale it can be called, that there is nothing in her writings "to stand beside it as the deepest and most searching utterance on the mystery of passion." And elsewhere she says: "I no longer ask of a book, is it clever or striking, or is it well done, or even is it beautiful, but — out of how deep a life does it come. That is the most searching test. . . . Do not speak of the spiritual life as 'another life'; there is no 'other' life; what we mean by that is with us now. The great misconception of Death is that it is the only door to another world." And again: "There is a great serenity in the thought of death, when it is known to be the Gate of Life."

"It was our habit, when talking to one another of the F. M. writings, to speak of 'Fiona' as a separate entity," says Mrs. Sharp, — "so that we should not be taken unawares if suddenly spoken to about 'her books.' It was William's habit also to write and post to himself two letters on his birthday—letters of admonition and of new resolutions, which he would give to his wife with a smile, saying 'Fiona is rather hard on me, but she is quite right.' "

In December, W. S. and his wife were together in that most beautiful place in the world, Taormina in Sicily, and on a drive in the mountains, when the beauty of a warm April day suddenly changed to snow and a piercing wind, the poet's enfeebled frame received its death blow. Four days afterwards, he suddenly leant forward with shining eyes and exclaimed in a tone of joyous recognition, "Oh the beautiful 'Green Life' again!" and sank back with the contented sigh, "Ah, all is well."

The title of F. M.'s romance, *Green Fire* was taken from a line in *Cathal of the Woods*, "O green fire of life, pulse of the world, O Love!" And the deeper meaning of the expression "Green Life" — so familiar to all who knew F. M. — is suggested in a sentence at the close of the book: "Alan knew that strange nostalgia of the mind for impossible things. Then, wrought for a while from his vision of green life, and flamed by another green fire than that born of earth, he dreamed his dream."

Shortly before he died, William Sharp had prepared letters to be sent after his death to several friends whom he thought might be offended by his reticence as to F. M., telling them that he and he only was the author — in the literal and literary sense — of all written under the name of “Fiona Macleod.” “It is a mystery which I cannot explain,” he wrote, “perhaps you will intuitively understand or may come to understand. ‘The rest is silence.’”

In surveying the dual life as a whole, Mrs. Sharp says that she found that “W. S.” was the first to find himself, while his twin, “F. M.” remained passive, or a separate self. But when “she” awoke to active consciousness, “she” became the deeper, the more impelling, the more essential factor. This severance and the resulting conflict, sometimes caused the flaming of the dual life to become so fierce that “Wilfion” {William + Fiona} — as Mrs. Sharp called the inner and third Self that lay behind that dual expression — realized the necessity of bringing the two separated selves into some kind of conscious harmony. This is what he meant when he wrote in 1899 to Mrs. Janvier (who was in the secret), “I am going through a new birth.”

Although the difference between the two literary expressions was so marked, they had one thing, at least, in common, the psychic quality of seership. As F. M. he dreamed dreams, and “got in touch with ancestral memories of his race,” and as W. S. he also saw visions from his childhood up, and a few of his friends knew him as psychic and mystic, who knew nothing of him as Fiona Macleod. W. B. Yeats, the Irish poet, and one of Sharp’s intimates, considered him as the most extraordinary psychic he had ever encountered. He really believed that Fiona Macleod was a secondary personality, “as distinct as those one reads about in books of psychical research.” W. S. could set himself to work normally, but for the F. M. self, he had to wait upon mood, or seek conditions to induce it. But the psychic, visionary power belonged exclusively to neither; it influenced both, and was subject to laws he did not fully understand.

“I remember from early days,” writes Mrs. Sharp, “how he would speak of the curious ‘dazzle in the brain’ which preceded the falling away of all material things and preluded some inner vision of Great Beauty or symbolic import — that would pass as rapidly as it came.”

“Once he saw in waking vision those Divine Forges he had sought in childhood. On the verge of the Great Immensity that is beyond the confines of space, he saw Great Spirits of Fire standing at flaming anvils. And they lifted up the flames, and moulded them on the anvils, into shapes and semblances of men, and the Great Spirits took these flaming shapes and cast them forth into space, so that they should become the souls of men.”

In fact the phenomena in the Beauchamp case were physical-psychical, those in Sharp’s case were psychical-spiritual. Mrs. Mona Caird wrote of him: “He was almost encumbered by the infinity of his perceptions; by the thronging interests, intuitions, glimpses of wonders, beauties, and mysteries which made life for him a pageant and a splendor such as is only disclosed to the soul that has to bear the torment and the revelations of genius.”

“And I would add,” says Mrs. Sharp in the last sentence of her book — “to quote my husband’s own words — ever below all the stress and failure, below all the triumph of his toil, lay the beauty of his dream.”

KATHARINE HILLARD.

NOTES

1. Paradise.
2. And he had his wish.

{This series of three articles also appeared as a 40 page pamphlet circa 1893,  
and was prefaced by the following:

#### Objects of The Theosophical Society

The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or color. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies, and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.}

## A PRIMER OF THEOSOPHY (1)

### I

In studying any system of religious thought worthy of the name, we are at once confronted by the problems involved in the relations of the Creator to the created, of Man to God. But we soon find that it is man who is really the creator, and that it is in his image that his God is made. The god of {preliterate man} is an intensification of the traits that {preliterate man} most fears, and admires and naturally worships, and as civilization carries its broadening light into {regions of Africa little-known to Europeans at the time}, for instance, the deified {preliterate man} takes on the semblance of something higher than himself in the scale of being, or if not higher, at least more powerful. In Robert Browning's wonderful poem of "Caliban upon Setebos," the poet seems to have penetrated to the very core of primitive man's nature, and to have painted a perfect picture of what he calls "natural theology in the island," as embodied in {preliterate man} Caliban's description of his creator, "Placable if His mind and ways were guessed, but rougher than His handiwork, be sure. . . . Also it pleaseth Setebos to work, use all His hands, and exercise much craft, by no means for the love of what is worked. . . . Believeth with the life the pain shall stop. His dam held different; that after death He both plagued enemies and feasted friends. Meanwhile, the best way to escape His ire, Is not to seem too happy."

"And yet even through this dim and bewildered brain there creeps a faint notion of something higher than Setebos, that made *Him*, or Somewhat, quiet o'er His head, out of His reach, that feels nor joy nor grief. This quiet, all it hath a mind to, doth."

So comes into imperfect understanding, a suggestion of something greater than Setebos. If Setebos made man, then who made Setebos? And so, step by step with the development of man, grows the development of the idea of a Divine Being, embodied in the majestic figures of the sculptured gods of India, of Egypt, of Greece and Rome, as the objects of men's adoration. Later on, the

jealous God of Israel sweeps away the worship of beauty, and then with the Christian era, begins the worship of a God of Love.

But all these phases of the Divinity mostly concerned the people, for among the priests and philosophers of every age is handed down a "Wisdom-Religion," the portion of "those who know," the keys that open the doors of all knowledge, behind which lie hidden the answers to all the enigmas of the universe.

And the first and most important of these answers is the teaching that God is Spirit, not *a* Spirit, but SPIRIT, One and Indivisible, that from Him all things proceed, and to Him all things must return. But while we look upon Him as the source of all Being, we have a dim feeling that beyond the heavens that declare the glory of God, there is what Browning's Caliban would call "the Quiet," an all-embracing something, a spiritual atmosphere, so to speak, but utterly beyond the power of primeval man to comprehend. It is impossible to formulate the basic ideas of theosophy without a metaphysical background, it only remains to make that background as simple and easily comprehensible as possible.

If we attempt to pierce through the veils that represent to us the limits of thought, we find ourselves confronted with that vague something which our philosophers, in default of a better word, have called the ABSOLUTE, or the UNKNOWABLE. "The Absolute is not to be defined," (says *An Abridgment...of The Secret Doctrine*, 322) "and no mortal nor immortal has ever seen or comprehended it during the periods of existence. The mutable cannot know the immutable, nor can that which lives perceive *Absolute Life*."

The first and fundamental axiom of theosophy then, is this metaphysical conception of the Absolute, "the Causeless Cause," from which is derived "the First Cause." Because when we speak of the *first*, we think of something that is dependent on time, and space, and rank, and none of these can have any relation to the Absolute, which is entirely outside of our conditioned existence. As an old Kabbalistic poem says: "Thou art One, the root of all numbers, but not as an element of numeration, for Unity admits not of multiplication, change or form. Thou art One, and no thought of ours can fix for Thee a limit, or define Thee."

From "the Causeless Cause," the "Unknowable," is derived "the First Cause," the Creative God of all theologies. This is the Logos, in the theosophic philosophy the synthesis of the Seven Creative Powers, the "Word" of St. John's Gospel. "All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was Life; and the Life was the Light of men."

And at the beginning of a new cycle of existence, when this Light springs forth from the bosom of Darkness, "the pairs of opposites" come into existence, and the work of creation, or rather evolution, begins. Spirit-Matter divides into Spirit and Matter, two aspects of the One Unity, and from them radiates the Divine Energy, *force* as science calls it, which corresponds to "the Son" of the

Christian Trinity. Spirit, Matter, Force, these are the three in one that form the basis of every theological trinity.

That which theosophy calls *Universal Substance*, is underlying matter in all its different grades, and that which it calls *Universal Thought* is the root of all individual consciousness. But apart from Universal Substance, Universal Thought could not manifest as *individual* consciousness, because it is only through a vehicle of matter that consciousness wells up as "I am I." And apart from Universal Thought, Universal Substance would remain an empty abstraction.

But just as the opposite poles of Spirit and Matter are but twin aspects of the one Unity, so there exists in the manifested Universe the guiding power of all manifestation, the Thought Divine, transmitted and made manifest through the intelligent Forces which are the architects of the visible world. Thus from Spirit, or Universal Thought, comes our consciousness; from Universal Substance the several vehicles in which that consciousness is individualized and attains to *self*-consciousness; while the Divine Energy, in its various manifestations, is the mysterious link between Mind and Matter, the animating principle electrifying every atom into life. Universal Thought includes Law, and the Forces of Nature are comprised in Universal Energy, while *Life* and *Motion* are convertible terms.

We must begin, then, by recognizing the existence of an Immutable Principle, which is entirely beyond the range of human thought, and therefore is best spoken of (if spoken of at all) as the *Unknowable*. This is symbolised by theosophy under two aspects, absolute, abstract Space, and absolute, abstract Motion. This abstract Motion is the *One Life*, eternal, invisible, but omnipresent, without beginning or end, yet periodical in its regular manifestations. It is often spoken of as "the Great Breath." Upon the boundless plane of the universe the worlds appear and disappear, in a regular tidal ebb of flux and reflux, confirming the absolute universality of that law of periodicity, or cyclic law, which obtains in every department of nature.

Moreover, we are taught, *first*, the fundamental identity of all souls with the universal Over-soul, the latter being itself an aspect of the Unknown Root; and *second*, the obligatory pilgrimage of every soul through "the Cycle of Necessity" or reincarnation, in accordance with the all-powerful law of cause and effect, and that of periodicity spoken of above. The Monad or unit of consciousness making this journey, is called "the Pilgrim," and is the only immortal and eternal principle in us, being an indivisible part of the Universal Spirit, a Ray of the Divine. This obligatory pilgrimage springs from the law that no purely Divine Soul can have an independent, conscious existence until it has passed through all the lower grades of being, belonging to this cycle of life, and thus has acquired the individuality which makes it immortal, first through natural impulse, and then by self-devised efforts, modified by the experiences it has gathered on the way. Thus it ascends through all grades of intelligence, from that of the mineral to that of the holiest archangel, and works out its own

salvation by its own efforts, for the pivotal doctrine of the esoteric philosophy admits no privileges or special gifts in any man except those won by his own Ego through personal effort during a long series of reincarnations.

This teaching of the “Cycle of Necessity” is very important because so many have asked, why should the “Pilgrim” leave its celestial abode and go through so much misery and such long and painful struggles, only to get back to where it started? But it gets back with the conscious, immortal entity it has made of itself, and this is the salvation it has won. It has built up its individuality and is now an immortal Soul, not merely part of a wave of life, one indistinguishable drop of the ocean of being.

“Just as at the close of the sidereal year the heavenly bodies return to the same relative positions which they occupied at its beginning, so at the close of the Cycle of initiation, the inner man has regained the pristine state of divine purity and Knowledge from which he set out on his cycle of terrestrial incarnations.” — (*An Abridgment...of The Secret Doctrine*, 184.)

“It is the spiritual evolution of the *inner* immortal man, that forms the fundamental tenet of theosophy, the reincarnating *Ego* that existed before its physical body, and survives all bodies that it may be clothed in.” (*An Abridgment...of The Secret Doctrine*, 285, 476.)

## II EVOLUTION

The law of Evolution as defined by the scientist, means first of all, “a law of continuity or causal relation throughout nature,” or in other words, “a continuous progressive change according to certain laws and by means of resident forces.” (Joseph Le Conte on *Evolution and Its Relation to Religious Thought*.) These “resident” forces of Le Conte, are the same thing that theosophy calls “the essential faculty possessed by all the cosmic and terrestrial elements of *generating within themselves* a regular and harmonious series of results, a concatenation of causes and effects, which proves that they are animated by intelligence coming either from within or from without.” In fact, to become complete and comprehensible, a theory of the universe has to start with a primordial Substance diffused throughout boundless Space, of an *intellectual and divine nature*. That substance must be the Spirit and Soul, the synthesis and highest principle, of the manifested Kosmos. And to serve as a physical basis to this, there must be its vehicle — *primordial physical matter*, so to speak, though its nature must forever escape our limited normal senses, and we can know it only through its phenomena, the results, that is, of the action of the laws or forces of Nature, the life of the physical world. These forces may be roughly summed up as Light, Heat, Sound, Cohesion or Attraction, (which of course includes Repulsion) and Magnetism, or Nerve-Force, together synthesized as *Motion*. These are not the “blind forces” of science, but the

manifestations of intelligent Powers, the Builders of the Universe. And while science recognizes innumerable degrees in the scale of physical being, theosophy maintains that there are at least as many in the scale of spiritual existence.

But while the degrees are infinite, none the less does this philosophy assert as its fundamental law, "the *radical unity* of all the component parts in Nature, from star to mineral atom, from the highest spiritual being to the smallest infusoria, throughout *all* the worlds, whether spiritual, intellectual or physical."

"The informing Intelligences, then, which animate the various centers of being, . . . are called by the truly ignorant, gods; by the learned-profane the *One God*; and the wise, the Initiates, honor in them only the periodic manifestations of *That* which neither our Creators nor their creators can ever discuss or know anything about."

The dawn of manifestation begins with *attraction*, the first flutter of awakening life being towards the center, and after attraction comes expansion, or the action of the repulsive force, the two forming the rhythm of the Universe, or "the Great Breath." A fundamental law of theosophy as well of science, is that known as "the conservation of energy," which maintains that there is no such thing as rest or cessation of motion during these periods of activity, that which seems rest being only the change of one form into another. And another fundamental law is, that there is no such thing in Nature as *inorganic* (or lifeless) substances or bodies. Minerals and even chemical atoms are simply organic units in profound lethargy, which has an end, and their coma becomes activity, when the wave of the new cycle of Life sweeps over them.

There is no room here for the details of the splendid system of evolution as described in *The Secret Doctrine*, but it should be explained that in the earlier theosophical books, such as *Esoteric Buddhism*, an error has crept in as to the teaching of the "planetary chains," Mr. Sinnett having therein described the Earth as one of a chain of seven planets, including the chief planets of our solar system. But the Secret Doctrine teaches that the Earth has its own seven states of matter and consciousness like all the other planets. These seven "globes" as they are sometimes called, are of varying materiality, descending through three grades of increasing density to the fourth or most material, (represented by our Earth in its present state) and ascending through three grades leading back to the spiritual. And as our physical eyes are only capable of perceiving objects on the physical plane, it follows that any stars or planets visible to us are on the same plane as ourselves, and neither higher nor lower in the scale of being. And these seven "globes" or conditions of matter, are capable of simultaneous existence, as the more ethereal interpenetrate the more substantial. Theosophy teaches that the matter of the heavenly spheres has its seven forms. First, we have *primordial* homogeneous matter, the One Element; then the second stage, called by science Cosmic dust, and Fire-mist; the third stage is the nebulous; the fourth is the atomic, when Divine Force thrills through this primordial matter, and the eternal vibration in the unmanifested world becomes vortical

motion in the manifested. With motion, the differentiation of the elements begins, and we have the fiery, or *germinal stage*, so-called, because these “elements” are but the germs of those we know. The sixth stage, the vaporous, the fourfold, shows us the beginning of our elements, the future earth, and the seventh stage is the cold and solidifying globe, dependent upon the sun for life and light.

Very briefly and roughly sketched, this is the *field* of man’s evolution. The *reason* of it is to be found in that often-quoted saying of Patañjali: “The universe exists for the sake of the soul’s experience and emancipation,” in other words, to give the soul its opportunity for development and salvation. And as man, to accept the popular division, is composed of body, soul, and spirit, the *process* of this evolution must necessarily be threefold — physical, mental, and spiritual.

The Ray of the Universal Mind, then, (the Monad, or the Pilgrim) passes through seven planes, three below and three above what the scientists call our threshold of consciousness. First it passes through three elemental planes or nascent centers of force, which answer to the nebulous stages in the earth’s history; then through the mineral kingdom, the turning point in the evolution of consciousness, where it becomes wholly latent, then through the three stages of “organic” life, the vegetable, the animal, the human. In the higher animals the Monad almost becomes an individual entity, while in the vegetable kingdom there is hardly any tendency towards individual consciousness, which can only be seen in such attempts as the persistent struggle of a vine towards a support upon one side of it, or the unwearyed seeking of a poplar’s roots after the water of a distant well.

The Sun gives Life to man, and therefore in the Eastern symbolism is rightly called his father, while the Moon represents his mother, for it is to the “lunar ancestors” that he owes that astral form around which is built up the physical body, given by his nurse the Earth. This astral prototype is formed of molecular matter far too ethereal to be perceptible to our normal senses, and interpenetrates the matter of our physical bodies, as a subtle odor interpenetrates the air.

And as the seed that perishes in the ground nourishes, by its decay, a new plant, so the Moon, having completed her cycle of existence, transferred her energies in dying (according to the law of the conservation of force) to a new cosmic center which became our Earth. The process of evolution upon the Earth, as well as all other worlds, is by seven successive waves of life-giving energy, which it has been agreed to call *Rounds*, and during each of these stages of evolution, seven *Races*, with many subdivisions, inhabit the earth, each Race being specially adapted to the conditions which surround it.

But the human Monad which has begun its pilgrimage upon this globe does not merely touch upon each of these conditions and then pass on, but has to go through many incarnations in each Race, the development of the individual soul being a long process. Between each individual incarnation, and

between each Round, or wave of evolution, the human Ego passes through a period of subjective, or unconscious life, thus completing the analogy with the shorter cycles of day and night, life and death, etc. Four times that great wave of evolutionary force has swept over the Earth, and four great Races have passed away. The present humanity is the fifth division of the Fifth Race, so that we have passed the lowest point of materiality, and are beginning to ascend towards spirit. But the eighteen millions of years which embrace the duration of perfected *physical* man, have to be enormously increased if the whole process of spiritual, astral, and physical development, is taken into account. All analogy goes to show the truth of the theosophical teachings that man was not “created” the complete being he is now, however imperfect he still remains. Worlds and men were in turns formed and destroyed, *under the law of evolution and from pre-existing material*, until both the planets and their men became what they are in the present cycle.

In strict analogy, the cycle of seven Rounds that gradually leads man’s physical body through every kingdom of nature up to its perfect form, is repeated on a much smaller scale in the first seven months’ life of the human embryo. As the embryo although fully formed at that period, yet needs two months more in which to acquire a perfect development, so “man, having perfected his evolution during seven Rounds, remains two periods more in the womb of mother Nature before he is born (or reborn) a Dhyāni, (or Divine Intelligence) still more perfect than he was before he launched forth as a Monad on the newly built chain of worlds” (*The Secret Doctrine*, II:259).

K. HILLARD.

(*To be continued.*)

## A PRIMER OF THEOSOPHY (2)

(Continued.)

### III THE NATURE OF MAN

“The development of ‘Man’ from his first appearance on the Earth in this Round, forms the subject of the second volume of *The Secret Doctrine*.”

The quotation marks, above, around “Man,” point to a condition or conditions of being quite different from anything we should call man. If we can conceive of a ball of fire-mist gradually becoming a solid globe, settling into a man-bearing world, and if we see everything on it evolving from a speck of protoplasm to the gigantic forms of antediluvian monsters, is it impossible to imagine man himself going through the same transformations? The carbonic vapors and steaming soil of the early globe could have no effect on such human life and organisms as we are told existed at those remote periods, and the Secret Doctrine tells us that it is shown in every ancient scripture and cosmogony that “man evolved primarily as a *luminous incorporeal form*, over which, like the plastic clay around the iron framework of the sculptor, the *physical* frame of his body was built by, through, and from, the lower forms and types of animal terrestrial life.”

In studying the nature of man and his environment, we are struck by the omnipresence of the number *seven*. But after a long and careful comparison of these correspondences, it seemed that the principal reason for the omnipresence of this number lay in its relation to the phenomena of *life*, and in fact *The Secret Doctrine* says that in our world the rhythm of life is in *sevens*, because that is the rhythm of our Mother the Moon, who in dying imparted her life to her child the Earth, according to the great law regulating the cosmic forces. Other planets and stars and solar systems, have other rates of vibration; in them the rhythm of life throbs faster or slower as the case may be. The Sun is the heart of our solar system, and there is a regular circulation of the Life-Essence throughout that system, like that of the blood in the body, only instead of a few seconds it takes the solar blood ten or eleven years to complete its rounds, and the astronomers are beginning to recognize this rhythm as the cause of the recurrence of sunspots.

To return to the evolution of man — we are told that the first human stock was a reproduction, by higher and semi-divine beings of their shadowy selves. They “became” the First Race, just as the “eternal cell” of which Weismann speaks, became the endless number of cells into which it subdivided. When the Earth had become dry land, the Spirits of the Moon came to fashion the astral body of man, the shadowy prototypes of future human beings.

These “Lunar Ancestors” as they are called, bear the same relation to the physical body of man that the Moon bears to the physical Earth. As the Moon formed the model, and still controls many of the phenomena of Earth-life, (the rhythm of diseases, of the tides, of generation, etc.), so the astral body still gives the model of the physical form, and controls the ebb and flow of its energies. But as these “lunar ancestors” corresponded to the elemental kingdoms preceding the mineral, and were devoid of the ray of Universal Mind, they could only give birth to astral man, a phantom with neither form nor mind.

The “Solar Ancestors” properly so-called, could and did, impart to this astral body a semblance of life (for from the Sun comes that great flood of vital force that vivifies all nature), but they could not give man that sacred spark which expands into the flower of human reason and self-consciousness, for they had it not to give.

It is the Solar Ancestors alone who could complete man, that is, make of him a self-conscious, almost a divine being — a god on earth. But as they were devoid of the grosser *creative fire* they were unable to create *physical* man. The Lunar Ancestors, though possessed of creative fire, were devoid of the higher intellectual element, and could only give birth to the astral man, the model of the physical. The reason why the Solar Ancestors could not give to man the “sacred spark” just referred to, is because they were too divine and pure, too near to the Absolute Cause of all things. To complete the nature of *septenary man*, to unite his three lower principles with the spiritual Monad, two connecting principles are needed, *Mind* and *Desire*, or the emotional soul. It would be impossible for the Monad to dwell in a form without these, except in an *absolutely latent* state, as in the higher animals.

We find primeval man, then, described as ethereal, devoid of compactness, and *Mindless*. He had no middle principle to serve him as a medium between the *highest* and the *lowest*, the spiritual man and the physical brain, for he lacked *mind*. For the Monad, the Ray of Universal Mind, has no hold upon the mere form. It cannot affect the form where there is no agent of transmission. But as no process of evolution is sudden or unprepared for, even the human mind developed by degrees, and although the First and Second Races were not what we call men, but merely rudiments of the future human beings, still even among these appeared here and there some faint foreshadowing of the intelligence to come.

The *Commentary* sums up the early Races in a few words: “First came the *Self-Existent* on this Earth. They are the ‘Spiritual Lives,’ projected by the absolute *Will* and *Law* at the dawn of every rebirth of the worlds.” (These, of course, are the Creative Powers, the fashioners of man.) From these proceeds

I. The First Race, the “Self-Born,” the astral shadows of their progenitors. The body was devoid of all understanding (that is, mind, intelligence, and will). The inner being (the Monad), though within the earthly frame, was unconnected with it. The link was not there as yet.

From the First Race emanated the

II. Second, endowed by the preservers and the incarnating gods with the first weak spark of intelligence.

And from this proceeds

III. The Third Race, the Twofold, or androgyne. As the process of evolution went on, and matter became more and more dense, the Third Race separated itself into three distinct divisions, according to its methods of reproduction. From being entirely without sex, it became androgynous, and having gone through the earliest stages of propagation by fission and by budding, in the Third (or egg-born) Race, the soft cell gradually turned into a man-bearing egg. These beings began to give birth, gradually and almost imperceptibly in their evolutionary development, first to beings in which one sex predominated, and then to distinct males and females. While the earlier Races were little higher than the sea-anemone in development, with the Third Race, and its increase in materiality, came many changes of form, and towards its end, men came into the world under the same conditions and by the same processes as at present. This change required of course many millions of years, and followed the general lines of evolution very closely.

With the separation of the sexes, strife came into the world, and the conflict of natures bred passion and sin and death, for as some of our naturalists have said, reproduction has death as its inevitable consequence, "it is the price paid for a body." This is the real fall of man, "the descent of the soul into matter," and involution, or the union of the spiritual with the physical having been effected, *evolution* or the return towards the spiritual began.

The Third Race shows three distinct divisions: physiologically and psychically; the earliest sinless; the second, awakening to intelligence; and the third and last decidedly *animal*, where the *mind* succumbs to the temptations of desire. The brain had continued to develop, until it had at last become a fitting vehicle for Mind, and the divine spark having kindled the fire of intelligence in man, he acquired the consciousness of his own powers, and ate of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. That is, having been given *mind*, *self-consciousness* had arisen from its union with matter, and man had become as a god, knowing good and evil. Good and evil, light and darkness, heat and cold, male and female, active and passive, etc., etc., are the two scales of the ever-vibrating balance of creation. Therefore evil *must* be relative, and only through constant struggle can man work out his salvation, and win his way back to the Divine Source of all.

IV. With the Fourth Race developed language, and the men of its early subdivisions are described as being of gigantic stature, and endowed with extraordinary faculties. From the men of this Race we get our traditions of Titans and Cyclopes, the three-eyed, the third eye being however, at the back of the head. The old *Commentary* says that when after the separation of the sexes men had fallen into matter, and their spiritual vision had become dim, it had to be awakened by artificial stimuli, and the third eye gradually

disappeared. But it has left a trace of its existence in the *pineal gland*, which René Descartes called the seat of the soul. It was an active organ in man at that stage of evolution when the spiritual element reigned supreme, and it did not become entirely atrophied till the close of the Fourth Race, when man's divine powers had been made the servants of his newly awakened physical and psychic passions instead of the reverse. The sin lay, not in using these powers, but in *mis-using* them.

The first civilization of our Round (the Fourth) began with the Third Race, of which a few remnants are now to be found among {certain Aboriginal Australian groups described by early anthropologists}. With the Atlanteans, physical beauty and strength reached their climax (in accordance with the law of evolution), towards their middle period. They represented an almost countless number of races and nations, and at their best, Greek, Roman, and even Egyptian civilizations, were as nothing compared to theirs. Their knowledge of the hidden powers of nature was far greater than ours, they built and navigated flying machines, and their houses were floored with gold. But little of their literature is now preserved, and their art and science have left scarcely any vestige except in China, although one of the principal astronomical works in Sanskrit is the production of an Atlantean astronomer.

It was the abuse of their knowledge of the subtler forces of nature which led to the downfall of the Atlantean Race. And as in any series of seven the fourth must be the central or point of equilibrium, so with the Fourth Race the spiritual element had become most deeply imbedded in matter, and with the

V. Fifth the reascent towards the spiritual begins. Only by the *union* with matter can Universal Consciousness become individual Mind, only by the *purification* of matter can it regain the glorious liberty of the Sons of God. With each Race, we are told, a new sense and a new element come to perfection, and already the fifth element, Ether, is beginning to be recognized. Professor William Crookes has said that in its vibrations hardly understood as yet, "lie possibilities of a new organ in the human brain answering to these vibrations as the eye answers to the vibrations which we know as light." And so the way is being prepared for the development of that *sixth sense* which will be the distinguishing characteristic of the coming (Sixth) Race.

After the destruction of Atlantis, the Fifth Race "was ruled over by the first divine Kings . . . who re-descended, who made peace with the Fifth, who taught and instructed it." "When mortals shall have become sufficiently spiritualized, men will *Know* that there never was a great world-reformer, whose name has come down to us, who was not a direct emanation of the *Logos*, and who had not appeared before, during the past cycle." Each of these, and many others, had first appeared on earth as one of the seven Powers of the *Logos*, individualized as a God or angelic messenger, then, more material in form, they reappeared in turn as the great sages and teachers of the Fifth Race, and finally sacrificed themselves for the good of mankind, to be reborn under different circumstances at various critical periods.

## IV

### THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF MAN

So far we have seen the evolution of man to be conducted on three lines, the physical, the mental, and the spiritual, but the closer we look into this marvelous system the more we realize that many problems present themselves that can only be solved by a more minute division, and the doctrine of “the seven principles” seems to be the Key that opens many locks. These seven principles, to begin with the lowest, or the most material, and therefore the best known to us, are (1) The physical body; (2) The astral body; (3) Vitality, or the Life-Force; (4) The passionate or emotional nature, the lower mind; (5) the higher mind, or the intellectual nature; (6) the spiritual nature; and (7) that Ray of the Divine that overshadows man, rather than forms a part of him. Or instead of speaking of the emotional nature, etc., we may say the animal Soul, the intellectual Soul, and the Spiritual Soul, but the other classification is perhaps simpler.

I. To begin with the physical body, the most material of the component parts of man: This outermost “sheath” as the Oriental philosophers call it, is built up of countless cells, or “Lives,” under the constructive energy of the Life-Force, the third principle. These cells have a consciousness of their own, entirely apart from the brain-consciousness, which enables them to select from the nourishment provided them, that which suits their needs, and reject that which would be injurious. Another phase of this cell-consciousness is shown in the way the cells hasten to repair wounded tissue in any part of the body. The brain-consciousness feels the *pain* of a wound, but has nothing to do with the action of the cells in repairing the damage. The memory, which is a function of the brain, urges the cells to repeat the repairing process even when it is no longer needed, and this is the cause of scars and “other things of like nature.”

When the body dies, it is it, and the energy expended in building because the life-force it which tears it to pieces. Wherever there up is is is withdrawn from changed into the energy an atom of matter, even in the most gaseous condition, there is life, however latent and unconscious that life may be. The expression “inorganic substance” means simply that the latent life in the molecules of so-called inert matter cannot be detected by our senses. The *Commentary* says that “the worlds to the profane are built up of the known elements.” Fire alone is *One* on the plane of the *One Reality*; on that of manifested, hence illusive, being, its particles are “fiery lives,” which live and have their being at the expense of every other life that they consume. Therefore they are called the “Devourers.” The preservation and destruction of the physical body are due to the alternate functions of the “fiery lives” as builders and destroyers. They are “builders” by sacrificing themselves in the form of vitality to restrain the destructive influence of the microbes, and compelling them under that restraint, to build up the material body and its cells. They are “destroyers” when that restraint is removed, and the microbes, unsupplied with

vital constructive energy, are left to run riot as destructive agents. During the first half of a man's life the fiery lives are indirectly engaged in building up the material body; life is on the ascending scale, and its force is used in construction and increase. After thirty-five, the age of retrogression sets in, and the fiery lives having exhausted their strength, the work of decrease and destruction begins.

But it must not be forgotten that there is in reality a principle more material than the physical body, or even the astral, and that is the fourth principle, the animal soul, the body of desires, as it has been called, the real animal center through which the beast in us acts all its life, and of which the body is but the irresponsible shell and medium.

II. The second principle is the astral body, the framework upon which the physical body is built, and which is still molecular, though of a finer grade of matter than the physical body. The evolution of the *external* form round the *astral* is produced by the terrestrial forces, but the evolution of the *internal* or real *Man* is purely spiritual. The stories of perfected men, like Enoch and Elijah who are taken up to heaven alive, symbolize the death of any spiritual man who has reached the power and degree, as also the purification, which enable him to die only in the physical body, and *still live consciously in his astral body*. The Pauline expression that "Enoch should not see death," has thus an esoteric meaning, but has nothing supernatural in it. The Biblical hints that Enoch will share with Christ and Elijah the glories of the last: Advent, signify, *esoterically*, that some of these perfected men will return in the Seventh Race.

Theosophists will remember that during a period of cyclic rest, which answers to our nightly slumbers, everything visible and invisible remains in status quo. All forms, as well as their astral types, remain as they were when the great clock of the Universe stopped. With the beginning of a new cycle the Monad has only to step into the astral body of the "lunar ancestors" in order that the work of physical consolidation should begin around the shadowy model. For there can be no *objective form* in all the universe, without its astral prototype being first formed in Space. From Phidias down to his humblest workman, a sculptor has to create a model in his mind before he can reproduce it in a figure, the most trivial thing that can be fashioned by the hand of man, must first exist in the mind of the artificer.

The astral body *inheres* in the physical body, and "to project the astral" means to disentangle every particle of the astral molecules that form it from the physical molecules, a most difficult and complicated performance, needing the knowledge and skill of an adept to complete successfully. Only in occasional cases, the astral and the physical bodies are both so loosely built, that the astral can slip out of its sheath, as can be seen sometimes in seances, when the astral body appears to ooze out of the *left* side of the medium, the spleen, which has been called the factory of astral matter, being on the left side. The astral body dies with the physical, or very soon afterwards, and one of the strongest

arguments for cremation is, that by hastening the dispersion of the molecules, the higher principles are the sooner set free from the bonds of matter.

III. The third principle is "Life," or Vitality, which pervades all the rest, as indeed do all the principles, nor can any one of them be thought of as a separate compartment, as it were, of man's nature, while all of them are but a portion of the Universal Soul in whom we live and move and have our being. The principles of man correspond to the principles of the Universe, and so the Life of the universe is the "Spirit" of Electricity, we are told, "as an abstraction we call it the One Life; as an evident reality we speak of a septenary scale of manifestation, which begins at the top with the Unknowable, and ends as omnipresent Mind and Life, immanent in every atom of matter." It is the action of the vital force upon a compound or even a simple body that produces life. "When a body dies, it passes into the same polarity as its male energy, and repels therefore the active agent, which losing hold of the *whole*, fastens on the parts or molecules, this action being called chemical." (*The Secret Doctrine*, I:526 note.)

IV. The fourth principle is the emotional nature or Desire, which must be carefully distinguished from Thought. In its lowest aspect, it is the emotional and passionate nature, the part of consciousness which is common to man and the animal; in its highest, it is aspiration, the motive power of the soul. It is this distinction between the consciousness of the animal and the *self*-consciousness of man, that solves so many of the problems of the psychologist as to the reason or instinct of animals. George John Romanes has shown that they have all the passions of men, and that they possess the reasoning faculty to a large extent, cannot be denied by any careful observer. What then is the difference? Simply that the animals have not what is called "the I am I" consciousness, that *self*-consciousness which enables mankind to develop the inner man, and to become the Higher Ego, the immortal Spirit, or the Higher Mind.

Perhaps the nearest approach to self-consciousness in the beast is the sense of ownership which many of the higher animals possess, but even this strong sense of individual property is hardly to be called self-consciousness. In the *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge* there are some very clear explanations of the true dividing line between man and beast, and even more in the second volume of *The Secret Doctrine*. "Man is a perfected animal," says the former, "the vehicle of a fully developed *Monad*, *self-conscious* and deliberately following its own line of progress, whereas in the insect, and even the higher animals, the Higher Triad of principles (the overshadowing Divinity, the Intellectual Soul, and the Spiritual Soul), is absolutely dormant." And *The Secret Doctrine* (II:267) says: "No animal has the three higher principles awakened in him; they are simply potential, latent, and thus non-existent." Therefore, "between man and the animal there is the impassable abyss of mentality and Self-consciousness." And yet we must not forget that "in relation to *its own plane* of conception and perception, the ant has as good an intellect

as ours, and over and above instinct, shows very high reasoning powers.” (*Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*, I:13.)

But the three higher principles that go to make up man’s complex nature, the Intellectual Soul and the Spiritual Soul, with the overshadowing Divinity, *can have no individuality on Earth*, cannot be *man*, that is, unless there is (1) the Mind, the Ego, to cognize itself, and (2) the terrestrial *false* personality, or the body of personal desires and will, to cement the whole to the physical form of man. It is the Mind and the body of desires and passions that contain the dual personality; the real immortal Ego (or the individuality) and the false and transitory *personality*, the two having to be closely blended to make up a *full* terrestrial existence. “The most perfect soul incarnated in the most perfect physical body, would be only a beautiful and unconscious being without Mind.” (*An Abridgment...of The Secret Doctrine*, 395.)

V. It is then very evident that the most important principle of our nature is the fifth, the Mind, the pivot upon which all the other faculties turn, and which is the foundation of our immortality. It is the close and intimate union of the Mind or the Intellectual Soul, with the Spiritual Soul, that forms that immortal Ego that persists forever. Consciousness, that which beholds itself in the mirror of thought, is all that we can feel secure of in the beginning. “I think, therefore I am,” said Descartes. “I am, therefore I think,” is equally true, and it is the Thinker within us that spells out by slow degrees the complex characters of itself and its surroundings, and learns at last to discern the important from the unimportant.

VI, VII. But higher even than Mind, because nearer akin to Spirit, is the sixth principle, the Spiritual Soul; *Intuition* as opposed to *Understanding*, and the seventh principle, which is its vehicle and can hardly be treated of separately. “The Spiritual Soul (the sixth principle), is but a mirror that *reflects* absolute bliss, a reflection not yet free from ignorance; the Supreme Spirit (the seventh principle), alone, is the one real and eternal substratum of all — the essence and absolute knowledge.” (*An Abridgment...of The Secret Doctrine*, 269.)

But it is better to leave the lofty speculations of philosophy for the present, and busy ourselves with matters more closely concerned with our everyday problems.

K. HILLARD.

(*To be continued*)

## A PRIMER OF THEOSOPHY (3)

(Continued.)

### V

#### THE SOURCES OF THE SECRET DOCTRINE<sup>1</sup>

In the introductory chapter to the first volume of *The Secret Doctrine* H.P.B. speaks of the “Wisdom Religion” as the inheritance of all nations, all over the world, and states that Gautama’s *secret* teachings form but a very small part of the esoteric wisdom of the world since the beginning of our humanity, while he limited his *public* instructions to the purely moral and physiological aspects of the Wisdom Religion. Things “unseen and incorporeal” the great Teacher reserved for a select circle of his Arhats, who received their initiation at the famous Saptaparna cave near Mt. Baibhās — (*Saptaparna — the seven-leaved plant = man, with his seven principles*).

The main body of the doctrines given is found scattered through hundreds and thousands of Sanskrit manuscripts, some already translated, more or less badly, others still in the vernacular. These are accessible to the scholar, while a few passages, taken from oral teaching or from the *Commentaries*, would be found difficult to trace. However, one thing is certain, says Mme. Blavatsky, that the members of several esoteric schools — the seat of which is beyond the Himalayas, and whose ramifications may be found in China, Japan, Tibet, India, and even in Syria and South America — claim to have in their possession *all* the sacred and philosophical works, whether in manuscript or in type, in whatever language or character, that have ever been written, — from the ideographic hieroglyphs down. And they claim also that these works have been carefully preserved in subterranean crypts and cave-libraries in the mountains of Western Tibet, and elsewhere.

The documents have been concealed, it is true, but the knowledge itself has always been made known to the chosen few through the medium of the great Adepts and teachers. More than one great scholar has stated that there never was a religious founder who had invented a new religion or revealed a new truth. They were all *transmitters*, not original teachers, and handed on fragments of the truths they had learned, couched in the symbolism of their own nation.

The teaching of *The Secret Doctrine* antedates the Vedas, and much of it has only been transmitted orally. The present book is based upon the Stanzas of *The Book of Dzyan*, a volume written in *Senzar*, the secret sacerdotal tongue once known to the Initiates of every nation. This language, besides having an alphabet of its own, may be rendered in several modes of ideographic writing. The only original copy now in existence, says *Isis Unveiled*, is so old that

modern antiquarians would not even agree upon the nature of the fabric upon which it was written. This archaic manuscript, says Volume II of *The Secret Doctrine*, is a collection of palm leaves made impermeable to water, fire, and air, by some specific unknown process.

Tradition says that its contents were dictated to the first men of each race, by the Divine Beings whose duty it was to instruct them. The old book, having described cosmic evolution and explained the origin of everything on earth, including physical man, gives the true history of the races from the First, down to the Fifth, our present race, and stops short with the death of Kṛṣṇa, about five thousand years ago.

It is the original work from which many of the most ancient volumes of occult learning in Chinese, Hebrew, Egyptian, Indian and Chaldean, have been compiled. Its influence can be traced in the Pentateuch itself, and an enormous number of commentaries, glosses, etc. have been written upon it. In *The Secret Doctrine* as we have it, certain portions of the Stanzas of *The Book of Dzyan* are printed, and extracts are also given from the Chinese, Tibetan, and Sanskrit translations of the original Senzar commentaries and glosses.

In addition we are told that it was from the Divine Teachers before-mentioned that infant humanity got its first ideas of the arts and sciences, as well as of spiritual knowledge. The Cyclopean and Druidical remains found all over the world, are all, as well as many other ancient structures, the work of initiated Priest-Architects, the descendants of those primarily taught by the “Sons of God.”

The Secret Doctrine is the accumulated Wisdom of the Ages, but such is the power of occult symbolism that the facts which countless generations of initiated seers and prophets have occupied themselves in marshalling, setting down, and explaining, are all recorded in a few pages of geometrical signs and glyphs. It is needless to say that the system in question is no fancy of one or of several isolated individuals, but is the one uninterrupted record covering thousands of generations of seers, whose respective experiences were made to test and to verify the traditions passed orally from one race to another, of the teachings of the Divine Instructors. For long ages the “Wise Men” of the Fifth, our own race, passed their lives in *learning, not teaching*, but in checking, testing, and verifying, in every department of nature, the traditions handed down to them by the independent visions of great Adepts; that is, *men* who have developed their physical, mental, psychic and spiritual powers, to the utmost possible degree. No vision of any one Adept was accepted till it was checked and confirmed by the visions — so obtained as to stand as independent evidence — of other Adepts, as well as by centuries of experience.

The mysteries of Life and Death were fathomed by the great master minds of antiquity; and if they preserved them in secrecy and silence it is because these problems formed part of the sacred Mysteries, and because they must always have remained incomprehensible to the vast majority of men, as indeed, they do now.

## VI

### THE ELDER BROTHERS

The student who has carefully followed these scanty outlines of a great scheme of philosophy, will have noticed that that scheme is based upon a few general laws which are repeated in many ways, and like the laws of physical science hold good throughout the universe. The law of the conservation of energy applies to spiritual phenomena as well as physical, and the action of the laws of evolution is as unerring upon the higher planes as upon the lower. Human nature develops along the same lines as animal nature, and from the progress that man has made in the past, we can safely forecast something, at least, of his future.

“The faith which is born of knowledge,” says Huxley, “finds its object in an eternal order, bringing forth ceaseless change, through endless time, in endless space, the manifestations of the cosmic energy alternating between phases of potentiality, and phases of explication.” And by these endless alternations, sometimes called “the Great Breath,” the universe develops, and the pebble beneath our feet changes from the mineral to the vegetable, and then to the animal, and finally to the human being. Beyond the man of today, what endless vistas of growth loom up, what ages of spiritual development! Huxley is often quoted as saying that it would be an impertinence to assert that there were not beings in the universe whose intelligence was as much beyond ours as ours is beyond that of the black beetle. Theosophy goes a step further, and asserts that such superior beings to ourselves, do exist among us, of different grades of development, and called by many names, one that they have given themselves being “The Elder Brothers.”

When a planet has passed through its regular stages of development, it dies, and its inhabitants, by this time far advanced entities, pass on to another field of development, where they become the teachers, guides and friends of the new humanity. They keep the knowledge they have gained of the laws of nature in all her varied phases, and are always ready to use it for the benefit of mankind whenever cyclic laws permit, for only at the proper moment can this knowledge be given to the world by these Elder Brothers who have treasured it up for us all.

They have always existed as a body, known to each other, and in some periods of the world’s history, known to the people among whom they worked. At such times, certain of the Elder Brothers have been recognized as great rulers, some as teachers, a few as great philosophers, while others are only known to the most advanced of their own body. It will be easily seen that it would be very dangerous for such beings to mingle openly with men, by whom they would either be worshipped, as gods, or persecuted as devils. In our present age, one of change and transition, when so much is based upon money and money values, it would be impossible for the Elder Brothers to permit themselves to be seen of men. In a fine paper written for *The Path* (September

1894) Mr. J. H. Connelly points out very clearly the conditions of their being. "If they temporarily assumed corporeal bodies, they would appear just like other men, and if embodied in more tenuous matter they would be invisible. . . . By those to whom the Mahātmas (*Mahā-Ātma* — great soul) are personally known — and there are such — it is recognized that theirs is not an equality of development, the greater wisdom and spirituality of some elevating them to higher planes and endowing them with greater powers, than those attained by others, and such progression extends far beyond the range of normal human comprehension."

And Mr. Sinnett quotes from the letter of one of these Elder Brothers, who writes to explain why they were supposed to have failed in making any perceptible mark upon the history of the world. "What they have done, *they* know; all that those outside their circle could perceive was the results, the causes of which were masked from view. . . . There never was a time, within or before the so-called historical period, when our predecessors were not moulding events and 'making history.' We never pretended to be able to draw nations in the mass to this or that crisis in spite of the general drift of the world's cosmic relations. The cycles must run their rounds. . . . And we, borne along the mighty tide, can only modify and direct some of its minor currents."

The laws of evolution mould alike the world and its inhabitants, and when those inhabitants have learned all that their sojourn in their present environment can teach them, they are ready to instruct the dwellers in the next planetary system, to whom we shall be "the terrene ancestors." The Guardian Spirits furnished many of our earliest nations with divine Kings and Leaders who taught humanity their arts and sciences. They had finished their own cycles on earth and other worlds in preceding Rounds, and in future life-cycles they will have risen to higher systems than ours. (*An Abridgment...of The Secret Doctrine*, 145-152.)

It is an interesting fact that the tradition of divine rulers and teachers runs through all the early nations of the world, and they are called by many names. Adepts, Initiates, Magi, Wise Men, Masters, and Mahātmas, among others. And when one of these has reached the final point of his development, if he refuse to enter Nirvāṇa, he may exist on earth as an Adept, and when at last he dies, "he remains in that glorious body he has woven for himself, *invisible* to uninitiated mankind, to watch over and protect it." (*The Voice of the Silence*. Note to the "Seven Portals.")

"There will be Initiates and profane till the end of this present life-cycle," and "*the Initiator*, or the Watcher, the Divine prototype, called the GREAT SACRIFICE, will sit at the threshold of LIGHT, looking into it from the circle of Darkness which he will not cross; nor will he quit his post till the last ray of this life-cycle. Why does the solitary Watcher remain by his self-chosen post? Because the lonely pilgrims on their way back to their *home*, are never sure, up to the last moment, of not losing their way in this limitless desert of illusion called earth-life. . . . It is under the direct guidance of this Great Teacher that all

the other less divine teachers of mankind, became from the first awakening of human consciousness, the guides of early humanity, and it is they who laid the first foundation-stones of those ancient civilizations that puzzle so sorely our modern archaeologists. . . . In future life-cycles they will have risen to higher systems than ours, and it is the elect of our humanity who will take their places. The next Great Cycle of being will see the men of this, becoming the instructors and guides of a mankind whose Monads may be still imprisoned — semi-conscious — in the most intelligent of the animal kingdom, while their lower principles will perhaps be animating the highest specimens of the vegetable world.” (*An Abridgment...of The Secret Doctrine*, 119-146.)

“The most intelligent being in the universe, man — has never been without a friend,” says Mr. Judge in *The Ocean of Theosophy*, “but has a line of Elder Brothers who continually watch over the less progressed, preserve the knowledge gained through aeons of trial and experience, and continually seek to draw the developing intelligence of the race to consider the great truths concerning the destiny of the soul.”

KATHARINE HILLARD.

NOTE

1. See *The Path*, October 1894.

## MAURICE MAETERLINCK AND THEOSOPHY

We are accustomed to the speculations of Monsieur Maeterlinck in various directions, and in various styles. He is always clear, and always ready to take up some new theme and make it his own; but it must be confessed that in dealing with Theosophy in his recent book, called *La Mort*, he seems to have gone rather beyond his depth, and to have confounded the ideas of reincarnation and the transmigration of souls.

Before taking up the questions of the nature and the persistence of the individual consciousness, M. Maeterlinck thinks it would be well to study two interesting solutions of these problems, which if not novel, are at least revivals of the idea of personal immortality. These neo-theosophic and neo-spiritistic theories are the only ones that he thinks worthy of serious discussion. "It cannot be denied," he says, "that of all religious hypothesis, reincarnation is the most plausible, and the one least shocking to our reason. It has the advantage of the support of the most ancient and the most universal religions, those which we have not yet fully comprehended. In fact the whole of Asia, whence comes to us nearly all we know, has always believed and still believes, in the transmigration of souls." Here Maeterlinck quotes Annie Besant, . . . as saying . . . — that there is no philosophical doctrine which has back of it so magnificent a past, so charged with intellectuality, as the doctrine of reincarnation, "there is no other, as Max Müller has declared, upon which the greatest philosophers of humanity have been so completely in accord."

All this, says M. Maeterlinck, is perfectly true. But he goes no further, the whole of Theosophy for him, seems to be compressed into that one doctrine; and not content with a philosophy handed down to us from remotest antiquity, a philosophy that he says is so completely satisfying to the greatest minds of all ages, he asks for — what? — for proofs! For proofs! and says that he has vainly sought for a single one among the best writings of our modern Theosophists. He finds them all limited to reiterated and dogmatic affirmations floating in empty space, whither M. Maeterlinck would seem to have sought them.

Several of the earlier chapters of *La Mort* are devoted to the terrors of death, dwelt upon, most of us would think, with quite unnecessary elaboration. Apart from any psychic or spiritistic phenomena, is it not a very frequent occurrence that a gentle indifference steals over the departing spirit, and an absolute absence of desire takes the place of the frenzied clinging to life which marks the fewer departures. One of the best known physicians in New York told me that only twenty per cent of the deaths he had witnessed, were other than calm and peaceful — probably indifferent would be the better word. A day will come, M. Maeterlinck is sure, when science will not only assert an opinion, but

will act with certainty when there is a question as to the release from suffering in incurable disease; when Life, grown wiser, will silently steal away, at the hour of its own choice, knowing that its hour has come, as calmly as it retires every night, knowing that its daily task is completed. There will not be any reason, physical or metaphysical, why the approach of death should not be as beneficent as the coming of sleep.

We are promised on the other hand, our author says, that in refining our senses, making our bodies more subtle, we, our mind, can live with those we call dead, and with the superior beings that surround us. It is surprising to him that they bring us nothing in the nature of proof. We demand something other than arbitrary theories about “the immortal triad,” “the astral body,” “Kāma-Loka,” etc. It is possible, he concedes, that the theosophists are right when they maintain that we are continually surrounded by swarms of living entities, intelligent and innumerable, ‘and as different from each other as a blade of grass from a tiger, or a tiger from a man,’ who elbow us unceasing, and through whom we pass without perceiving them.” we go from one extreme to the other. “If all religions have united in over-stocking the world of invisible beings, we have, perhaps, too completely *de-peopled* it, and it is very possible that some day we shall find out that the error was not on the side we thought.” Let us only remember, he continues, that we are not obliged to prove the statements of positive religions, it is for them to establish their truth. Now there is not one of them that presents us with any proof that a moderate intelligence could accept as irresistible.

And be it said in passing, says M. Maeterlinck, it is always very unfortunate to replace a mystery by a lesser mystery. In the hierarchy of the unknown, humanity always ascends from the lesser to the greater. On the other hand, to descend from the greater to the less, is to return to a primitive barbarism, where man goes so far as to replace the infinite by a fetish or an amulet. The greatness of man is measured by the mysteries he cultivates, or before which he stops short.

“We stand before the abyss,” says M. Maeterlinck, “emptied of all the dreams with which our fathers peopled it. They believed they knew what was there, we only know what is not there. While waiting for a scientific certainty to dispel the darkness — for man has a right to hope for what he cannot yet conceive — the only thing that interests us, because we find it within the little circle that our present intelligence traces upon the darkest night, is to know whether the unknown whither we go, is to be welcomed or feared.”

Outside of the positive answers given by the churches, four solutions of this problem appeal to M. Maeterlinck as conceivable: I, total annihilation; II, survival of our present consciousness; III, survival without any kind of consciousness; IV, finally, survival, or rather absorption in the universal consciousness; or with a consciousness which is not the same as that we enjoy in this world, which makes V, *M. le philosophe, ne vous déplaise!* {Mr. Philosopher, if it please you!} It does not seem to occur to him that total annihilation

(I) and survival without any kind of consciousness, (III) are virtually the same thing, and so is absorption in the universal consciousness, (IV). Of a consciousness differing from our own, we are unable to conceive at present, which leaves us with only two theories. I and IV, and as M. Maeterlinck confesses in his next paragraph that total annihilation is an impossibility, we have nothing left but the universal consciousness, in which our own is swallowed up. A cheerful philosopher found his way out of this dilemma, by asserting that if you were not to be immortal, you would never know it. Of course unless some other condition of consciousness than ours immediately succeeded death, there could be no survival of the personality, and no such thing as immortality, in the ordinary sense of the word.

And so we come round again to the point from which we started, the theosophic ideas of death and reincarnation, as M. Maeterlinck sees them. He has a passage on the soul or rather the mind, which is very significant. "How can our thought," he says, "remain the same when there is nothing left of that which embodied it? When it has no longer a body, what can it carry into the infinite by which it can recognize itself, an entity who only knew itself thanks to that body? A few souvenirs of a common life? Would these recollections, already beginning to fade in this world, suffice to separate this entity forever from the rest of the universe, in unbounded space, and unlimited time? But it may be said, in our 'I' lies hidden a superior being to the one we know. It is probable, even certain; but how will the 'I' we know, and whose destiny alone concerns us, recognize all these things and this superior being which it has never known? If I am told that this stranger is myself I should like to believe it, but that which in this world felt and measured my joys and sorrows, and gave birth to the few thoughts and memories that remain to me, was it this unknown and invisible being which existed in me without my suspecting it, as I probably lived in it without its troubling itself about a presence that brought it nothing but the miserable memory of a thing which is no more?" It reminds one of Aldrich's two ghosts that meet in "desolate wind — swept" space and the one asks the other who he is:—"I do not know, the Shape replied, I only died last night."

KATHARINE HILLARD.

## DANTE'S BEATRICE

The vexed question of the historical or allegorical character of volume for its proper treatment, and there is only space here for a brief and very inadequate summary of the principal arguments in the case. That she {Beatrice Portinari} was a real person, the daughter of Folco Portinari, and the wife of Simone de' Bardi, that she was born about a year after Dante Aligheri, was a married woman at the time of her father's death, and that she departed this life in June 1290, are statements vouched for by Giovani Boccaccio, and accepted as historical facts by such early writers as Benvenuto da Imola, Filippo Villani, Giannozzo Manetti, Cristoforo Landino, and Leonardo Bruni. But these all follow the story of Boccaccio, and of him Giovanni Andrea Scartazzini (one of the most accomplished of Dante scholars) tells us that "we should have willfully to shut our eyes, not to see that the loquacious Certaldese (Boccaccio) is a thousand miles removed from the conscientious accuracy of the serious historian, and that if he did not invent the facts which he relates, to give weight to his declamations, as certain too rigorous critics have not hesitated to accuse him of doing, he certainly took no manner of care to verify the historical truth and exactness of the facts related by him" (*Vita di Dante*, 6). And Scartazzini might have added that the greater part of Boccaccio's story is a mere amplification of Dante's *Vita Nuova*, with the important difference that Dante nowhere identifies his Beatrice with any family of Florence, nor does he identify the city where she lived with Florence, but speaks simply of "that city in which God had placed my lady." The dates given by Dante in the *Vita Nuova* are all mystical combinations of the number 9, and it seems hardly probable that so many coincidences could have occurred in a real life. And although we could readily believe in the love of a boy of nine for a playmate a little younger than himself (as in the case of Lord Byron, for example), it is hard to believe that as the children lived so very near each other, and Dante says that he often "went in search of this youngest of the angels," that it could have been *nine years* after their first meeting before she ever spoke to him, and then only to salute him in the street as she passed by. And it is still more incredible that the love of a boy of eighteen, whose only outward recognition in the space of nine years was a passing salutation, should have needed the "screen" of a pretended love for two other ladies. And if within the space of three years, at the farthest, from their second meeting, Beatrice married Simone de' Bardi, why have we no allusion to a fact so tragic in its significance to even the most ideal of lovers? It is true that Dante mentions the father and friends of Beatrice, but he also speaks of the *relatives* and friends of Philosophy, who were dear to him for her sake.

Not many days after the death of Beatrice's father, Dante himself falls ill, and on the *ninth* day of this illness the thought occurs to him that Beatrice herself must die someday; whereupon he has a vision of her as dead, and the details of this vision correspond in many respects with the description of her first appearance in *Purgatorio*, Canto 30. Following this dream comes the curious passage already quoted, wherein he compares *Joan* who came before Beatrice to *John*, who came before the true Light, after which he makes a long digression to prove the necessary use by poets of an allegory in the form of a love-story.

His own narrative abruptly breaks off at the news of the death of Beatrice, at the *first hour* of the *ninth* day of the *ninth* month (according to Syrian reckoning {in Syrian (Syriac) reckoning: the day begins at sunset, not at midnight; hours are counted from sunset; thus, the "first hour of the day" is the first hour after sunset.}), of that year of the century (the thirteenth) in which the perfect number (ten) was *nine* times completed. And as one reason why *nine* plays so conspicuous a part in her history is that all the *nine* heavens were in most perfect harmony at her birth, but "the more subtle and infallibly true reason is, that she was a miracle whose *sole root* was the miraculous Trinity." Does this sound like the genealogy of a mortal woman?

Here the story of the *Convito* comes in, to corroborate and help out that of the *Vita Nuova*. Having defined the method of his exposition as first literal and then allegorical, and having explained that the former is a *beautiful fiction*, while the latter is the *hidden truth*, Dante proceeds (Book 2, chapter 2) to tell us that two years after the death of Beatrice he first saw the *donna gentile*, the "lady at the window" (of § 36, *Vita Nuova*), who so comforted him by her pitying glances, that he thought of her as a person who pleased him only too well. This lady, Dante Rossetti conjectures, may be meant for Gemma Donati (whom Dante married a year or two, perhaps, after the death of Beatrice, and whose house stood between those of Alighieri and the Portinari), because he believes "in the existence always of actual events, even where the allegorical superstructure has been raised by Dante himself."

Such was for a long time my own belief, but, after careful consideration of Dante's definition of the *literal*, I cannot find that it necessarily implies the *historical*. It is simply a narrative, however fabulous, under which he conceals his true thought (see Book 2, chapter 1). And the argument for the *necessity* of the existence of the actual Beatrice falls to the ground when we admit that "the *literal*" is often what the poet himself calls it — "a *beautiful fiction*." It is quite possible, nay, probable, that Dante may have fallen in love, at the age of nine, with a little neighbor who became to him "the idol of his youth, the darling of his manhood, and the most blessed memory of his age"; but I cannot see that we have any right to identify that ideal with Beatrice *Portinari* from any evidence furnished by Dante himself. Such identification rests solely upon the authority of that exceedingly untrustworthy romancer, Boccaccio.

The dates and the events of the *Vita Nuova*, I repeat, are too mystical to belong to real life, and we have no more right to identify “the lady of my *mind*” with Beatrice Portinari, than we have to identify “the lady at the window” (who, Dante tells us, is Philosophy) with Gemma Donati, or the lady “screen” with Monna Vanna. Dante strikes his keynote in the very first section of the *Vita Nuova*, when he speaks of “the first time that appeared before my eyes the glorious lady of *my mind*,” implying a preexisting conception. In fact, I cannot but feel that even if those were “actual events” upon which Dante raised “his allegorical superstructure,” that that superstructure had become to him the all-important thing.

In the *Vita Nuova* and in the *Convito* the story is the same. Two years after the death of Beatrice, Dante found consolation in the charms of Philosophy, and for the next two years and a half devoted himself to scholastic learning. The works of Marcus Tullius Cicero and Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius were his constant study, and *The Consolation of Philosophy* of the latter seems to have suggested much of Dante’s allegory. It is very certain that Dante owed far less to the various *Visions* and *Voyages* in Heaven and Hell that had preceded Him, than to the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle, the *Aeneid* of Virgil {Publius Vergilius Maro}, Cicero’s *Dream of Scipio*, and his various essays, *The Consolation of Philosophy* of Boethius {Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius}, and the suggestive words of the Apocalypse {the Book of Revelation}, and the Book of the Wisdom of Solomon.

But, in spite of the charms of scholastic learning and the active life, the love of the first Beatrice was still latent in the soul of the poet; and as he proceeds with the *Convito*, he shows us how beyond science and all morality is the Divine Philosophy or Eternal Wisdom, which is full of all peace, and whose dwelling-place is that Quiet Heaven where the soul is at rest in God. So at the end of the *Vita Nuova*, after describing the same struggle of conflicting thoughts that he dwells upon in the *Convito*, he has a vision (about the *ninth* hour again) of the glorified Beatrice, clothed in that sanguine raiment in which she first appeared to his eyes, and she seemed to him as young as when he first saw her. And, remembering the past, he grieves to think that he has ever loved another, and all his thoughts return to their most noble Beatrice. And he has a vision of her receiving homage beyond “that sphere of widest range,” that is, in the Quiet Heaven of Divine Wisdom and Peace. And after that he has another vision (of the *Commedia*), in which he sees things that make him resolve to say no more of this blessed one till he can more worthily treat of her.

If we interpret Dante’s story after his own fashion, that fourfold manner in which he says all books “*may* be read and *ought* to be explained,” it seems to me that we have, according to the *literal* sense, the story of a heart that consoles itself for the loss of its first love with the pity of another, and then repents its inconstancy, and returns to its original object of devotion. If we take it in the *allegorical* sense, we have the rivalry between philosophy of the schools and theology. If we interpret it according to its *moral* significance, we have the

opposition of the active life and the contemplative life, the two beatitudes that Dante tells us are possible to man; and if we look for the *mystical* meaning, we have a soul that, having recognized its true blessedness in the Divine Wisdom, loses itself for a time in the things of this world, shortly to repent, and to turn back to “that blessed Beatrice, that gazeth continually upon the face of God,” for she “is privy to the mysteries of the knowledge of God, and a lover of His works” (Wisdom, 8:4).

The Book of the Wisdom of Solomon (said by some authorities to have been written by Philo of Alexandria {but now do not}) is constantly quoted by Dante, and if we put together some of its verses, we shall see how closely he followed its suggestions in many passages of the *Divine Commedia* as well as the *Convito*. We read, for instance, in the description of Wisdom —

“I loved her, and sought her out from my youth; I desired to make her my spouse, and I was a lover of her beauty.

“Therefore I purposed to take her to live with me, knowing that she would be a counsellor of good things, and a comfort in cares and grief.

“Moreover, by means of her I shall obtain immortality, and leave behind me an everlasting memorial to them that come after me” (8:2, 9, 13).

“What hath pride profited us? or what good hath riches with our vaunting brought us?

“All these things are passed away like a shadow, . . . and as when a bird hath flown in the air” (5:8, 9, 11).

“Wherefore I called upon God and the Spirit of Wisdom came to me.

“I preferred her before scepters and thrones, and esteemed riches as nothing in comparison of her.

“For she is the breath of the power of God, and a pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty.

“For she is the brightness of the everlasting Light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of His goodness.

“And in all ages, entering into holy souls, she maketh them friends of God and prophets.

“For she is more beautiful than the sun, and above all the order of the stars: being compared with the light, she is found before it” (7:7, 8, 25-27, 29).

“And Wisdom knoweth thy works, and was present when Thou madest the world” (9:9).

“Before the fair flowers were seen, or ever the motive powers were established, before the innumerable multitude of angels were gathered together” (2 Esdras, 6:3).

“Wherefore,” says Dante (*Convito*, 3:14), “it is written of this eternal Love which is Wisdom, *He created me from the beginning before the world, and I shall never fail* (Ecclesiasticus, 24:9). And in the Proverbs of Solomon (8:23) she, Wisdom, says, *I was set up from everlasting*. And in the beginning of the Gospel of John her eternity is openly declared.”

From these and many other passages quoted or assimilated by Dante, we see the deep hold that the Gnostic ideas had taken upon his mind, and the close resemblance that his “Wisdom” (identified here and in many other places with the Logos and the Second Person of the Trinity) bears to that of spiritual intuition, or secret knowledge of Divine things, common to mystics of all ages. She is identified with the *Active Intelligence* of the scholiasts, and with the *Gnosis* of the Hermetic philosophers. We read in *Hermes Trismegistus* (said by Robert Wilhelm Bunsen to have been finished at the latest 670 B.C., and by others assigned to a far earlier date) that “God did not create all men with intelligence” (that is, spiritual insight), “because He wished to hold it before men’s souls as a prize to strive for. He filled a great bowl with it, and sent it by a messenger, ordering him to cry to the hearts of men, ‘Baptize ye, ye who have the power, in the bowl; ye who believe that you will return to Him who has sent it, ye who know wherefore you are born!’ And those who answered the call, and were baptized in this intelligence, these possess the *Gnosis*, and have become the initiated of the spirit, the perfect men. Those who did not understand the call, possess reason but not intelligence, and know not wherefore and by whom they were formed. Composed alone of passions and desires, they do not admire that which is worthy to be contemplated, but give themselves up to the pleasures and appetites of the body, and believe that this is the end of man. But those who have received the gift of God, these are immortal, and no longer mortal. Disdaining all things, corporeal and incorporeal, they aspire towards the One and the Only. This is the wisdom of the spirit, to contemplate Divine things and to know God. This is the blessing of the Divine bowl.”

So Dante says, “If it happen that by the purity of the receiving soul the intellectual virtue be absolutely separate and free from any corporeal shadow, then the Divine goodness multiplies in that soul, as in a thing worthy to receive it; and further, it multiplies in the soul endowed with this intelligence according to her capacity of reception. . . . And in such a soul is her own virtue, and the intellectual, and the Divine. . . . And some are of opinion that if all these powers should cooperate in the production of a soul according to their most favorable disposition, the Deity would descend upon that soul in such fulness that it would be almost another God incarnate” (*Convito*, 4:21).

If we open *The Consolation of Philosophy*, by Boethius, we find many striking resemblances to the allegory of Dante. Boethius, wretched and in prison, is lamenting his exile and his misfortunes, when a lady of majestic presence suddenly appears at his bedside. She has glowing eyes, and a stature that is at one moment that of ordinary men, and the next rises to the highest heavens. Her garment, woven by her own hands, of the finest indissoluble threads has inscribed upon its lowest edge an *alpha*, upon its highest an *omega*, and between the two is embroidered a ladder of many degrees. But her robe is torn, and violent hands have rent away the fragments. In one hand she carries a scepter, in the other some books. She expels the muses of poetry from the philosopher’s cell, saying that, under the guise of medicines, they have given

him sweet poisons. "You have taken from me no common man," she says to them, "but this my faithful one, whom I believed to be in Greece, rapt in the study of Plato and Aristotle. Depart from him, ye sirens, whose sweetness hath brought him nigh to death." And these having left him, she seats herself by his bedside.

"Dost thou know me?" she says to him. "It is in sooth I, who nourished thee, and who armed thee with such weapons that, hadst thou not thrown them down, would have defended thee from every assault." Whereupon Boethius wept bitterly, and she dried his eyes with the hem of her robe.

This lady is Philosophy, who never abandons her faithful ones. She requires from her disciple a full confession, and hearing how he laments the lost favors of Fortune, his exile and his imprisonment, sets herself to discredit this rival, to show him how worthless are her favors and herself. She tells him that man's true fatherland is the contemplation of immortal and divine things, and that they alone should be called exiles who are shut out from this perfection, seeing that the ultimate end of man is the supreme beatitude of the contemplative life, and to that end he should dedicate himself entirely. Therefore she who has loved him from his earliest years, now that she has told him wherein consists his true beatitude, will point out to him — first indicating the things he should avoid — the path which will lead him back to it, and will replume the wings of his mind so that he may be enabled to soar to "la somma Beatrice." {The supreme Beatrice.} There, restored to health and safety, and untroubled, made one of the army of heaven, he will contemplate the law by which the King of kings rules the universe, and will see how, for the individual as for the race, the highest beatitude is resolved into the Unity.

When Beatrice first appears to Dante in Purgatory, she says to him, "Look at me well; I am in sooth Beatrice! How didst thou deign (being lost in the pride of philosophy) to come unto this mount where man is happy? Not only by the influence of the stars at his birth," she continues, addressing her attendant virtues, "did this man receive great intellectual power, but also by the special gift of Divine grace did he become such in his new life (*sua vita nuova*) that everything good was possible to him. I revealed myself to him in his youth, and for some time led him with me in the right way, but when I stood upon the threshold of my second age and changed life, he left me, and gave himself to another. As I ascended from flesh to spirit, and beauty and virtue increased in me, I became less dear to him, and he turned to pursue those false images of good that never fulfil their promises. Nor was he affected by the inspiration of the visions that I sent him, but fell so low that I was obliged to show him the realm of the lost. The law of justice would be broken should he pass Lethe without tears and repentance." And then, addressing herself directly to the poet, she demands his confession that this charge is true, and asks him what impediments he found while following those desires inspired by her (which led him to love that good wherein aspiration ceases) that caused him to lose hope, or what advantages to any other good that he should turn to it? And the poet,

weeping, says that the things of this world, with their false images of pleasure, led him astray as soon as her countenance was hidden from him. Then Beatrice tells him that her “buried flesh” should have led him in the opposite direction; for neither art nor nature ever gave him so much pleasure as her fair members now dispersed in earth.

In the *Convito* (3:14, 15) Dante tells us that the soul of Divine Philosophy is love, and the *beauty of her body* is morality, “because as the beauty of the body results from the proper ordering of its members, so the beauty of wisdom, which is the body of philosophy, results from that ordering of the mortal virtues which makes us take a sensible delight in them.” Henry Clark Barlow (*Historical Contributions to the Study of Dante*), in commenting upon this passage of the *Purgatorio*, says, “The *Donna* of the *Vita Nuova*, of the *Convito*, and of the *Divina Commedia* is one and the same, only differently treated. In the first we have the Aristotelian *form* of Beatrice treated of, that is, *Amore*, in the second we have the *beauty* of Beatrice treated of, that is, *Morality*; in the third we have the *Substance* of Beatrice treated of, *il soggetto materiale* {the material subject}, or *Sapienza* {Wisdom, or Divine Wisdom}, in which the real nature of Dante’s *Donna* is made manifest.”

The two passages of the *Purgatorio* already quoted (*Purgatorio*, 30:127-130, and 31:47-51), where Beatrice speaks of her “second age” and of her “buried flesh,” have always been the stronghold of those who believe in the historical Beatrice; but if we are to accept these lines in their literal sense, they carry us entirely too far, and convey a meaning which is surely other than Dante’s. In the *Vita Nuova* the whole story of his intercourse with Beatrice is limited to his *seeing* her once at the age of nine (§2), to her speaking to him nine years afterwards, as she passed him in the street (§3), and to his seeing her once across a church (§5), after which, hearing of his love for “the lady who served him as a screen” on that occasion, she refuses to salute him (§ 10), and even joins with her companions in making a jest of him when he meets her once more at a wedding feast (§ 14); while Dante himself assures us, “to prevent every vicious thought,” that the end of his desires was the salutation of his lady, “which consisted of two acts of her mouth — her smile and her speech” (§19). Is it not grossly inconsistent with this poetic ideal, for that Beatrice who went through life so clothed upon with maidenly modesty, to tell her lover when she first meets him in the spirit world — a lover the end of whose desires was her smile of greeting — that her *fair body* had given him more pleasure than anything in art or nature, and that the memory of that “buried flesh” should have kept him insensible to all other attractions, for when “the highest of all pleasures” was taken from him by her death, what mortal thing was there to awaken desire? (*Purgatorio*, 31:48-54). She had told him just before that the desire for her led him to love that Good beyond which there is nothing to aspire to; but could the love of the body, however fair, inspire that love of God that Dante describes over and over again as “our highest beatitude”?

It seems to me impossible to take the Beatrice of the *Vita Nuova* for an historical reality and the Beatrice of the *Divina Commedia* for an allegory (as many have done), because the two are so closely connected; in fact, as Giuliani says (though he is, nevertheless, a realist), comparing §29, *Vita Nuova*, and *Paradiso* 32:7, where Beatrice is placed under the standard of the Virgin, “whoever noticed all these minute relations, and, indeed, the perfect accordance of the *Vita Nuova*, the *Divina Commedia*, and all the other works of Dante, must be forced, while he admires, to recognize ever the same mind in the architect of such numerous and varied works.” And not only the same mind, but the same intention.

Guiseppe Perez identifies Beatrice with the Active Intelligence (which he identifies with Wisdom, or the Divine Light), and his argument may be briefly summed up thus. Dante is said by Beatrice (*Purgatorio*, 30:109, *et seq.*) to be endowed with all possible intellectual power; not only by the influence of the stars at his birth, but by the special gift of Divine grace, which is that seed of felicity that is the beginning of all good in man (*Convito*, 4:21). The fruit which should be produced from this seed is the blessedness which follows the use of the soul in contemplation (*Convito*, 4:22). The angel at the sepulcher says to those who have wandered from the true way — that is, to all who have sought for happiness in the *active life* — that it is not there, but that it goeth before them into *speculation*, or the contemplative life. Now, if (as Dante has said elsewhere) “the highest Good, beyond which there is nothing to aspire to,” is the use of our intellect in speculation; if the false pleasures of present things make up the beatitude that the schools of philosophy are seeking in this world — where they will never find it; if Beatrice asserts that she guided him in his youth to this highest Good; and if, as we have seen, the intellect cannot act unless the *active Intelligence* enlighten it; what else can Beatrice be, but that Active Intelligence (or Divine Wisdom), the enlightener of the *possible intellect* (or human understanding), which, united to the latter, becomes the *Beatrice beata?* (the blessed or glorified Beatrice).

Dante’s *beatitude had preceded him into speculation*, and he finds her on the summit of “the Mount Delectable, which is the source and cause of every joy” (*Inferno*, I:77), whence, by the power of his lady’s eyes, he is lifted to travel through the heavens (*Paradiso*, 17:113). So Richard of St. Victor says, “Man must ascend this mountain if he would comprehend those things which are above human senses. Its ascent leads to the knowledge of one’s self; that which happens on the summit leads to the knowledge of God. He who ascends the mountain, who knows himself as he is, will know what he should be. The mind that never rises to the knowledge of itself, can it ever soar upon the wings of contemplation to that which is above itself? So long as it spends itself in manifold desires, so long as by many ways of thought it wanders here and there, it cannot ascend to contemplation.”

“And thus it appears,” says Dante (*Convito*, 4:22), “that our beatitude, that is, this felicity of which we are speaking, we may first find imperfectly in the

active life, that is, in the exercise of the moral virtues, and then almost perfectly in the contemplative life, that is, in the exercise of the intellectual virtues; which two operations are unimpeded and most direct ways to lead us to the supreme beatitude that cannot be obtained here below."

The story of Dante's inner life (*la vita nuova*, or *regenerate* life), as told in the great trilogy of his works, appears to be this — that from his early boyhood he had felt a strong love for the contemplative life (or study of Divine Wisdom); that amid the distractions of the active life, the pursuits of the world, the cares of the state and the family, the duties of the soldier, the studies of the artist and the scientist, this heavenly "giver of blessings," this Divine beatitude, passed away from him. Then came the consolations of scholastic philosophy, with "its false images of good," in whose attractions his whole soul was for a time absorbed, until at last the vision of the higher life, as he had seen it when a boy, came back to him, and he returned to the love of the Divine Wisdom, who revealed to him first her *eyes*, "those demonstrations wherein one sees the truth with the greatest certitude," and then her "second beauty," her *smile*, "through which the inner light of Wisdom shines as without any veil"; for in these two we feel that highest pleasure of beatitude which is the greatest joy of Paradise (*Convito*, 3:15).

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## HIDDEN CURRENT OF BEING

In reading an article the other day, I was struck by a quotation from Elihu Burritt {an American social reformer, pacifist, and self-taught polymath who was famously known as “the Learned Blacksmith,” and advocated international peace, arbitration, and moral reform} which ran in part:

There is no sequestered spot in the universe, no dark niche along the disk of non-existence, into which man can retreat from his relations to others, where he can withdraw the influence of his existence upon the moral destiny of the world; everywhere his presence or absence will be felt, everywhere he will have companions who will be better or worse for his influence. . . . Thousands of my fellow-beings will yearly enter eternity, with characters differing from those they would have carried thither had I never lived.

The author’s thought parallels my own recent conjectures upon the multiplied force of concerted action and shows that, side by side with what we are *doing*, runs the hidden current of our *being*, slow-moving perhaps, yet sweeping on with a restless force, none the less great for being unsuspected. Still, this is one of the most difficult things in the world to realize. To speak, to act — these we can all appreciate as bearing largely upon the character of others. We also can realize the inspiration of a great deed, a stirring sentence, but simply to *be* — what can this do for the world? How far can the nature of a man, apart from words and actions, affect the noble purpose of the Teachers of mankind?

Our first impulse is always to ask: What can I *do*? Yet right action is merely the fruit of right thought, the blossom of the character from which it depends, as the fruit from a tree. The gardener does not try to improve his roses by forcing open the buds and trying to stretch the crumpled petals to a broader growth; instead he turns his attention to the bush on which they grow, grafts it, waters it, enriches the soil around it, exposes it to light and air — and more beautiful flowers follow in natural sequence.

Just as we cannot think of the perfect rose without its fragrance, so the perfected human character cannot be conceived of apart from its *influence*, that perfume of the soul which is as subtle and powerful as thought itself.

What is this influence but the aggregate of a man’s inmost thoughts, the real Person which all his tricks of speech and grace of manner cannot hide? This is the reason the sages teach us that thought is father to action — “as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he” — a man becomes that on which he resolutely and persistently ponders. He puts himself into an attitude of receptivity to a particular current, high or low; and since the force of attraction

operates on every plane and automatically tows along lines of least resistance, it enters whatever channels he has prepared for it.

In his beautiful poem, *Santa Filomena*, Longfellow says:

Whene'er a noble deed is wrought,  
Whene'er is spoken a noble thought,  
    Our hearts, in glad surprise,  
    To higher levels rise.

The tidal wave of deeper souls  
Into our inmost being rolls,  
    And lifts us unawares  
    Out of all meaner cares.

This is the *active* influence, the power we are all ready to recognize and work for. But there is also its *passive* counterpart — not negative, but the quiet, inner, unseen influence — the “atmosphere” of a person that has an even more potent though less apparent effect. To dominate the emotions of others by the voluntary force of speech or action is comparatively easy, for it is a momentary effort. We poise ourselves for an instant on the topmost heights of our being, and our fellows, kindled at the sight, strive temporarily to emulate our altitude. But how much harder is the task of informing our inmost being so that it can give out nothing but nobility, nothing but love! Who has not known men and women whose very presence is a benediction, and who make the bright vision of a universal fraternity among the peoples on earth seem possible of realization. It is precisely by and through this tremendous inner power which we all possess, yet handle as carelessly as children do matches, that one-world consciousness eventually shall become a reality, destined in the words of Walt Whitman to “saturate time and eras.”

How startled we are when confronted with some word or deed of our long-forgotten past which, like a chance-sown seed, has borne fruit in another’s mind, and now we gaze upon its harvest. It is these not necessarily pleasant glimpses of our far-reaching effect upon our fellows that pull our reluctant souls out of their lethargy. They bring us face to face with the unalterable reality of our past, the glorious possibilities of our future. This again is the active power of the spoken word or outer deed. But what of the consequences of that unseen influence that never ceases — the weight of character — that is continually creating for the soul “the garment that we know it by”? As Emerson wrote:

The words that a father speaks to his children in the privacy of home are not heard by the world, but, as in whispering galleries, they are clearly heard at the end, and by posterity.

That which we *do* for good in the course of our lives is very little, that which we *say* still less, but that which we *are* affects every human being whose

destiny is linked with ours, and draws within our sphere all the highest forces of the universe to cooperate with us. This is not a goal to be gained or shared by one effort, not a victory to be decided by one battle. It is a long, slow, building-up of character, thought by thought, much as coral polyps build the reef, each sacrificing its house of life, shell by shell. There is no need that we should sigh for wider fields of action while we wield in the present such possibilities for weal or woe as this power breathing from us unawares. But he who labors with steadfast aim for the purification of his own soul that his fellow pilgrims may benefit, will in time join that "tidal wave of deeper souls" and see ever farther and farther beyond the horizon. The task of self-mastery is not without joy, for it brings with it that beautiful transparency of spirit which enables all men to see by the radiance that shines forth from within and enlightens the whole world.

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